SPECIAL EDITION

COUNTERINSURGENCY READER II

Preface

In October 2006, the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center published a volume of selected articles in conjunction with the release and distribution of the Army/Marine Corps Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency. Subsequently, numerous articles have been written exploring other dimensions of counterinsurgency not treated, or not well understood, when the first volume was published. These articles reflect both the vastly expanded range of knowledge and experience that U.S. land forces have obtained as well as the painful cost of such lessons with regard to fighting and defeating insurgencies in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and elsewhere. Many outline the first-hand lessons learned in the current operational environment. As the Intellectual Center of the Army, the Combined Arms Center recognizes the importance of sharing these first-hand documents. The Counterinsurgency Center (COIN Center) and editors of Military Review have designed this second collection to complement the recently released FM 3-0, Operations and the soon to be released Counterinsurgency Handbook (produced by the COIN Center); FM 3-24.2, Counterinsurgency Tactics; FM 3-07, Stability Operations; and FM 3-28, Civil Support. While doctrinal field manuals lay out principles and supporting theory for dealing with the asymmetric aspects of warfare inherent in insurgency conflicts, these articles are intended to provide specific lessons and observations drawn from operations in the field.

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Military Review

Combined Arms Center Special Edition—Counterinsurgency Reader II

Cover Photo: (FRONT) U.S. Army SSG James Warren provides security from a rooftop during a combined patrol in the Shula district Baghdad, Iraq, 18 June 2008. (U.S. Army, SPC Charles W. Gill)
(BACK) A group of Iraqi children look on as a U.S. Soldier from 1st Brigade Combat Team, 6th Infantry Division, assigned to Task Force Regulars practices balancing a plate of bread on his head in the Jameela market area of the Sadr City district of Baghdad, Iraq, 31 May 2008. (U.S. Air Force, TSGT Cohen A. Young)

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America's Frontier Wars:
Lessons for Asymmetric Conflicts

Congressman Ike Skelton

Congressman Ike Skelton suggests how to overcome the threat of asymmetrical warfare by examining yesteryear's battles to develop strategies and tactics for tomorrow's conflicts.

IN JULY 1755, Major General Edward Braddock, commander in chief of all British forces in North America and a 45-year career soldier, was killed along with 900 of his men by a smaller French and Indian force. On his way to capture Fort Duquesne, Pennsylvania, Braddock had split his force into two divisions. Because of the difficulty of crossing the wilderness, they opened a distance of 60 miles between the "flying column" division of rapidly moving soldiers and a support column hauling "monstrously heavy eight-inch howitzers and twelve-pound cannons" completely unsuited to the terrain.

The lead column stretched a mile in length and was attacked on the far side of the Monongahela River by Indians streaming along either British flank and hiding within the forest they had long used as hunting grounds. The British responded using traditional tactics—continuously trying to form companies and return fire but only concentrating their number further for Indian attack. Braddock ordered forward the main body of his troops, which then collided with retreating elements ahead. In the resulting confusion, 15 of the 18 officers in the advance party were picked off. Still, the remaining forces continued to fight the way they were taught: maintaining platoon formations and firing together even as they drew heavy fire to the line from well-hidden

Indians. It was not until Braddock himself was shot in the back that the British broke in retreat, carrying off the body of their commanding officer.[1]

Asymmetric Warfare: Yesterday and Tomorrow

Why do I begin an article addressing tomorrow's conflicts with an account of a battle fought two and a half centuries ago? As an avid student of history, I believe it is critically important for us to understand that asymmetric warfare is not something new. In fact, it has been a recurring theme of American military history and is familiar to many of today's military officers. Many of its best historical examples come from the series of conflicts we collectively refer to as the Indian Wars. Braddock's defeat highlights as many useful insights as contemporary examples of asymmetric action, like Russian battles with the Chechens. Overcoming future challenges will require that we both understand the lessons from the past and develop strategies and tactics appropriate to tomorrow's battlefield.

While asymmetric warfare is not something new, it is very much in vogue today in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War. Given America's resounding success in that conflict, potential adversaries have learned Iraq's lesson that it is foolish to try to match us conventionally. Instead, they are seeking ways to

turn our strengths against us. This is the heart of the concept of asymmetry, broadly defined by Steven Metz and Douglas Johnson of the US Army War College as: "In the realm of military affairs and national security, asymmetry is acting, organizing, and thinking differently than opponents in order to maximize one's own advantages, exploit an opponent's weaknesses, attain the initiative, or gain greater freedom of action."[2]

Asymmetry on the Future Battlefield

In operational terms, asymmetry derives from one force deploying new capabilities that the opposing force does not perceive or understand, conventional capabilities that counter or overmatch the capabilities of its opponent, or capabilities that represent totally new methods of attack or defense—or a combination of these attributes.[3] The US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) now thinks of ways to characterize tomorrow's asymmetric challenges.[4] In considering its arguments, I was struck again by the utility of lessons learned from earlier campaigns against Native Americans such as Braddock's defeat. So I have matched TRADOC's insights for the future with asymmetric examples from the past. Only by studying the lessons of history are we likely to adapt to asymmetric challenges.

TRADOC's analysis begins by stressing the differences between our current perception of the future operational environment and what is likely to be true. Today we think of close combat as involving deliberate actions conducted at a tempo decided by the United States and characterized by the application of technology and systems that leaves opponents virtually helpless to respond or retaliate. Therefore, the public expects military operations to involve few casualties and precision attacks, secure our homeland and be short-lived. On the contrary, potential adversaries will likely choose to fight in ways that negate these expectations. Future close combat will be much more dynamic and lethal, marked by greater intensity, operational tempo, uncertainty and psychological impact. We cannot expect the experience of the Gulf War to be repeated.

Likely Characteristics of Adversaries

With this as a starting point, TRADOC has discussed attributes a potential enemy is likely to possess: greater knowledge of the physical conflict environment, better situational awareness, a clearer understanding of US military forces and an ability to adapt quickly to changing battlefield conditions. These attributes strongly mirror challenges for British, and later American, soldiers in Indian campaigns of yesteryear.

The physical environment remains the defining variable of close combat. For US military forces, it is almost certain that future conflicts will occur in regions where the enemy has a greater understanding of the physical environment and has better

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Opposing forces will also have greater situational awareness. . . . We should expect them to have human networks operating over telephone lines or with cellular phones and using commercial imagery systems. . . . Even with its sophisticated intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems, [the United States] will have difficulty in complex settings unless it builds a more effective human intelligence

optimized his forces to fight. A common characteristic of many Indian campaigns was the Indians' superior knowledge of the terrain. A great example of this was the attack on the forces of Colonel Henry Bouquet during his march to relieve Fort Pitt, Pennsylvania, during Pontiac's War in August 1763. The Indians attacked in an area of old growth forest, offering limited fields of fire, around Bushy Run. They forced Bouquet's forces back into a defensive position on a hilltop, attacking the position repeatedly but without waiting for a counterattack. Their detailed knowledge of the area allowed them to simply fade into the forest, suffering few casualties.[5] This is but one example of the advantages that accrued to many Indian tribes through the late 1800s.[6]

Opposing forces will also have greater situational awareness in future conflicts. We should expect them to have human networks operating over telephone lines or with cellular phones and using commercial imagery systems. This will be critical, not only because the adversary can distribute information quickly but also because crucial information will only be available through human interaction. The United States, even with its sophisticated intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems, will have difficulty in complex settings unless it builds

During the Second Seminole War, Major Francis L. Dade and all but three soldiers of his 110-man detachment were killed on 28 December 1835 during an ambush near Ocala, Florida.

Museum of Florida History, Tallahassee, Florida

The Seminole Indians adapted continuously during the second Seminole War of 1835-1842. . . . Where other eastern Indians could usually be depended upon to follow the rules of the game—to defend a fixed position and be routed—the Seminoles . . . regularly rejected pitched battles and instead relied on ambushes and raids to bleed the Army, sap its strength, and generally discourage its leadership. In the future, such an adaptive enemy would put additional pressure on the United States' ability to respond, as their battlefield successes would be covered instantly by the global media.

a more effective human intelligence capability in strategically important regions. Moreover, these new adversaries will learn not only how to adapt technology but also tactics, formations and operations in light of changing battlefield conditions during the course of operations. Such adaptations will help them counter a precision warfare strategy by creating uncertainty while also trying to control the nature and timing of combat engagements.

During the war in Chechnya, the Chechens fought using few prepared positions, preferring instead, as Chechen Vice President Yanderbaijev said, to "let the situation do the organizing."[7] They would move from city to city to deny Russian maneuver and fire superiority and would use the local population as cover for their activities.

Similarly, the Seminole Indians adapted continuously during the second Seminole War of 1835-1842. One noted historian puts it this way: "The second Seminole War did not follow the precedent set in earlier Indian wars by producing a single daz-

zling stroke by a spectacularly brilliant leader. No fewer than seven American commanders would try and fail to bring the war to a successful conclusion. When confronted with superior firepower and at a tactical disadvantage, the Seminoles simply dispersed into small bands and continued to fight a guerrilla war . . . best suited to the terrain and their own temperament. Where other eastern Indians could usually be depended upon to follow the rules of the game—to defend a fixed position and be routed—the Seminoles . . . regularly rejected pitched battles and instead relied on ambushes and raids to bleed the Army, sap its strength, and generally discourage its leadership."[8]

In the future, such an adaptive enemy would put additional pressure on the United States' ability to respond, as their battlefield successes would be covered instantly by the global media, instantaneous communications and media coverage.

Finally, our future adversaries will almost certainly have greater knowledge of US forces than we will of theirs. We are the most studied military in the world. Foreign states have regular military features and, in some cases, entire journals (most notably Russia's *Foreign Military Review*) devoted to the assessment of US military force structure, doctrine, operational concepts and capabilities. All major US Army field manuals (FMs) and joint doctrinal publications are freely available on the Internet, and many foreign organizations access them regularly. As an example, in April 2001 alone, the Center for Army Lessons Learned recorded 5,464 sessions on its website from Europe and 2,015 from Asia. This access, combined with their knowledge of battlefield terrain, greater situational awareness and adaptability, will make future adversaries far more menacing.

How Will They Fight?

The essence of future asymmetric warfare is that adversaries will seek to offset our air, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and other technological advantages by fighting during periods of reduced visibility and in complex terrain and urban environments where they can gain sanctuary from US strikes. This will also deny these areas and their inherent protective characteristics to US forces, keeping us exposed and on the defensive.

US forces will have to contend with greater uncertainty in the field as adversaries mask the size, location, disposition and intentions of their forces. They will seek to convince US commanders that they are using conventional tactics while making us vulnerable to unconventional, adaptive and asymmetrical actions.

Geronimo (*in front of horse*) with some of his warriors during negotiations with General George Crook in 1886. During this period, telegraph linemen (*inset*) and Apache warriors were antagonists in a 19th-century precursor to 21st-century cyberwar.

National Archives

National Archives

There is a relevant Indian war complement to today's challenges. . . . By 1882, the Apache had learned [the telegraph's] function and its method of operation. When they jumped the reservation, they would cut the lines and remove long sections of wire, or they would remove a short piece of wire and replace it with a thin strip of rawhide, so cleverly splicing the two together that the line would appear intact and the location of the break could take days of careful checking to discover. This disruption foreshadows the potentially far greater problems from cyberattacks.

At the same time, adversaries will use both old and new technologies to great effect on the battlefield. They may use older technologies in unique ways as the Chechens did by buying commercial scanners and radios to intercept Russian communications. They will also try to acquire advanced niche technologies like global positioning system jammers and systems for electronic attack to significantly degrade our precision strike capabilities. Moreover, we must be prepared for adversaries to upgrade software capabilities in the middle of an operation, potentially allowing for a more networked opposition.

While some of the technology may be new, the Indian campaigns again provide useful insights. Many Indian campaigns demonstrated the effectiveness of asymmetric tactics in countering larger and better-armed British and American forces. In fact, "Indian skulking tactics—concealment and surprise, moving fire, envelopment and, when the enemy's ranks were broken, hand-to-hand combat—remained

the cardinal features of Native American warfare" over a period of 140 years.[9] The longevity of their effectiveness shows how important it is to develop appropriate responses to asymmetric tactics.

One of the most successful Indian tactics was the ambush. Captain William Fetterman's massacre in 1866 near the Lodge Trail Ridge in Wyoming left 92 American soldiers dead in a classic ambush some believe was masterminded by Sioux leader Crazy Horse. A lesser-known battle, almost a century before, shows the effectiveness of the ambush, particularly when matched with reckless leadership. At the Battle of Blue Licks in August 1782, a group of 182 Kentucky militiamen, led by Colonel John Todd and including Daniel Boone and members of his family, was in hot pursuit of Indians who had attacked an American fort. Boone noticed the Indians were concealing their numbers by sharing tracks, yet making the trail easy to follow. He smelled an ambush by a force he estimated at 500 and advised

breaking off the pursuit until reinforcements could arrive. A more junior officer yelled, "Them that ain't cowards follow me," and recklessly charged across the river toward several decoy Indians, with much of the force following him. The remaining Indians were waiting in ambush, as Boone had feared, and delivered a devastating defeat to the rangers.[10]

Like Blue Licks, the Battle of Bushy Run not only shows the efficacy of Indian raids until defeated by Bouquet's brilliant feigned retreat and flanking maneuvers; it also shows how an enemy can use deception effectively. The official history of Bushy Run says Bouquet's forces were engaged and surrounded by Indian forces at least equal in size to his own. However, when I toured the battlefield, Indian

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recreators, who have studied the battle extensively from the Indian point of view, maintained that the Indians numbered no more than 90 and that the tactics they used in the forest made their numbers seem larger. This disparity is a good example of attempts to confuse conventional forces so that the size of the opposing force is impossible to discern.

Finally, the Indian campaigns provide some excellent examples of the role of technological advances in asymmetric campaigns. Noted historian Armstrong Starkey emphasizes that the Europeans arrived in North America during a time of military revolution in Europe: "European soldiers brought the new weapons and techniques of this revolution with them to North America and by 1675 had provoked a military revolution of a sort among Native Americans, a revolution that for 140 years gave them a tactical advantage over their more numerous and wealthier opponents."[11]

Specifically, King Philip's War (1675-1676) was the first conflict in which the Indians had modern flintlock firearms. This proved an important advantage because some of the American militias were only equipped with matchlocks and pikes, and because the Indians were excellent marksmen.[12] More than 200 years after the Civil War, the same faulty assumptions were still at work—namely, that the US military retained unmatched technical advan-

tages over its more primitive adversaries. At that time, the US government rearmed its forces with breechloaders in place of magazine rifles—due to a bias against unaimed shots and excessive use of ammunition—while the Plains Indians acquired such weapons by direct purchase and thus, in some cases, had superior arms in the 1870s. We must be on the lookout for technological matches like these in our own future conflicts.

New Threats

We have seen the great utility of examining historical conflicts between Europeans and Native Americans to learn lessons about possible future conflict. Yet there are two additional dimensions to asymmetric warfare that must be mentioned—the threat of weapons of mass destruction, potentially used against the American homeland, and of cyberattacks on US military, government and private information systems.

At the heart of asymmetry is the assumption that an adversary will choose to attack the weakest point. In the case of the United States, asymmetric tools may well entail terrorist acts—with or without nuclear, biological or chemical weapons—on the US homeland designed to disrupt deployments, limit access, erode public support and take the fight to the American people. In some respects, this homeland tactic is not new. Beginning with King Philip's War, the New England Indians abandoned their traditional restraints and "prepared to wage total war on all of the colonists, making no distinction between combatant and non-combatant."[13] Attacks on Americans using weapons of mass destruction take these homeland tactics to a new level. Because of the devastation of these attacks and the interest of many potential adversaries in acquiring these capabilities, the United States must develop strategies for preventing and responding to such an occurrence.

The cyberthreat now facing the United States is equally compelling and risks both the effectiveness of US forces on the battlefield and the safety of private and government systems throughout the United States. Recent Joint Chiefs of Staff-directed cyberwarfare exercises like *ELIGIBLE RECEIVER* and *ZENITH STAR* showed how vulnerable command and control networks are to cyberattacks, a prime asymmetric target given the US military's continued reliance on information technology. Moreover, there are now approximately 30 nations that have developed "aggressive computer-warfare programs."[14]

Again, there is a relevant Indian war complement to today's challenges. Indians of the Southern Plains disrupted American efforts in the West through unconventional means. "The telegraph line, which once had commanded their awe, no longer was mysteri-

ous. By 1882, the Apache had learned its function and its method of operation. When they jumped the reservation, they would cut the lines and remove long sections of wire, or they would remove a short piece of wire and replace it with a thin strip of raw-hide, so cleverly splicing the two together that the line would appear intact and the location of the break could take days of careful checking to discover."[15] This disruption foreshadows the potentially far greater problems from cyberattacks if we do not design strategy and tactics for dealing with this as part of an asymmetric campaign.

Preparing for Asymmetric Attacks

The first step in preparing to better meet tomorrow's challenges is to learn from the past. As the examples drawn here indicate, there is a rich history to be tapped in the early American experience. But there are many other examples as well—Yugoslav partisans fighting the occupying Nazis or Afghans against the Russians and Serbs in the recent NATO operation in Kosovo. Military commanders must study history. Modern, technologically sophisticated warfare—with the asymmetric challenges that accompany it—makes that requirement more true, not less.

Our forces must also be adaptive. Just as our adversaries will continuously change tactics and approaches to seek our weaknesses, so must we be able to counter them through continuous adaptation. If we do not, we risk the mistakes of the past. "While European military revolutions provided states with the means to project power into the interior of North America, they did not provide troops

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with appropriate training and tactics to succeed on the frontier."[16] Therefore, our forces, doctrine and tactics must continue to embrace agility and adaptability and prepare for a range of missions. The Army continues to do so in its most recent doctrinal publications, FM 1 and FM 3-0.[17] Efforts to address asymmetric threats must also retain the unique American strengths—superior training, leadership and technology—that give us an edge against any potential adversary.

Finally, we must guard against arrogance. An account at the time of Braddock's defeat noted the irony that his preparations for the march to Fort Duquesne were precise. He attended to every minute detail except "the one that mattered most: Indian affairs."[18] He dismissed those Ohio Indian chiefs who might have been allies for his expedition as savages who could not possibly assist disciplined troops. We must not fall into the same trap of underestimating a potential adversary because of his different culture or seemingly inferior capability. To do so would be to repeat the errors of the past with potentially devastating future consequences. **MR**

NOTES

1. Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 94-107.
2. Steven Metz and Douglas V. Johnson II, *Asymmetry and US Military Strategy: Definition, Background, and Strategic Concepts* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, January 2001), 5.
3. This operational definition of asymmetry is drawn from my conversations with General Montgomery Meigs, Commander of US Army Forces, Europe, who is an excellent source for insights on operational art.
4. I am deeply indebted to General John Abrams and his staff, especially Colonel Maxie MacFarland at TRADOC for many of the ideas presented here. In addition, I would like to thank Professors Graham Turbiville and William Robertson at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, for their assistance with the historical examples. Their help was invaluable in constructing this article. I am also grateful to Erin Conaton, professional staff member with the House of Representatives' Committee on Armed Services, for her assistance with researching and writing this article.
5. See Anderson, 547-63.
6. Jack Lane's biography of General Leonard Wood notes that as a new surgeon in the Army Medical Department, Wood "learned why the Apaches . . . proved to be the army's most impervious foe in the 1870s and 1880s. Perfecting guerrilla warfare to a fine art, the Apaches operated in small raiding parties rarely numbering more than 100 braves. The hardy warriors had developed incredible stamina and a seemingly unlimited ability to endure with only the bare necessities for long periods in the almost impenetrable, barren mountains and deserts of southern Arizona and northern Mexico. Organizing themselves into small bands, they roamed the Arizona ter-

ritory at will until, pursued closely by the army, they retired into the strongholds of the Sierra Madre Mountains. To defeat such an enemy required exceptional leaders and men." See Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978), 4.
7. "Chechen Commander on Modern Separatism," *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye* (22-28 January 1999), 3.
8. John D. Waghelstein, "The Second Seminole War: Lessons Learned, Relearned and Unlearned," *Low Intensity Conflict and Law Enforcement* (Winter 1992), 4.
9. Armstrong Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare, 1675-1815* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 167.
10. Isaac Newton Skelton III and Earl Franklin Skelton, *Ike, This is You* (Washington, DC: 1995), 132-41. The author's great-great-great grandfather, Squire Boone, was wounded during this battle.
11. Starkey, viii.
12. Ibid., 71-72.
13. Ibid., 72.
14. James Adams, "Virtual Defense," *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2001), 102.
15. Odie B. Faulk, *The Geronimo Campaign* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 46.
16. Starkey, 169.
17. US Army FM 1, *The Army* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office [GPO], June 2001); FM 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, June 2001).
18. *The Journal of Captain Robert Chomley's Batman*, 20 and 23 May 1755, cited in Anderson, 94. The rest of the account of Braddock's defeat is largely drawn from Anderson's work; see 94-107.

The Honorable Ike Skelton, US House of Representatives, Democrat, Missouri, has represented Missouri's Fourth Congressional District since 1977. He is the ranking member on the House Armed Services Committee. He has written several articles for Military Review over the years. His most recent contribution, "Military Retention Intangibles: Esprit, Morale and Cohesion," appeared in the July-August 1999 issue of Military Review.

Developing a National Counterinsurgency Capability for the War on Terror

John Hillen, Ph.D.

Dr. John Hillen is the Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs. The bureau he heads is the principal link between the Departments of State and Defense and provides policy direction in the areas of international security, security assistance, military operations, humanitarian assistance, and defense trade. A former Army officer, he served in reconnaissance and airborne units and was decorated for his actions in combat in the 1991 Persian Gulf War. Dr. Hillen received his B.A. from Duke University, his M.A. from King's College London, his doctorate from Oxford, and an M.B.A. from Cornell University.

THE WAR ON TERROR pits the United States and its allies against violent ideologues who would replace secular governments or (to their minds) apostate states with theocratic regimes hostile to the values upon which inclusive democratic societies are based. Our enemies' strategies and tactics collectively amount to a global series of insurgencies, competing for the right to govern in predominantly Muslim nations around the world. In many ways, we can usefully characterize the war as a counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign against an ideologically driven collection of insurgents who act transnationally, are highly networked, and, like cancer, are adapting and metastasizing. If we are to prevail in the long war, we must mobilize and synchronize all elements of our national power—diplomatic, military, economic, social, and informational—to develop antibodies to and eventually find a cure for this new and dangerous kind of enemy.

Our national security system provides us with overwhelming capability to defeat conventional, state-based threats, but it is not organized to deliver the coordinated support to political, economic, civil, and educational institutions that our foreign partners need to prevail against locally based insurgents. During the Vietnam War, General Creighton Abrams said to a group of diplomats that "in the whole picture of this war, battles don't really mean much." This was an exaggeration, but only a slight one. National security and defense communities around the world agree that successful counterinsurgency is primarily political in nature, focusing on ameliorating or counteracting conditions that lead to popular support for insurgency, support without which no insurgency can hope to succeed.

Despite its inherently political nature, COIN theory has been almost entirely developed within military circles. This work, such as the new Army-Marine Corps COIN field manual, recognizes that every insurgency has a specific geographic, political, and social context, but all insurgencies have characteristics in common. Every insurgency originates in a competition for governance and/or resources, the perpetration of real or perceived injustices by a governing entity, competing visions of social and cultural equities in the affected society, or some combination thereof. Any effective COIN campaign, therefore, must address the political, economic, and social problems that gave rise to the insurgent movement in the first place. Although direct military action against insurgent leaders may be necessary when an adversary perpetrates destabilizing violence and does not respond to other means of engagement, military action in and of itself is not likely to result in redress of the local conditions that gave rise to the insurgency.

It is a potentially crippling irony that the parts of the U.S. Government best suited to deliver essential COIN capabilities are those least engaged in current efforts to frame COIN policy and doctrine. This must change; the civilian departments and agencies of our government must make a deliberate, concerted effort to apply COIN principles to their policies, plans, programs, and operations where their missions and competencies can make a difference between success and defeat in the various battles of this war.

That's not to say our agencies aren't trying to adapt to the world in which we operate. Indeed, several seem to have contracted COIN fever, although that is not the term of art by which they refer to their efforts. The Department of Defense's *Quadrennial Defense Review* Building Partner Capacity and Irregular Warfare Roadmaps and the State Department's new Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization and Director of Foreign Assistance all seek to build what arguably could be considered COIN *capacity* in Defense and *capability* at State. The U.S. Agency for International Development has created a new Office of Military Affairs and is rethinking its strategic approach to development, clearly understanding that development is key to building and protecting responsible governance in underdeveloped regions of the world.

Moreover, in our efforts to realign and reform institutions, we should all be seeking to contribute resources and capabilities to President George W. Bush's National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (NSCT). This comprehensive document elaborates in great detail what Executive Branch departments and agencies must bring to the fight against terrorism. Enormous amounts of intellectual capital and other resources are being devoted to implementing the strategy in our individual and collective venues. A national COIN strategic framework would complement and further the NSCT by allowing us to knit together various instruments of national power *on an operational basis* in specific national, regional, and local contexts. A national COIN framework would serve our national goals in real and immediate ways, in places plagued by or at risk of destabilizing insurgencies.

There is growing awareness in the national security community that civilian capacity to plan and conduct interagency operations does not exist in the U.S. Government and must be created. This is easier said than done; it will require each agency to look beyond its own domain to a shared understanding of problems and then agree on shared approaches to solving them. The lack of a strategic COIN framework inhibits interagency coordination of responsibilities for COIN operations, undermines our ability to build partner capacities, and detracts from our ability to build international coalitions dedicated to defeating enemy insurgents. Until we create such a framework, we will have no basis for organizational or curricula design that would institutionalize lessons learned and support the development of the skill sets, tools, and policies that would make us successful COIN operators.

> *A national COIN framework would serve our national goals in real and immediate ways, in places plagued by or at risk of destabilizing insurgencies.*

In his excellent article "Best Practices in Counterinsurgency," published in the May-June 2005 issue of *Military Review*, Kalev Sepp identified the key actions that must be taken in order to counter insurgency. These are—

● The provision of basic human needs, such as food, water, shelter, health care, and a means of living.

● Development of an adequately sized and trained police force able to gather and act upon intelligence at the community level, supported by an incorrupt and functioning judiciary.

● Enactment of population control to separate insurgents from indigenous support.

● Political and information campaigns that give people a stake in the success of their government and encourage the peaceful reintegration of insurgents.

● Deployment of military forces, both indigenous and supporting, organized and trained to support the police and fight insurgents.

● Adequate border controls to prevent the flow of foreign fighters and weapons that fuel the insurgency.

● Empowerment of a single legitimate executive authority that can direct and coordinate counterinsurgency efforts.

Clearly the majority of these efforts involve work we associate with "civilian" skill sets and even agencies—but the uniformed military is often placed in the position of having to undertake such activities. Moreover, many conventional military units and commanders do not consider some non-kinetic COIN tasks to be core competencies—and that's not necessarily a bad thing.

We need to be able to field interagency teams of experts to assist and advise foreign governments and military forces in developing appropriate COIN strategies, operations, and tactics, particularly with regard to modifying local government behaviors that build support for insurgents and erode popular support for counterinsurgent goals. These interagency teams, whose members would be deeply experienced in their primary agency competencies (intelligence, policing, security sector reform, development, public information, and direct action), would be specially trained in counterinsurgency techniques and able to work in close concert with military forces in hostile or semi-permissive environments. In fielding these teams, U.S. agencies would strengthen their capacity for "jointness" and gain valuable, deployable expertise. To this end, we are developing COIN handbooks for use by both strategic planners and interagency field operators and will capitalize on existing programs to collect and disseminate lessons learned among current and future COIN practitioners.

Through advocacy and education, we must build support in the Congress for the authorities and funding that would create deployable capabilities and capacity in the U.S. Government to conduct COIN operations. Such capacity would complement and reinforce the Civilian Response Corps being developed at the State Department by the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. While stabilization and reconstruction (S&R) capacity building focuses on post-conflict environments, COIN capacity, by definition, would be engaged before or during conflict. Although there is certainly significant overlap between the skill sets required for COIN and S&R, they are not identical, and there will be great value in developing each community in tandem to avoid duplication and achieve synergy of effort.

As a first step, we are committed to establishing a national Center for Complex Operations that will work closely with entities, both inside and outside the government, that specialize in training and education on governance, development, rule of law, transitional security, S & R, and related issues. This center would help rationalize the many related and important, but currently uncoordinated, ongoing U.S. efforts to deliver COIN capabilities more effectively. State recently launched a COIN website, *www.usgcoin. org*, which we plan to expand to a robust information clearinghouse and virtual collaboration center for COIN professionals and public policy officials, perhaps under the sponsorship of the center.

In September 2006, the Departments of State and Defense co-hosted a seminal conference on "Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century," bringing together experts in diplomacy, defense, foreign policy, media relations, foreign assistance, irregular warfare, homeland security, development, stability operations, and conflict transformation. We are planning a similar event in Europe in early 2007 that will focus on building an understanding among partner nations of our effort. Such an event will encourage other nations to adopt and enable a similar approach to our shared security problems. We are working closely on this effort with the government of the United Kingdom, with which we share a vision on how best to deal with our shared security challenges.

In summary, State has assumed leadership of this important new national security initiative, one grounded both in the study of history and in recent painful national experience. We will seek to encourage and support the development of a holistic, robust national capacity to engage and defeat enemy insurgents as we seek peace, security, and prosperity for all in the 21st century. **MR**

> ***We need to be able to field interagency teams of experts to assist and advise foreign governments and military forces in developing appropriate COIN strategies, operations, and tactics…***

Phase IV Operations:
Where Wars are Really Won

Lieutenant Colonel Conrad C. Crane, U.S. Army, Retired, Ph.D.

Portions of this article have been adapted from a monograph written for the Strategic Studies Institute by Conrad C. Crane and W. Andrew Terrill in 2003.[1]

Events in Iraq since March 2003 highlight the importance and complexity of operations during Phase IV of a campaign—activities conducted after decisive combat operations to stabilize and reconstruct the area of operations (AO). Phase IV is often described as postconflict operations, but that is a misleading term. Phase IV usually begins soon after the advent of combat during Phase III, and the two overlap. In addition, as in Iraq, significant fighting can still occur during Phase IV. A better descriptive term would be "transition operations," because military forces try to position the AO to move back to peace and civilian government control.

In the past, U.S. commanders often conducted detailed planning for Phase IV while Phase III was ongoing, such as during World War II. But, with modern warfighting concepts like Rapid Decisive Operations and schemes of maneuver designed to speedily defeat adversaries, such an approach is no longer wise or feasible. Even the concept of having separate phases during a campaign might be worth rethinking because the construct can stovepipe planning and hamper the holistic vision necessary to properly link combat to the end state that accomplishes national political objectives.

Planning, as well as execution of Phase III and Phase IV must occur simultaneously, not sequentially, and we should also train that way. Too often training exercises ignore Phase IV operations or conveniently delay them until the conclusion of major combat operations. Real life is not that neat or simple.

When Lieutenant General John J. Yeosock took command of the U.S. Third Army during Operation Desert Storm, he could not get useful staff support to assess and plan for postconflict problems such as hospital beds, prisoners, and refugees. He later complained he was handed a "dripping bag of manure" no one else wanted to deal with.[2] Neither the Army nor the Department of Defense (DOD) had an adequate plan for postwar operations to rebuild Kuwait, and civilian agencies were even more unprepared. Only through adept improvisations by Army engineers and civil affairs personnel and the dedicated efforts of Kuwaiti volunteers and the Saudi Arabian Government was the situation salvaged.[3]

The Third Army was the first U.S. field army in combat since the Korean War, which might account for some of the deficiencies in postwar planning during Operation Desert Storm. Historically, postconflict planning has been a function of headquarters at echelons above corps (EAC), and continuing problems with more recent operations are at least partly attributable to the generally small scale of U.S. interventions.

For at least the latter half of the 20th Century, U.S. military leaders and planners focused on winning wars, not on the peacekeeping or nationbuilding that came afterward. The unpleasant result of the Vietnam War magnified this shortcoming, as the services

developed doctrines, force structures, and attitudes to fight major conventional war and to avoid another experience like Vietnam.[4] But national objectives can often only be accomplished after the fighting ends; a war tactically and operationally won can still lead to a strategic defeat if transition operations are poorly planned or executed.

The ironic truth about Phase IV operations is that the U.S. military would rather not deal with them or would like to quickly hand them off to other U.S. Government agencies or international organizations, which, in turn, argue that nationbuilding tasks are rightfully within their sphere of responsibility. However, while there is universal agreement about who should ideally be rebuilding states, the harsh historical reality is that the world's greatest nationbuilding institution, when properly resourced and motivated, is the U.S. military, especially the U.S. Army. American military forces would like to quickly win wars and go home, but the United States has rarely accomplished long-term policy goals after any conflict without an extended American military presence to ensure proper results from the peace.

U.S. Occupations

Since its formation, the Army has had a lot of experience with postconflict or transition operations. During the 19th century, the Army had such missions in Mexico, the post-Civil War South, and the American West. Generally, these experiences were extremely unpleasant and at the end of the century helped motivate military reformers focus on building a military establishment worthy of a great power and designed to win major conventional wars. Reformers agreed with the philosophy of influential Prussian general and theorist Count Helmuth von Moltke, the Elder, that the primary role of the modern military was to successfully conclude major combat operations (once diplomats had gotten the nation into war) and then quickly withdraw while the diplomats resolved the aftermath.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, the United States has conducted generally successful efforts with reconstruction and nationbuilding in Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Germany, Italy, Japan, Austria, South Korea, Panama, and Kuwait. Some successes came as a result of good planning, as during World War II; others came from adept scrambling, as after Operation Desert Storm. Notable failures occurred in Haiti, Nicaragua, Somalia, and Vietnam. Ongoing efforts continue in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Recent history provides a number of useful examples to illustrate the

missions and challenges involved in postconflict or transition operations. This article examines recent smaller scale contingencies (SSCs) and insights from major wars.

Panama. Operations in Panama leading to the overthrow of General Manuel Noriega's regime have been touted as a model use of quick, decisive U.S. military force, but postconflict activities did not go as smoothly. Combat operations were conducted superbly and quickly in a complex situation (with difficult terrain, many civilians, and restrained rules of engagement [ROE]) that required intricate joint planning and execution. The crisis period was exceptionally long, beginning with public revelations about Noriega's nefarious activities during June 1987 and culminating with Operation Just Cause during December 1989. Planning for military intervention began as early as February 1988.[5]

After Noriega annulled the May 1989 election, sent paramilitary thugs to assault opposition candidates, and increased harassment of Americans, the United States conducted Operation Nimrod Dancer, which was a show of force by U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) to demonstrate U.S. resolve to convince Noriega to modify his behavior. When Noriega did not conform to expectations, President George H.W. Bush ordered the action called Operation Just Cause, which was a textbook example of the quality of the new U.S. Armed Forces and doctrine and encompassed simultaneous nighttime assaults of 27 targets.[6]

Because of a focus on conducting a decisive combat operation, not a complete campaign, the aftermath of this SSC did not go smoothly. Planning for the postconflict phase—Operation Promote Liberty—was far from complete when the short period of hostilities began. Missions and responsibilities were vague, and planners failed to adequately appreciate the effects of combat operations and regime change.[7] Although guidance from SOUTHCOM on posthostility missions was fairly clear, tactically oriented planners at the XVIII Airborne Corps, in charge of the joint task force (JTF) carrying out the operation, gave postconflict tasks short shrift. The plan assigned a lone military police (MP) battalion to run a detention facility, protect all convoys, provide security for many key facilities, and prepare to restore law and order.[8] Although the battalion was mainly concerned with a relatively small geographic portion of the country, it was quickly overwhelmed by its responsibilities.

With the elimination of the Panamanian Defense Force, the task of restoring law and order became

quite demanding. Looting and vandalism spread throughout the country, and chaos reigned, which is a common occurrence in situations where national security forces are removed, leaving instability and a security vacuum in their wake. U.S. forces scrambled to restore some semblance of order, but the MPs, trained in law and order missions, did not perform well in unfamiliar combat operations and were numerically inadequate to deal with the problems they faced.[9] The MPs also could not handle all the enemy prisoners of war (EPWs) and refugees for whom they were responsible. Similarly, there were not enough civil affairs personnel or engineers for the rebuilding effort, which seems to be a common occurrence in U.S. transition operations. Slow and disorganized U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) callups, relying on volunteers, exacerbated personnel deficiencies. Political-military interagency cooperation was also poor, many agencies were excluded from DOD planning, and the Embassy was severely understaffed.[10]

Senior commanders later admitted they had done poorly in planning postconflict operations and hoped the Army would remedy that situation in the future.[11] Despite these deficiencies, the U.S. Military Support Group, activated in January 1990 to support the growth of independent Panamanian institutions, deactivated just a year later in a much more stable country, although whether it or Panamanian leaders deserved the credit for this success was unclear.[12]

Haiti. Like Panama, the operation in Haiti was another SSC in response to a long-festering crisis that had begun with the military overthrow of President Jean-Bertrande Aristide by Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras in September 1991. On 1 April 1993, the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent the first alert order to the commander in chief, U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM) (now U.S. Joint Forces Command) to begin planning for contingency operations in Haiti. Planning for active intervention intensified in October of that year after armed protesters in Port-Au-Prince turned away a ship loaded with UN peacekeepers.

During the next year, international pressure on the military leaders of Haiti increased and was intensified even further by obvious U.S. preparations for an invasion. In September 1994, the Haitian Government returned Aristide to power because it knew U.S. Army helicopters, 10th Mountain Division soldiers aboard the USS *Eisenhower*, and elements of the 82d Airborne Division were heading for Haiti.[13] In fact, Cedras did not begin to negotiate seriously with the U.S. diplomatic delegation until

he had confirmed that the 82d Airborne contingent was in the air. The overwhelming force deployed in the initial occupation and U.S. soldiers' professional and disciplined conduct and appearance in continuing operations did much to deter and control the actions of potential troublemakers.[14]

Beginning occupations with a strong, pervasive ground presence to control and intimidate looters and deter potential resistance is always the best course of action, but this did not occur in Iraq in 2003. Even Ambassador J. Paul Bremer conceded that "[w]e never had enough troops on the ground" to adequately control the postwar environment.[15]

The long lead time between the beginning of the Haitian crisis and the actual military intervention, combined with lessons learned from operations like those in Panama and Somalia, greatly facilitated planning for Operation Uphold Democracy. USACOM prepared operational plans for both forced and unopposed entry, while DOD conducted extensive interagency coordination.[16] DOD's Haiti Planning Group, with the help of other government agencies, prepared a detailed interagency checklist for restoration of essential services.

The lead agency for all major functional areas was the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), with DOD support (mostly from Army units). The agency was to—
- Reestablish public administration.
- Conduct elections.
- Restore information services.
- Help the Department of Justice set up and train a police force.
- Prepare for and respond to disasters.
- Run airports.
- Care for refugees.

Military units had primary responsibility for—
- Security measures, such as disposing of explosive ordnance.
- Protecting foreign residents.
- Demobilizing paramilitary groups.

These were mostly Army functions, and the Army provided 96 percent of deployed military forces.[17]

Military leaders' desires to avoid getting involved with nationbuilding missions such as those that led to so much grief in Somalia affected these plans and their execution. Army lawyers wrestled with interpreting humanitarian requests for reconstruction and classified them as either mission-related or as nationbuilding. The lawyers approved requests that fell into the former category and denied those in the latter. Medical units focused on supporting the JTF, not on humanitarian assistance, because U.S.

leaders did not want to replace the medical facilities of the host nation. This reluctance to embrace peacekeeping or nationbuilding had its most regrettable result on 20 September 1994 when restrictive ROE prohibited U.S. forces from intervening as Haitian police killed two demonstrators. The next day, U.S. officials expanded the ROE to allow more military involvement in restoring and maintaining law and order.[18]

Such mission creep should be expected; it has been part of virtually all U.S. involvement with complex Phase IV operations. A similar expansion of Army roles and missions occurred in almost all other restoration efforts in Haiti. The attorneys, rationalizing that any action that made Americans look good lessened security risks, began approving such efforts as mission-related. Other government agencies were slow to arrive or build up resources, so the military picked up the slack. Other departments had not done the detailed planning DOD had, often wanting more support than DOD had expected to provide.[19]

When the ambassador to Haiti asked for military advisers to help new government ministries get established until efforts from USAID and the Department of State could be established, a ministerial adviser team from the 358th Civil Affairs Brigade hastily deployed "the first large-scale implementation of a civil administration effort since World War II."[20] The scope and pace of civil affairs missions increased so rapidly they threatened to get out of control, raising fears such actions would only heighten Haitian expectations that U.S. forces could fix all the nation's problems, thus setting the people up for great disappointment later.[21]

The expanded military missions caused many other problems, to some extent because civil affairs units are relatively small organically and require considerable support from other organizations. Engineer planning, equipment, and personnel were inadequate for their required civil affairs and reconstruction projects. Soldiers had to develop new policies and procedures to help set up internal security forces and expend funds, which often required working around *U.S. Code*, Title 10, restrictions.[22] Soldiers assumed expanded roles in maintaining law and order, including manning and operating detention facilities and developing new crowd-control techniques. Items like latrines and police uniforms were in short supply. Doctrine and personnel were not available to establish proper liaison with the myriad civilian organizations working in the country. Intelligence assets were severely taxed, and the force in Haiti had to rely heavily on theater and national intelligence

assets to make up for deficiencies.[23]

The military in general and the Army in particular received much praise for their performance in Haiti. Even so, once the last American troops left the island in April 1996, the situation there deteriorated to conditions approaching those that existed in the early 1990s. Without long-term military involvement, most U.S. policy goals were frustrated. The civilian agencies that replaced military forces did not have the same resources available, and the Haitian economy, judicial system, and political leaders obstructed reform.

U.S. officials decried the results of subsequent elections and admitted the failure of their policies. Even UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan recommended against renewing the mission there.[24] One key lesson from the frustrating experience in Haiti is that the United States should predicate redeployment of its military forces on the achievement of designated measures of effectiveness (MOEs) and not on time limits. Another is that follow-on civilian agencies must be capable of maintaining those accomplishments as well as achieving new ones.

The Balkans. The U.S. Army has picked up its usual heavy load of postconflict tasks that require several thousand troops to remain in Bosnia and Kosovo, and it looks as if doing so will be a long-term commitment.[25] Current U.S. operations in the Balkans reveal how force and mission requirements change during the transition phase. Eighteen months after the agreement between NATO and the Yugoslav Army in regard to Kosovo, U.S. Army troops were still engaged in "peacekeeping with an iron fist" to establish a safe, secure environment under the rule of law, with patrols backed by armored vehicles and detention centers to control trouble-makers. The UN-NATO justice system has been heavily criticized, and a Judge Advocate General Legal Assessment Team found the UN mission in Kosovo so severely short of facilities and personnel it recommended that teams of 15 Army lawyers rotate through the country to reinforce the UN effort. Impatient Kosovars resent that the UN seems to be making little progress toward a transition to local control.[26]

With efforts in Bosnia more advanced and the environment more secure and peaceful, U.S. Army task forces have become lighter and have moved from providing security to enhancing long-term stability. By late 1997, the Stabilization Force (SFOR) realized a disparity existed between the military force's ability to complete its General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP) tasks and its less-

capable civilian counterparts' ability to implement them. SFOR realized it could not disengage with such a large GFAP gap remaining and expanded its mission to help international organizations set the conditions for civilian implementation of the GFAP to help transition the area of operations to a stable environment. U.S. military leaders on the scene recognized they were moving into the area of nationbuilding but saw no alternative if SFOR was ever going to be able to withdraw or significantly reduce its commitment without risking the peace.[27]

As the nature of stability operations and support operations in Bosnia evolved, so did the peacekeeping force's requirements. The force needed fewer combat troops and more engineers, military police, and civil affairs personnel. Intelligence requirements changed and expanded, and after-action reports (AAR) highlighted many shortfalls in the Balkans' force structure and peacekeeping policies, many of them common to previous SSCs. Army lawyers again proved adept at "thinking outside traditional fiscal rules and applications" to support operational requirements.[28] The roles of MPs expanded to include performing as maneuver battalion task forces and working with international law-enforcement agencies, but difficulties with tactical MPs trying to perform law and order missions reappeared.[29]

Problems also reappeared with shortages and recall procedures for Reserve Component (RC) engineer, military intelligence (MI), and civil affairs augmentation.[30] The massive engineering requirements for Operations Joint Endeavor and Joint Guard highlighted branch deficiencies with command and control, construction unit allocations, and bridging.[31] A split-based logistics system trying to meet requirements in the Balkans and the Central Region of Europe required considerable augmentation, but still strained combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) assets considerably.[32]

Liaison officers were in great demand to be Entity Armed Forces Joint Commission observers and to coordinate with the myriad nongovernment organizations and civilian agencies.[33] Shortages of linguists existed throughout the theater, exacerbating problems with intelligence. MI doctrine was inadequate to support peace operations. Understaffed MI units had to adapt as best they could to a complex multiservice, multiagency, and multinational situation complicated by a host of treaty requirements.[34] A Defense Science Board study concluded that Balkan operations revealed many shortcomings in psychological operations as well, especially in planning and resourcing to support all the geographic combatant commanders' engagement and postconflict activities.[35]

Even with all these problems, Army units in Bosnia have continued to compile a superlative record of accomplishments. Nonetheless, the GFAP gap remains, with recurring UN problems in coordinating and directing civilian agencies. Recent elections were dominated by continuing political divisiveness, which demonstrated the limited progress made in changing people's attitudes.[36] However, while American military leaders might complain about the troops remaining in the Balkans, the fact that decisions about their redeployment have been based on achieving MOEs and not on adhering to time limits has at least insured stability in the region.

The Philippines. In the aftermath of the Spanish-American War, the United States began a long occupation of the Philippine Islands that officially ended with their independence in 1946. This quite lengthy transition to self-government is not typical of U.S. experiences with occupation, and the most useful insights are to be gleaned from studying the early years when U.S. forces tried to subdue resistance and establish control.

The Army's Philippines experience reinforces that "postconflict operations" is a misnomer. To be successful, such actions must begin before the shooting stops and be conducted simultaneously with combat. Planning must be complete before the conflict begins, so military forces can immediately begin accomplishing transition tasks in newly controlled areas. All soldiers must accept duties that are typically considered in the purview of civil affairs detachments. There will never be enough civil affairs troops to go around, and whoever is on the scene must meet immediate needs. Even in the midst of combat, leaders and their soldiers must keep in mind the long-term goals of peace and stability and conduct themselves accordingly.[37]

In the Philippines, military and civilian officials recognized that the military leader on the scene was the best agent for local pacification. A situation where village attitudes and characteristics varied widely required considerable decentralization. Officers had great discretion and were not closely supervised, although they also had clear directives from higher headquarters.

The requirement for local familiarity meant the Army could not rotate soldiers quickly. Personal relationships are important in village societies and take considerable time and effort to establish. Even 1-year tours in a tribal society like Iraq are probably

too short. In the Philippines, the Army had to accept some decline in unit combat efficiency to keep units in lengthy occupation duties. Troops had to be aware of the cultures they were in and not try to force U.S. values. Knowledge of the Koran and local customs were important for everyone. Even John J. Pershing, a captain at the time, could spend hours talking to local imams about religion. Being aware of how important personal relationships are does not lessen the requirement to achieve the right balance of force and restraint, but troops must consider long-term consequences for every action. General Leonard Wood's predilection for punitive forays in response to even minor incidents like theft cowed many Moro chiefs, but by doing so he also undermined many alliances and relationships local commanders had painstakingly established. Instead of quieting small disturbances, Wood's expeditions often created larger problems by driving pacified or neutral villagers into joining more rebellious ones, making it more difficult for his subordinates to gain local trust.[38]

Germany. The United States has occupied Germany twice in the past century. When World War I concluded, over 200,000 U.S. troops moved to positions around Coblenz and prepared for the possibility that the Germans would not sign the Versailles Peace Treaty. When the Germans agreed to sign in 1919, the occupation force rapidly diminished. By the end of 1922 only 1,200 U.S. troops remained.[39] Although the bulk of responsibility for the occupation and regime change fell on other Allied governments, U.S. troops did find themselves in charge of 1 million civilians. The U.S. Army and Government had not really accepted the administration of civil government in occupied enemy territory as a legitimate military function after the Mexican War, Civil War, or Spanish-American War, and the civil affairs officer for the U.S. military government in the Rhineland lamented that the U.S. Army of Occupation "lacked both training and organization" to perform its duties.[40]

As World War II approached, U.S. Army War College committees went back to World War I reports and developed formal doctrine for military government. During spring 1942, a School of Military Government was established at the University of Virginia, and thinking began there about postwar reconstruction of Germany, Japan, and Italy.[41]

By the time Germany surrendered in May 1945, detailed Allied planning for the occupation of that nation had been ongoing for 2 years. All staff sections at Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, and Army Group headquarters invested considerable resources in developing what became Operation Eclipse. The plan correctly predicted most of the tasks required of the units occupying the defeated country. Within 3 months, those formations had disarmed and demobilized German armed forces; cared for and repatriated 4 million EPWs and refugees; restored basic services to many devastated cities; discovered and quashed a potential revolt; created working local governments; and reestablished police and the courts.[42]

Before any Allied armies entered Germany, planners designated military governance units to closely follow combat forces. The first civil affairs detachment set itself up in Roetgen, Germany, on 15 September 1944, only 4 days after U.S. troops entered Germany. Once the Third Reich surrendered, small mobile detachments went immediately to every town in the U.S. occupation zone. Typically, unit commanders confronted mayors with a number of demands (a list of local soldiers and party members; the turn-in of all military and civilian firearms; and housing for U.S. troops). Detachment leaders also imposed curfews and immobilized the population and had the authority to replace uncooperative mayors.[43]

The regime in Germany was changed from the bottom up. Throughout history, this has been the best approach to rebuilding states. Local elections and councils were allowed to function, and responsibility was shifted to local authorities as quickly as possible. State governments were next, and only after they were working effectively were national elections considered. Political life was strictly controlled to prevent any resurgence of radicalism, although public opinion polls were conducted on an almost weekly basis to monitor what the German people thought about occupation policies. Also, the German legal profession had been totally corrupted by the Nazis, and each occupying ally took a slightly different approach in reestablishing courts. The British used a lot of previous Nazi lawyers and judges, while the Americans tried to reform the whole system—a slow process. The best solution was probably that of the Soviets'; they found educated, politically loyal people and gave them 6 weeks of legal training. These lay judges got criminal and civil court systems working quickly.[44]

One of the most vexing problems for occupation authorities was how to dismantle the Nazi Party and its security apparatus while retaining the skills of some of its members who performed important functions. The solution was to have adult Germans fill out detailed questionnaires about their associations.

Heavy penalties were imposed on anyone who lied or failed to answer questions. A board of anti-Nazi Germans and Allied representatives reviewed the fragebogen (questionnaire) to determine who had held leadership positions and should have their political and economic activities curtailed for the occupation. By the time such people regained their rights, democratic Germans were so solidly established that a Nazi revival was impossible.[45] This approach also allowed occupation authorities to clear key administrators and technicians, along with some security forces, so they could remain at their posts to help with reconstruction. Most commentators agree that the most critical mistake made during the initial occupation of Iraq was the total disbanding of the Iraqi Army and the extensive purging of Ba'athists without attempting discriminatory screening.[46]

Japan. In 1945, the occupation force for Japan, a country slightly smaller than Iraq, included almost 23 divisions amounting to more than 500,000 soldiers. Because of uncertainty about how occupation forces would be received, General Douglas MacArthur decided overwhelming force was the best insurance against unrest. Most ground forces were American, although allies, such as British and Australian units in Hiroshima, were used in some sensitive areas.[47]

While interdepartmental deliberations in Washington, D.C., about occupying Japan had been going on since the aftermath of Pearl Harbor, the actual planning in the Pacific for Operation Blacklist did not begin until May 1945.[48] Within 2 years, most Japanese soldiers were disarmed and repatriated (except those from Soviet-controlled areas); a purge list of persons restricted from political activity was completed; basic services were restored; police reform programs were implemented; the economy was restarted; land reform had begun; and the nation had adopted a new democratic constitution renouncing war as an instrument of national policy.[49]

In October 2002, reports emerged that President George W. Bush's administration was looking at the Japanese occupation as a model for achieving democratization and demilitarization in Iraq, but the administration quickly withdrew from that position. Many experts have highlighted the important differences between the scenarios. The Japanese surrendered unconditionally after total defeat, and the whole world acknowledged the legality and necessity of Allied occupation. Millions were dead, cities were in ashes, and the populace was destitute and cowed. Their more homogeneous culture did not feature the ethnic, tribal, and religious divisions so evident in Iraq, and the Japanese were conditioned to obey the emperor's command to accept defeat and submit to their conquerors. They also had some experience with limited democracy, although it can be argued that Iraq had some similar experiences earlier this past century. Another major difference is that Iraq is much richer in natural resources than Japan, which provides another set of opportunities for occupying powers.[50]

However, Operation Blacklist provides useful insight about purging undesirable political elements and on how to design the insertion of military forces into a situation where the possibility of armed resistance remains ambiguous. Similarities also exist between the way Americans viewed the Japanese in 1945 and the way many perceive Iraqis today—as a totally foreign and non-Western culture.

John Dower, the renowned historian of the occupation of Japan, strongly agrees that Japan does not provide a useful model for Iraq. His important caveat is that current policymakers should heed the clear warning that "even under circumstances that turned out to be favorable, demilitarization and democratization were awesome challenges."[51]

Additional Observations

Other insights should also be emphasized. For example, detailed long-term interagency planning for occupation is important and can considerably smooth transition. MacArthur's staff managed to develop Operation Blacklist in just over 3 months, but analysis for such a course had been going on for years. He devoted considerable staff assets to creating the plan, and the operation required little interagency coordination. Also, the Far East Command staff made many adjustments on the fly during the early years of occupation.

The ideal approach to occupation is exemplified by interagency planning for operations in Haiti that produced a detailed list of postcrisis tasks and responsibilities well in advance of any possible combat. That operation eventually failed, however, because civilian agencies proved incapable of completing the mission once military forces left because of inadequate resources or inflated expectations.

The primary problem at the core of U.S. deficiencies in postconflict capabilities, resources, and commitment is a national aversion to nationbuilding, reinforced by the U.S. failure in Vietnam. U.S. leaders must accept the nationbuilding mission as an essential part of national security, and they must better tailor

Ideal Vision of Transition

Time
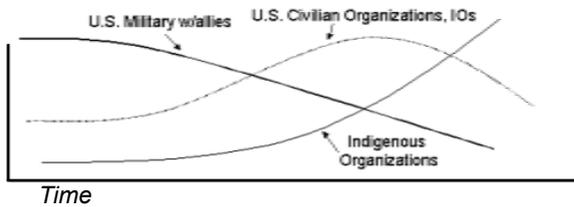
Figure 1

Realistic Vision of Transition

Time
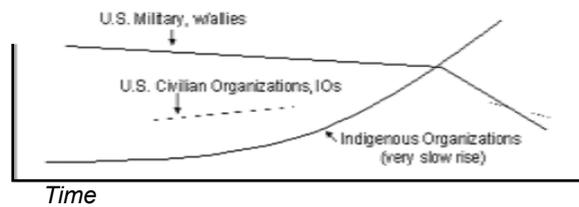
Figure 2

and fund military services and civilian governmental organizations to accomplish the mission.

In the past, no part of Phase IV has been more problematic for U.S. military forces than handover to civilian agencies. Ideally, the allocation of effort and shift of responsibilities should proceed as depicted in figure 1, but in reality, it normally looks more like figure 2, where the handover is directly to the local government.[52]

A number of possible structural solutions are available to the Army to improve its performance in Phase IV operations. These range from internal reorganizations to relying more on civilian agencies.

Forming specialized peacekeeping units. Some commentators have recommended that the Army establish constabulary units focused exclusively on peacekeeping duties. While this has certain training and organizational efficiencies, it is a bad idea for a number of reasons. At the beginning of Phase IV, strong warfighting skills are essential, and no progress is possible without peace and security. The conventional deterrent value of today's relatively small Army will be significantly reduced if some units are perceived as having a more limited capability for offensive or defensive operations, unless these constabulary units are an addition to the existing force structure. They will also be of only marginal use in meeting the requirements of the current national military strategy with acceptable risk.

Whether created as new organizations or as modifications of existing ones, specialized units would probably be inadequate to meet the number of future demands for their skills. Center for Army Analysis projections, based on data from the 1990s, predict the United States will face 25 to 30 ongoing SSCs every month, and that does not include the increased operational tempo resulting from the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).[53] One alternative to this approach would be to structure USAR and Army National Guard (ARNG) units to perform transition phase functions. After Active Component (AC) combat units have had time to provide a secure environment, deploying specialized USAR and ARNG

forces might be appropriate. Such units' performance in the Balkans has drawn rave reviews from many civilian administrators who like the different attitudes those units bring to Phase IV operations. To prevent excessive deployments, however, there need to be many of these units. The same attitudes that please civilian observers will draw the Army even more into nationbuilding tasks.

Creating multipurpose units. Creating more multipurpose units makes good sense, given the realities the Army faces. Army Transformation initiatives are relevant for this solution. The new medium brigades will retain some armored punch with more infantry. They will gain augmented intelligence capabilities and be more mobile and versatile. The Army should also invest in multipurpose technologies, such as platforms equally suitable for mounting lethal weaponry for combat or carrying relief supplies for humanitarian missions. This solution will require more than just new organizations or technology, however. There will have to be a recognition and acceptance throughout the Army of the likelihood and importance of Phase IV operations and the realization that these missions require a different mindset and training than decisive combat operations. Army schools at all levels will have to prepare soldiers to better meet this challenge, and units would have to adjust mission essential task lists accordingly.

Increase the AC's CS and CSS force structure. A common theme found in AARs, and from observations of civilian administrators and from exercise analyses is that the Army has serious shortfalls in providing the required CS and CSS for Phase IV. Some of these shortfalls are the result of having USAR theater-level elements as a late follow-on in normal force flows in war plans, as is the case with some engineer organizations. Some deficiencies are the result of elements almost exclusively in the USAR having become overextended by unaccustomed, recurring deployments. In other cases, the force does not exist anywhere, sometimes because of a lack of reliable historical experience or plan-

ning data to determine requirements, as in MP asset shortfalls for internment and resettlement of EPWs and refugees. The complicated multinational and multiagency environment of Phase IV has also created a host of new requirements not foreseen by planners used to combat operations.

Training and equipping CS and CSS units to be more versatile would overcome some deficiencies, but most fixes to this problem are not that easy. To effectively increase its CS and CSS personnel and assets available, the Army would have to invest in force structure and provide more AC assets for theater or EAC tasks. The DOD *Fiscal Years 2000-2005 Defense Planning Guidance Reserve Component Employment Study 2005* determined that to be able to conduct contingencies for 60 days without RC augmentation the Army needed 230 new CS and CSS units.[54] The list, which covers many of the shortages recent AARs have revealed, would be a good place to start to determine expanded requirements. Ongoing GWOT operations reveal even more CS and CSS needs.

Strengthen civilian agencies. Although strengthening civilian agencies is not something the Army can do directly, it is often a solution presented by those who believe the services should not be involved in nationbuilding and by departmental secretaries and officials advocating the roles of their organizations. The United States should adopt this solution in some form anyway, and the military should support it, although this might threaten to lead to reductions in the DOD budget. But nothing in Phase IV can be accomplished without establishing a secure environment on the ground that only military forces, primarily the Army, can maintain.

In any Phase IV, the lack of a quick-response capability by civilian agencies, as well as problems coordinating them, will ensure that the military will bear the brunt of all essential tasks in rebuilding and reorganizing a failed or wartorn state for a long time. For instance, a representative from the Department of Justice specializing in setting up police forces has said that even with proper funding and commitment, it takes at least 9 months to have a viable force; recent experiences show this to be an optimistic estimate.[55] The implication for the Army is that no foreseeable future reduction is likely in the nationbuilding or nation-assistance roles Phase IV operations demand from it. Contracting services to civilian companies might relieve some of this burden, but these activities have come under fire from the General Accounting Office for their costliness

and inefficiency and suffer from the same limitations as other civilian agency operations.[56]

Recently, Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness David Chu said that to prevent future wars, the U.S. military is in the nationbuilding business to stay, and its leaders need to accept the fact that soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines so engaged believe it is an important mission.[57] Anecdotes from the field support his assertion. Soldiers interviewed in Kosovo emphatically expressed their support for nationbuilding. One said, "With every plate of glass we replace in a window; with every door we install, we're helping these people get back on their feet."[58] He also described the importance of tending to a child's broken arm and giving a mother blankets to keep her children warm, concluding that "[w]ith every town that we help, we're helping the nation get stronger." The Bush Administration initially expressed resistance to employing the U.S. Army in nationbuilding, but recent history demonstrates it will occur anyway. Being prepared to conduct such operations will avoid a sense of mission creep when they inevitably have to be performed.

Former UN Secretary-General Dag Hammer-skold once said, "Peacekeeping is not a job for soldiers, but only a soldier can do it."[59] The same might be true for nationbuilding, especially during the earliest stages of Phase IV before a safe, secure environment has been established and civilian agencies have been able to build up their resources. Accepting nationbuilding or increased nation assistance as a mission has major implications for military involvement in Phase IV operations, but it would also bring service attitudes, doctrine, force structure, and training into line with the reality of what is happening in the field. Undoubtedly, congressional action will be needed to carefully alter legal and fiscal constraints about such military activities.

The Army is developing a set of leaders with experience in Haiti, the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq. They understand the importance of Phase IV operations in accomplishing national policy objectives. Ground forces will almost always be responsible for most military missions in these situations. The U.S. Army has been organized and trained primarily to fight and win the Nation's major wars, but it must also prepare for victory in peace. ***MR***

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Linking Doctrine to Action: A NEW COIN CENTER-OF-GRAVITY ANALYSIS

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PHOTO: U.S. Marine Corps LTC Mark House, right, the commanding officer for 4th Reconnaissance Battalion, speaks through an interpreter to Iraqi men in Al um Waz, Iraq, 6 April 2007. (DOD, Cpl. John M. Odette, U.S. Marine Corps)

JUST AS THERE IS no one weapon that guarantees superiority in conventional warfare, there is no silver bullet when it comes to counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, provides a firm doctrinal foundation, as corroborated in Battle Command Knowledge System chat rooms, training at the U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Center and the Taji Counterinsurgency Center for Excellence, and field experience in Iraq and Afghanistan. Even so, there is still a gap between doctrine and tactical results in COIN warfare. This article seeks to fill that gap by introducing what we believe is a useful planning tool: the COIN center of gravity (COG) analysis, integrated as the culminating step of COIN intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB). COIN COG analysis translates theory into practice from the bottom up, exposing insurgent lines of operation (LOOs) and suggesting possible counters to them. Rather than thrusting objectives from the top down that may or may not apply to a given situation, it balances counterinsurgent efforts and provides metrics. Links between COIN IPB and the root causes of a conflict, and between COIN COG analysis and tactical actions, are analyzed to figure out how to preempt insurgent activity instead of merely reacting to it. The process approaches COIN from the dual perspective of the nature of the population and the nature of the insurgent, not from the perspective of the counterinsurgent.

A New COIN IPB and COG Analysis

Our aim is to understand the enemy's specific strategy, get inside his decision cycle, and predict his likely actions. To accomplish this, we use the four steps of COIN IPB:

- Understand the environment.
- Determine how the enemy is using the root causes of conflict to generate or heighten popular discontent and thereby manipulate the population.
- Discern the insurgent's strategy and his likely actions.
- Culminate steps 1-3 with an analysis of the COIN COG.

This approach focuses operations on eliminating the root causes of an insurgency, accounts for host-nation cooperation across all LOOs, and reconciles short- and long-term effects. Products from the process can help staffs prepare commander's critical information requirements (CCIR), devise means to nullify insurgent information operations, and forecast specific

IPB

Determine how insurgents leverage the population to accomplish their objectives (Counterinsurgency Center of Gravity Analysis)

Visualize specific groups within the population in their multiple layers (ASCOPE)

4 Determine Threat Courses of Action

1 Define the Operational Environment

Evaluate the Threat

Describe the Operational Environment's Effects

Assess the insurgent's strategy in order to forecast his most likely/ most dangerous COA (Visualize the enemy's campaign plan and how he gains passive/active support of the population)

3

2

Visualize the root causes of insurgency by specific population group

LEGEND: COA, course of action; ASCOPE, area, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events

Figure 1. The four steps of COIN IPB.

enemy actions. Critically, the process produces metrics that can help validate an adopted course of action (COA). Altogether, COIN IPB/COIN COG analysis is an integrated, comprehensive process that flows from the perspectives of the population and the insurgent.

The People Are the Environment

Because the population is the key to success in a counterinsurgency, COIN IPB must start with the people and their issues. Both insurgents and counterinsurgents employ strategies to separate each other from the population while drawing the population's active or passive support to themselves. The people need to make choices in support of one side or the other; controlling their will is more important than controlling terrain. According to Clausewitz, a center of gravity is "the point against which all the energies should be directed."[1] For the counterinsurgent, all energies should be directed at gaining and maintaining control over the population and winning its support. Power emanates from the people; without their support, neither the insurgent nor the counterinsurgent can win.

In step 1 of COIN IPB, we assess the area, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events (ASCOPE) in an area of operation to identify the links between the physical environment and the people. In other words, we move from the *what* to the *who*. The human element is the important part here. The ASCOPE assessment helps the counterinsurgent understand the people and the cultural, social, and physical environment in which they live.

Addressing the Root Causes of Conflict

In COIN, the counterinsurgent's main thrust must be directed at eliminating the root causes of conflict. These root causes preexist the insurgent's arrival, and determining what they are is the essence of step 2 in COIN IPB. To use a medical metaphor, the root cause is a wound, the insurgency an infection stemming from the wound. The counterinsurgent must treat the infection to heal the wound, and then find and remove whatever caused the wound.

COIN doctrine prescribes general treatment for the ills that cause insurgency, but the medicine prescribed for a particular illness must be more specific: the counterinsurgent must address the root causes indigenous to each area, ideally before an insurgency materializes. A counterinsurgent needs to do more than defeat an insurgent group to be successful; if he eliminates root causes that could

spawn an insurgency, he attains his objective. It is helpful to identify the insurgent's special tactics, but it is key to understand the intent behind them—the insurgent's purpose or operational goals. The question to answer, then, is not what kind of an insurgency exists, but what is causing it. These causes will be sociopolitical—they will be the grievances of real people. The insurgent wants to use them for tactical gain. By *addressing the root causes*—the *way*—the counterinsurgent can achieve his desired *end state* of denying the insurgent the support of the population.

An accurate, detailed analysis and understanding of a specific operational environment is paramount for winning over a population. Such an understanding is achievable by tactical units down to platoon level; in fact, platoon level is the best place to start. Still, although insurgencies are unique, they do have some common characteristics. At the core, three prerequisites are necessary for insurgency: *a vulnerable population* (one with social, political, economic, or security-related grievances), *leadership for direction* (a person, group, or idea), and *lack of government control* (a non-responsive and/or overly repressive government).[2] COIN COG analysis sets these prerequisites in the context of insurgent strategy and host-nation shortcomings.

Counterguerrilla Operations

Counterinsurgents earn the loyalty of the people and deny insurgents their life support by supporting or undertaking legitimate initiatives that address root causes effectively. Tactical actions such as finding improvised explosive devices (IEDs), defeating IED networks, seizing IED materials, clearing areas, and destroying IED cells and their infrastructure are aspects of *counterguerrilla warfare;* as such, they are merely part of one pillar of COIN operations, not the ultimate remedy to the root causes of conflict. Without a long-term solution to popular discontent, counterguerrilla efforts will continue to strike an enemy that is capable of infinite regeneration. To be sure, the counterinsurgent must confront guerrillas and their tactics, but he must not lose sight of the need for a long-term antidote to a sociopolitical problem. Effective COIN operations aimed at root causes will create an environment that inhibits the enemy's ability to fabricate, transport, emplace, and initiate IEDs in the first place.

Insurgent Strategy versus Type of Insurgency

The type or nature of an insurgency (*what* they want) should not be confused with the insurgent strategy itself (*how* they intend to achieve what they want). To succeed, COIN operations must focus primarily on the enemy's strategy and how he sequences his actions in time and space—not on his ideology or desired end state. Misunderstanding the distinction between type and strategy at this level of analysis will skew our approach to counterinsurgency.

In considering the issue of nature or type versus strategy, it is worth noting that Kurdish separatist groups, Colombia's FARC, certain extremist Shi'a movements, Sunni Ba'athist cells, and Al-Qaeda all have distinct natures but employ essentially the same strategy: urban terrorism as developed by such revolutionary leaders as Frantz Fanon in Algeria and Raúl Sendic, head of Uruguay's Tupamaros in the 1960s and 70s. These groups all attack the government to provoke retaliation and generate collateral damage among the local population. In this way, they seek to separate the government from the people.[3]

By assessing the insurgent's strategy and what his capabilities will allow him to do, we can develop a good idea of what his operational goals might be. Examination of these goals and the insurgent's attempts to achieve them through guerrilla actions will then allow us to get in front of his decision cycle.

The insurgent's operational goals may be overt and publicly championed, or covert. They may have immediate consequences, or delayed effects in consonance with long-term objectives. (Car bombings of a local population, for instance, may seem counterproductive because they incite immediate anger against the bombings and their perpetrators, but a sustained campaign of massive

> *…assessing the insurgent's strategy and what his capabilities will allow him to do… will…allow us to get in front of his decision cycle.*

violence can have two longer term results: it can weaken popular support for the government, and it can make the population believe that the insurgents can protect them better than the government can.) Whatever the insurgent's intent is, if we approach the problem from the perspectives of the population and the insurgent campaign plan, we can interdict him on a number of levels. COIN COG analysis encourages the counterinsurgent to undertake tactical actions that address the root causes of conflict. It enables the counterinsurgent to achieve lasting effects that will survive successive unit rotations.

Insurgent Ends, Ways, and Means

The insurgent works in a premeditated fashion, in accordance with his strategy, to achieve his operational goals, his *ends*. COIN COG analysis translates these ends into insurgent LOOs (not to be confused with friendly logical LOOs) that can be grouped into four broad functions, or *ways*: political, military, social, and economic. The insurgent will seek to achieve freedom of maneuver by exploiting the root causes of conflict at the tactical level. Within his abilities, he will attempt to provide the needs of the population: governance, sustenance, a cause to belong to, and security. Because what works for the insurgent in one area may be futile in another, his specific course of action—his *means*—will be determined by the unique conditions of each demographic cluster (or groupings of people with enough similarities to have the same needs). The same holds true for the counterinsurgent.

The Seven Pillars of Insurgency

Doctrine has identified seven key aspects or dynamics of an insurgency: leadership, ideology, objectives, environment and geography, external support, phasing and timing, and organization and operational patterns.[4] The counterinsurgent can use these dynamics to assess insurgent strategy and predict insurgent courses of action. An assessment must be done for every distinct region, since an insurgency might use a different strategy and different phasing in different areas. This step (step 3 in COIN IPB, "Analyze the Threat") considers, in detail, how the insurgency and the population relate to the environment.

Enemy COIN COG Analysis

In COIN, the center of gravity is generally an aspect of the population (shared ethnicity, religion, or grievance discovered in COIN IPB steps 1 and 2) that the enemy exploits (step 3) to garner active or passive popular support. Enemy COIN COG analysis, otherwise known as Insurgency Course-of-Action (COA) Analysis (step 4), simply brings together the first three steps of IPB; it puts existing data into a context planners can use to visualize the complexities of the environment, and it integrates how the enemy uses the root causes of conflict to gain the support of, or control over, the people. The analysis is predicated on understanding the links between the insurgent and the population. The root causes of conflict offer the opening for insurgent interaction with the population. The people, in turn, facilitate insurgent actions and sustain the insurgency's existence because they believe that the insurgents can best meet their needs, or inversely, that the government cannot—whether the needs are material, physical, cultural, spiritual, or ideological.

Enemy COIN COG analysis enables a unit to think and act unconventionally, to discern the enemy's strategy and operational goals, and to deduce how the enemy plans to achieve his objectives through tactical actions. The enemy COIN COG analysis construct differs from the one used in conventional COG analysis. Instead of *critical capability, critical requirement*, and *critical vulnerability*, it considers *COG, COG enabler, principal facilitator, counter facilitator,* and *friendly force COA.* (See figure 2 for an example of how an enemy COIN COG analysis might proceed.) This construct is applied to each insurgent LOO.

As aforementioned, the enemy COIN COG is that aspect of the population that the enemy exploits to achieve his operational goals. Insurgents exploit that specific group's root causes to gain passive or active support. A *COG enabler* is an official or unofficial leader or specific information operations message or narrative that facilitates the insurgent's ability to exploit the COIN COG. *Principal facilitator* refers to an insurgent action designed to manipulate the COG enabler(s). Designed to play upon the root cause, the principal facilitator takes advantage of a vulnerability of the COG enabler. It is also the specific delivery method of the enemy's IO messages. *Counter facilitator* describes a counterinsurgent action designed to counter the principal

Enemy - Iraqi Sunni Extremists
Former Regime Element (FRE)

"Regain Control / MNF-I Out"

POLITICAL	MILITARY	SOCIAL	ECONOMIC

POLITICAL

Political Wing	Infiltrate Political Leadership	Disrupt Election
Enemy COG	Enemy COG	Enemy COG
Friendly COG	Friendly COG	Friendly COG

MILITARY

Interdict MSR LANCERO	Harassing Rockets Mortars	Infiltrate IA
	Enemy COG	Enemy COG
	Friendly COG	Friendly COG

SOCIAL

Tribal Class Division	Religious Class Division	Influence Education "Madrassa"
Enemy COG	Enemy COG	Enemy COG
Friendly COG	Friendly COG	Friendly COG

ECONOMIC

Interdict Power lines	Disrupt Construct. Effort	Disrupt Supply Lines
Enemy COG	Enemy COG	Enemy COG
Friendly COG	Friendly COG	Friendly COG

Friendly COG

Enemy COG

See figure 3

IA: Iraqi Army
PSD: Personal Security Detachment

* = Purchase material from local merchants

** = Purchase services from locals

Enemy COIN Center of Gravity → **Al-Dulaim Tribe in Vicinity MSR LANCERO**

Enemy COG Enablers

Tribal Leader Sheik Mohammad	Imam Iban Hanifa of the Al-Bari Mosque	I/O Theme: "Crusaders helping local Shi'a"	Merchants (Business council)

Enemy Principal Facilitators

Provide generator	Bribe	Hire sons Rashad and Fiasa as auxiliary cell leaders	Threaten to kill his family	Make mosque improvements	Provide food for internally displaced people (IDPs)	Pass info tea shop grid 17S12345678	Graffiti grids 17S12304560 and 17S87654321	Use technicians to make DVDs and web site	Pass info at market where merchants smoke and talk	Extortion: provide "protection" merchant's vehicles

Friendly Counter Facilitators

*Provide better generators	Ensure area gets equal electricity	**Start construction business	**Help sons start PSD business	**Hire sons' PSD business	*/**Hire Sheik's construction company to improve Mosque	*HN provides food, medicine, school supplies, etc. to imam for IDPs	Arrest insurgent mouthpiece	**Post 'help wanted' notices in tea shop (PSD and construction companies"	*/**Hire sheik's construction company to beautify walls/ keep eyes-on for insurgents to repaint	*/**Hire imam to paint Qur'anic verses on walls	*/**Build business for techs (internet café). Use sheik's construction company and sons' PSD for security	Arrest insurgent mouthpiece	Provide police protection for vehicles/ **Use sons' PSD for added security

FF COA (×14)

Figure 2. Enemy COIN COG Analysis: Culmination of steps 1 through 3 of COIN IPB.

facilitator. Defining effective counter facilitators is a part of the ongoing analysis and not a COA; it addresses *what to do* about the insurgent's attempt to coerce a COG enabler, not *how to preempt* the insurgent. And finally, the counterinsurgent arrives at his *friendly force COA*. Each counter facilitator should elicit several possible COAs. Ideally, the different COAs will help build cooperation and interoperability between the counterinsurgents and the demographic cluster.

Enemy COIN COG analysis examines how to separate the insurgents physically and psychologically from the population. It proceeds like a war-gaming sequence, with consideration and assessment of actions, reactions, and counter-actions. The process helps planners grasp the complexities of the environment, effects, and threat, and it prompts

consideration of specific counter actions to take for each threat action or reaction. It enables the counterinsurgent to develop more than just COAs that counter current insurgent operations; its emphasis on the root causes of conflict allows the counterinsurgent to get ahead of the insurgent by conducting operations that build relationships with the local community across the logical lines of operation. Instead of focusing only on the IED or the network that emplaced it, enemy COIN COG analysis also considers the environment that enabled the network to arise and flourish in the first place.

Friendly Forces COIN COG Analysis

In COIN warfare, COG analysis doesn't stop with the enemy; it also has a friendly forces component.

Friendly COIN Center of Gravity ⟶ **Al-Dulaim Tribe in Vicinity MSR LANCERO**

Friendly COG Enablers

Tribal Leader Sheik Mohammad	Dr. Rashad Zidan	I/O Theme: *"MSR needed for economic stability"*	Police Chief Hussein

Friendly Principal Facilitators

| Include in local council meetings | Show respect; credit and input on projects; column in newspaper started by IA | Ensure electricity reaches area. Credit IA/IP and tribal leader | Make improvements on clinic | Provide vaccinations to locals and meds to clinic | Hand out IO products at tea shop grid 17S12345678 | Help IA to start local newspaper. Hand out IO product (newspaper) at TCPs | Help IA cdr start newspaper; use merchants for labor/materials | Fortify police station. Contract: Tribal leader + Merchants | Provide training and advise | Establish outposts in city |

Enemy Counter Facilitators

| Pressure tribal leader to denounce MNF-I in meetings | Threaten to use photos taken with MNF-I to state he is puppet of infidels | Attack convoys w/SAF from village to invite MNF-I retaliation | Destroy electric lines, blame MNF-I | Attack clinic under construction | Hire technically skilled people for clinic | Put out that the vaccinations will make the people sterile | Attack tea shop | Threaten tea shop owner | Target TCP while passing out newspapers | Attack merchant who provides printing and materials for paper | Attack police station before station is fortified | Infiltrate police to kill MNF-I advisors | Attack micro-FOBs | Attack vehicles resupplying outposts |

FF COA (×15)

TCP: Traffic Control Point, SAF: Small Arms Fire, MNF-I: Multi-National Forces-Iraq

Figure 3. Friendly COIN COG analysis.

Whereas the former aims at denying the insurgent popular support, the latter helps identify the best COAs to draw the support of the population to the counterinsurgent, and thus the host-nation government. Using enemy operational goals and root causes to forecast how the enemy will react, it helps planners develop friendly initiatives. In friendly forces COIN COG analysis, planners must conduct COIN-specific war games based on the population and insurgency—conventional war gaming cannot predict insurgent actions. Figure 3 describes how a friendly forces COIN COG analysis might proceed.

Linking Bottom to Top

The understanding of the environment gained through COIN IPB benefits counterinsurgent operations on a number of levels. COIN COG analysis, once again as step 4 of COIN IPB, links bottom-up intelligence to enemy strategy to help commanders design operational concepts to counter enemy actions, mitigate the population's vulnerabilities, and make the people choose to support the host-nation government. Decentralized execution of COIN operations still requires that higher level commanders and staff coordinate efforts, cover seams and fill in gaps, and pass forecasts and assessments among operating areas. The analysis can help to accomplish these tasks as well.

Conclusion

As step 4 of IPB in a COIN environment, COG analysis is used to integrate our approach to operations. Undertaken from the perspective of the population and focused on the nature of the insurgency, it methodically builds detail at the lower levels and helps planners formulate CCIR that are truly crucial to achieving strategic goals. COIN COG analysis guides our identification of enemy initiatives and operations specific to an area. It—

● Highlights topics for discussion with community leaders, which in turn can produce information concerning the uniqueness and diversity of the population.

● Helps identify unofficial community leaders and their capabilities rather than simply identifying structures and features.

● Uncovers who the enemy's recruiters/mouthpieces are, where they operate, and how they interact with the population.

● Helps planners form tactical courses of action that can draw the enemy out and make him more visible.

● Identifies economic, social, and political reform projects for each community and provides insight about which local leaders to talk to and what we should talk to them about in order to further government initiatives.

● Underlines the links between insurgents, criminal organizations, and local support.

● Promotes interoperability between U.S./coalition military/political efforts and host-nation government elements, as this cooperation is necessary for the method to work.

COIN COG analysis stands in contrast to the "carrot and stick" approach, which focuses on short-term solutions to long-term issues and actually provides incentives for future violence.[5] COIN COG analysis maximizes resources, synergizes the staff, and improves interoperability. It provides specific messages tailored to the people's unique concerns through ways they normally communicate. Examining the COIN problem through the population and enemy perspectives, it enables the counterinsurgent to tailor resources to each specific area, and in a balanced and measured fashion.

Critically, by conducting COIN COG analysis within COIN IPB, we use the enemy's LOOs to shape our campaign to control the population and gain its support. To get in front of the enemy's decision cycle, we must understand how he plans on pursuing his operational goals. If we only think tactically (e.g., counterguerrilla operations), we will be forced into a reactive way of doing business (e.g., passing tactics, techniques, and procedures back and forth; doing pattern analysis; pursuing insurgents in their base areas). Looking across the spectrum of the enemy's operational goals and understanding his relationship to the people and his attempts to exploit them enables commanders to build proactive short-, medium-, and long-term counterinsurgency plans. This of course includes counterguerrilla operations, but only as part of the process and in the proper context.

COIN COG analysis is the comprehensive approach military forces and other government agencies need to take to operate effectively in an extremely challenging environment that typically takes years to understand. It "squares the circle" and facilitates the transition from descriptive COIN doctrine to prescriptive guidance. Currently, COIN COG analysis is taught to brigade combat teams on the road to deployment, is part of the curriculum at the COIN Center for Excellence in Iraq, and is among regular lecture topics at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. It has also been shared with training centers, allied militaries, and curriculum developers for various professional military education programs. COIN COG analysis may not be a silver bullet, but it is a useful tool, one developed in the field to help overcome the challenges of the unconventional environment we find ourselves operating in today. **MR**

NOTES

1. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and eds. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 595-96.

2. Field Manual (FM) 90-8, *Counterguerrilla Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO] August 1986), Section II, 1-4.

3. The COIN campaigner should also take care not to pigeon-hole the insurgent group according to some historical precedent it seems to be following. Insurgents might begin with or borrow from one or more specific doctrinal models or theories (e.g., those of Mao Tse-Tung, Che Guevara, Abd el-Krim, Carlos Marighella, Frantz Fanon), but in time they will evolve into whole new manifestations of insurgency.

4. FM 3-07, *Stability and Support Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, February 2003), A-2.

5. The carrot and stick approach, whereby a commander offers an insurgent or community leader an incentive (say, a well for his village) in exchange for neutrality or support (e.g., not allowing insurgents to fire mortars from his village into a coalition operating base) can actually invite violence: the leader might figure that once he gets his well, another outbreak of insurgent mortar fire might yield an irrigation project, more kilowatts, or a new school. Coalition unit rotations that neglect good battle handover are particular targets for such stratagems.

For additional information about COIN IPB and COG analysis, or to request software, class plans, and graphics for use in COIN IPB (including COIN COG analysis), visit the USA/USMC COIN Center website at https://coin.army.mil (This is a secure site.) Those using the process and wanting feedback on their analysis can contact Major Mark Ulrich (mark.ulrich@conus.army.mil) for a SIPR address. Those without secure access who desire further information, other tools, perspectives, briefings, workshops, and training programs can contact the USA/USMC COIN Center at 913-758-3157 or via email (mark.ulrich@conus.army.mil).
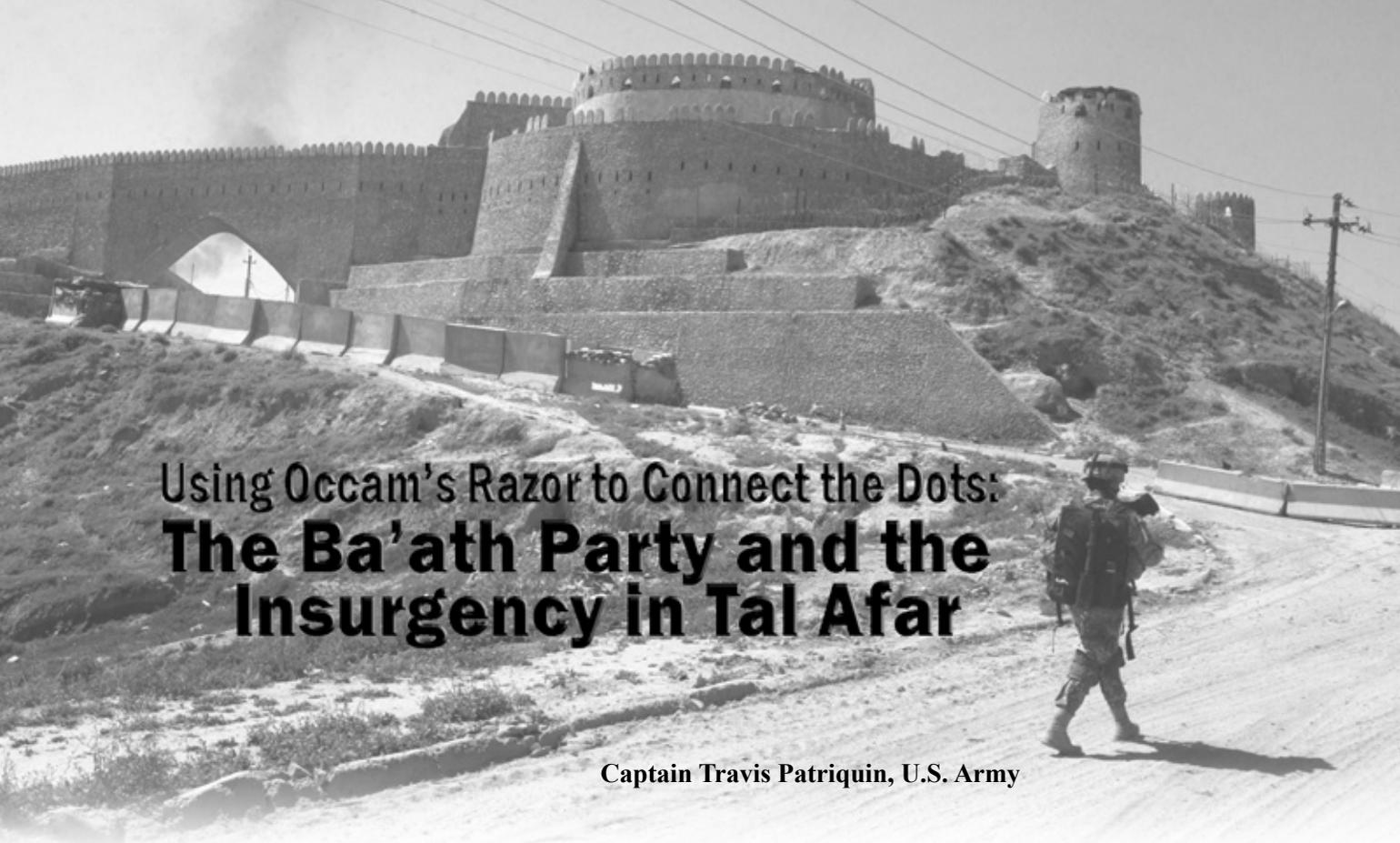
Using Occam's Razor to Connect the Dots:
The Ba'ath Party and the Insurgency in Tal Afar

Captain Travis Patriquin, U.S. Army

Occam's Razor is a rule in science and philosophy stating that entities should not be multiplied need-lessly. It is interpreted to mean that the simplest of two or more competing theories is preferable, and that an explanation for unknown phenomena should first be attempted in terms of what is already known. In other words—the simplest explanation is most likely the best.

I N AN ERA that appreciates the power of statistical probabilities, Occam's Razor is especially useful when access to all the facts necessary to arrive at absolute certainty is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. The problem at hand to which we might apply the principle involves discerning the most significant factors from among the many complex elements fueling the insurgency in Tal Afar, Iraq, and elsewhere in the country. The rational conclusions derived may seem glaringly obvious to some, but a sudden epiphany or even a total surprise to others.

The Turkoman of Tal Afar

A good way to begin to apply Occam's Razor to the situation in Tal Afar is to examine the city's history and demographic distribution from the perspective of city planning. Such an examination exposes compelling clues about the underlying nature of the insurgency there and points to the most likely leaders of the opposition to the coalition and the Iraqi government.

Ethnic background. We start by observing that the population of Tal Afar has historically been virtually 100 percent ethnic Turkoman—not Arab.[1] The Turkoman people first arrived in Iraq through successive waves of migration accompanying invading Turkic armies. They established themselves in permanent communities that became insular, xenophobic enclaves. A

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PHOTO: A Soldier from TF 2-37 AR approaches the 14th-century Ottoman Castle in old Tal Afar. (DOD)

general suspicion of outsiders continues today: a city of at least 250,000 people, Tal Afar has never had a hotel and has no current plans to build one. Turkoman distrust of "uninvited guests" is indicative of a closely knit culture that neither desires nor welcomes outside interference.

In contrast to the more restive and predominantly Arab groups elsewhere in Iraq, Tal Afar's Turkoman population had, until relatively recently, a long history of comparatively peaceful relations despite sectarian divisions. This was mainly because they saw themselves as kinsmen within an ethnic group defined primarily by origin and language, not by affiliation with any religious sect. As a result, for over 1,300 years, millions of Turkoman Sunnis, Shi'ites, and Assyrian-Christians lived side by side in relative peace, frequently marrying across sectarian lines and, as a group, remaining relatively united politically against those perceived as outsiders. Occam's Razor therefore allows us to eliminate ethnic or religious friction as the principal cause of the ongoing conflict in Tal Afar. It leads us to conclude that the insurgency must have somehow been triggered by other—outside—motives or actions.

The Turkoman and outside influence. The mistake that most would-be occupiers have made in dealing with the Turkoman was to marginalize them on one hand while on the other leaving them enough autonomy to avoid assimilation. As a result, a resilient sense of Turkoman ethnic identity not only emerged, but intensified over time.

Starting with the British Mandate of 1921, colonial administrators went about carving up Middle Eastern lands to accord with schemes involving great-power spheres of influence. They created a host of arbitrarily drawn nation-states, mainly to keep emerging Middle Eastern entities docile and dependent on their former colonial masters. Turkoman enclaves, however, were clearly viewed as incidental to great-power politics, and so the British showed little regret when expediency dictated ceding control of Turkomani regions to the Ottoman Empire. In a similar vein after World War I, the British, having gained nominal rule over territory in which Turkoman enclaves survived, did little to help the Turkoman satisfy their independent ethnic aspirations.

One consequence of this policy was that Iraq's Turkoman population frequently and ferociously fought the British to expel them from what they regarded as a hereditary Turkoman homeland. They fought as a generally unified ethnic front, heedless of sectarian religious differences.

Ba'athist Co-optation

Following the departure of the British, the Turkoman enjoyed a brief period of relative regional autonomy that lasted until the rise of the Ba'athist Party under Saddam Hussein. In contrast to the former colonial powers, Saddam's regime took severe measures to extinguish minority identity in Iraq. In their attempts to stamp out non-Arab differences in the name of a unified Iraq, the Ba'athists sought to absorb the Turkoman into Iraqi society.

As coalition partners now know well, Saddam's Ba'ath Party, for better or worse, became the unifying sociopolitical force that held Iraq together. Ba'athism was an unswervingly secular movement. Ruling with an iron grip for several decades until Saddam's overthrow in 2003, the Ba'athists brutally oppressed sectarian religious parties to prevent them from blocking the creation of a single Iraqi national identity. The Ba'athists maintained overall control of the population through a combination of policies that promoted fierce loyalty among party members while instilling terror in all who opposed them. Ba'athists manifested their loyalty to the party by performing without question ruthless and horrific acts aimed at keeping the party in power.

The fanatic loyalty of Ba'athist members was coupled with an incredibly diverse and efficient internal intelligence network that spied on every sector of Iraqi society. Together they created a society in which state-sanctioned acts of murder and intimidation aimed at eliminating internal political opposition became commonplace. The end result was a Ba'ath Party habituated to using domestic terror as a "legitimate" tool of governance, and a traumatized Iraqi public with deep and lasting psychological scars that remain as barriers to trust and faith in any central government today.

So deeply seated was the general public's fear of the party and its reprisals that there is no serious challenge to the proposition that, had the coalition not intervened in Iraqi affairs, the Ba'athists would still be firmly in charge today. In fact, many Iraqis believe the party would rapidly and mercilessly emerge to resume power if the coalition were to leave Iraq tomorrow.

Although the Ba'athists were widely loathed and feared, they were also envied in many quarters, mostly because of the power and privileges they enjoyed. Thus, one effective way to reduce the influence of ethnic minority identity was to recruit members of ethnic minority groups into the party via service in the Iraqi Army, and then co-opt those with the most promise by offering them economic opportunities, special status and privileges, and the ability to participate in administering coercive power. Under this policy, many soldiers recruited from the Turkoman population became ardent Ba'athists and supporters of Saddam's government.

The policy helped develop a loyal cadre of grassroots party members of diverse ethnic origin. These adherents were used to neutralize political and ethnic enclaves like the Turkoman. To hedge his bet, Saddam did not go so far as to promote minority Iraqi soldiers to high responsibility on the basis of merit—promotion to high rank in the military was reserved for those who were most politically reliable and had specific reasons for showing extreme loyalty to Saddam personally, such as being a close family or clan member. Nevertheless, despite these discriminatory practices, the Turkoman proved that they were very good soldiers and loyal to the regime. They often ended up in highly sensitive units, frequently serving as technical specialists for handling special weapons or for collecting internal intelligence.

To help motivate soldiers like the Turkoman and to ensure their loyalty, Saddam put in place an extended system of perks and privileges for those who had served the government faithfully. One of these perks was the right to live in specially built, Ba'athist-only communities equipped with amenities and privileges (e.g., priority for power and water service) not accessible to common Iraqis. That such privileges might arouse the ire of other Iraqis was unimportant to Saddam; in fact, the internal animosity and jealousy created may have been viewed as a positive benefit, since any chance to sow division among potentially rebellious ethnic groups would have been viewed as desirable.

In what amounted to resettlement schemes, many loyal Turkoman Ba'athist soldiers were rewarded upon retirement with land grants or given the right to purchase land cheaply, so that they might establish such communities. These settlements were strategically located among populations of suspect loyalty. Tal Afar was the site of one such Turkoman resettlement.

Ethnic Strife via City Planning

In applying Occam's Razor to the situation in Tal Afar, it is important to understand that Ba'athist policies divided the city, effectively pitting the north against the south. Tal Afar had been a significant urban center since the early Ottoman Empire. The pattern of construction and physical layout of the southern and eastern areas of town continues to reflect the priorities of a medieval city's political and community concerns. The city center is a communal gathering place with wells (harkening back to a time before running water was piped to individual houses), a marketplace, and houses of worship. The streets through this area are narrow and difficult to negotiate with modern vehicles. They are easily congested. Freedom of movement is also limited because the streets were originally laid out not to aid movement, but to channel potential enemies into vulnerable locations. Today, not only the physical layout in south and east Tal Afar, but also the demographic tendencies engendered by current city planning, reflect medieval patterns of family associations, tribal law, and social traditions.

By contrast, the northern part of the city is characterized by more or less modern city planning and a cosmopolitan sense of secularism reflected widely in the attitudes and habits of its relatively new settlers—the loyalist NCO retirees of Saddam's army. The vast majority of these men were Turkoman, and after the end of the ill-fated invasion of Kuwait, they represented more than half of the military-age males in north Tal Afar—approximately 20,000 men.

The location of the new Ba'ath Turkoman community in the north was not selected arbitrarily; it was purposely situated to increase Ba'athist presence, influence, and control in key areas where loyalty to the central government was suspect. It was no accident that a community of Ba'athists of proven loyalty, consisting mainly of highly skilled military technicians who could be readily mobilized, was built on key terrain overlooking the vital Mosul-Sinjar Highway.

The Ba'athist neighborhoods of Hai al Sa'ad, Qadisiyah, and Hai al Bouri have central plumbing, square blocks, and wide streets built to accommodate motor vehicles. Unlike neighborhoods in south

Wide streets, good wiring, and plumbing mark Tal Afar's northern "retirement communities." U.S. Army Soldiers from the 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, on a combat patrol in Tal Afar, Iraq, on 9 April 2006.

The southern, predominantly Shi'a section of town remains crowded and unimproved. 1st Armored Division Soldier SPC Anthony Bouley conducts a combat patrol in Tal Afar, Iraq, on 13 February 2005.

Tal Afar, they are ethnically diverse, with a mix of religious persuasions and secularist viewpoints. Thus, for reasons both ancient and modern, the more contemporary and secularist population of north Tal Afar is at odds on many different levels with the population of south Tal Afar, which remains dominated by traditional tribal and religious relationships rooted in older traditions. Clearly, Saddam's policies effectively split Tal Afar both physically and spiritually, giving him the ability, if he needed it, to convert the north's residents into networks of Ba'athist agents for the purpose of armed insurgency and terrorism.

Instigating Sectarian Strife

In apparent accord with other state policies aimed at broadening and deepening ethnic and religious divisions, Sunni imams began arriving in Tal Afar in 1988, not long after the Ba'athist Party had established its retirement community in the north.[2] These imams began to have considerable success in spreading extreme Wahhabi and Takfiri versions of Islamic beliefs, both of which are intolerant of the values and beliefs not only of Westerners, but of Shi'a Islam as well.

Owing to the tight control that Saddam exercised over every aspect of Iraqi life, such potentially divisive activity had to have been sanctioned in some way by the government itself. The social and political fractures engendered by Wahhabi zealots dovetailed so well with Saddam's overall divide-and-conquer tactics that coincidence seems out of the question. The imams' actions would have been especially attractive to Saddam since they served to stoke suspicion primarily against the Shi'a, a group the dictator personally loathed and had long considered to be a potential fourth column for Iran.

In the face of such a dramatic reversal of the former conditions of religious balance and tolerance among the Turkoman in Tal Afar, most Shi'a continued to attend their own mosques. Meanwhile, the majority of the Sunni population in the city's northern neighborhoods responded to the fiery message of the Wahhabi zealots and began to act with animosity toward the Shi'a. Not surprisingly, serious sectarian tensions and divisions emerged where none had existed before. Today, the legacy of tensions between Tal Afar's Shi'a and Sunni communities continues to exacerbate the political and social discord that prevails in the city.

The Insurgents Unmasked

Looking back at the conscious creation of north Tal Afar and other areas in Iraq as bastions of Ba'athist/Sunni loyalty, it is somewhat surprising that in the aftermath of Saddam's overthrow in 2003, various coalition leaders expressed astonishment, confusion, and even denial over how quickly a fairly well organized insurgency emerged. Some coalition figures still refuse to acknowledge the obvious, and assert instead that the insurgency is in the main a terrorist conspiracy fueled by foreigners working for Osama bin Laden. The major problem with this assertion is that very few of the insurgents captured or killed have been foreigners. Outsiders are certainly playing a role, especially as suicide bombers, but hardly in the numbers one would expect if they were to be regarded as the driving force of the insurgency.

Other coalition leaders claim that the insurgency is mainly the result of support from Iran through a network of Shi'a contacts. This theory, too, is flawed. Although Iraqi Shi'a militias are only too glad to accept help from anyone offering it, for the most part the Iraqi Shi'a have little love either for Iran or the Iranians' fundamentalist brand of Shi'ism. Even more problematic is that the Shi'a appear to be the insurgents' main target. The vast

> Three days after he arrived in Iraq, Bremer dispatched an aide to Jay Garner's office with a copy of the de-Baathification policy....
>
> Garner read it. *Holy Christ*, he thought to himself. *We can't do this.*
>
> He contacted the CIA station chief and asked him to meet him in front of Bremer's office right away. As Garner walked down the hall to the viceroy's suite, he ran into one of the State Department ambassadors and explained what was happening.
>
> "We've got to put a stop to this one," Garner said. "It's too hard, too harsh."
>
> Garner and the station chief barged into Bremer's office.
>
> "Jerry, this is too harsh," Garner said. "Let's get Rumsfeld on the phone and see if we can't soften it."
>
> "Absolutely not," Bremer said. "I'm going to issue this today."
>
> Garner asked the station chief what would happen if the order were issued.
>
> "You're going to drive fifty thousand Baathists underground before nightfall," he said. "Don't do this."[3]
>
> —Rajiv Chandrassekaran, *Imperial Life in the Emerald City*

majority of civilian casualties since 2003 have been Shi'a. This would seem to eliminate them from being the principal force behind the insurgency.

Why the identity and motivation of the insurgents should be regarded as such a mystery by some, given what we know about the history of Tal Afar under Saddam, is itself a kind of mystery. Nevertheless, many in the coalition still wonder aloud who the insurgents are, how they are able to coordinate their campaign, and how many of them there are, especially since the insurgency has proven to be virtually impenetrable to coalition infiltration efforts. Although it may be convenient to blame the rise in violence following the collapse of Saddam's regime solely on foreign fighters or on meddling by Iran, to do so is to overlook the simplest, most logical explanation, at least as far as Tal Afar is concerned—that the insurgency is being conducted through a deeply entrenched network of Ba'athists who are still connected via positions of authority and privilege held long before the coalition invaded. This network would logically include a large number of Ba'athists who show an outwardly benign, even cooperative face to the occupying forces, enabling them to move about openly in public. Thus, questions about the insurgents' identity and manpower can be answered simply by counting the number of Ba'athists who used to have power in each region prior to Saddam's overthrow, then subtracting the number of former Ba'athists who have proven themselves to be pro-government. This should give anyone a good estimate of the size of the insurgent force, including its supporters.

Unfortunately, this easiest explanation leads to a politically ominous conclusion: the insurgency numbers not in the thousands or tens of thousands, but in the hundreds of thousands, even though only a relatively small number might actually be engaged in fighting at any one time. Applying this logic in Tal Afar, we are probably looking at over 20,000 former Ba'athists involved in supporting the insurgency in some way, shape, or form.

Writer Scott Taylor provides support for this conclusion in a

first-hand account of his captivity during Operation Black Typhoon. Taylor describes the resistance in Tal Afar as "purely Turkoman" and notes that his first encounter with a foreign fighter was when Ansar al Islam handed him over to an Arab terrorist in Mosul.[4] Colonel H.R. McMaster, commander of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR) in Tal Afar during Operation Restoring Rights, seems to second Taylor's observation. According to McMaster, the vast majority of fighters captured during Restoring Rights were Iraqis, not foreigners.[5] It is also hardly coincidental that such foreign fighters as there are enter Iraq mainly from the last Ba'athist country in the world, Syria, which had many unofficial and familial ties to Iraq's Ba'ath regime prior to Saddam's ouster, and to where many of Saddam's supporters have fled.[6] Furthermore, a host of influential Tal Afaris who had close ties to the deposed regime still travel relatively freely between the city and Syria to those very areas that continue to supply foreign fighters and suicide bombers.

Thus, although there is no doubt that foreign fighters have provided many of the foot soldiers (and a lot of the cannon fodder) for the insurgency, a reasonable person who looks at things broadly and from the perspective of prior history will arrive at a simple conclusion: a network of Ba'athists established long before the 2003 overthrow of the regime is clearly active, and it enjoys widespread popular support in key areas of Tal Afar.

Strong secondary evidence supports this contention. When foreign fighters turn up in the insurgency,

A U.S. Army M1 Abrams tank from the 1st Armored Division conducts a combat patrol in Tal Afar, Iraq, on 27 February 2005.

they often appear as suicide bombers. Several U.S. commanders have likened these bombers to "human cruise missiles."[7] Actually, they are more like laser-guided bombs, directed to their targets by someone on the ground who has done reconnaissance, figured out where the bomber might have maximum effect, and then taken pains to smuggle the bomber into Iraq, arm him, and direct him to the attack site. Without that ground support, each individual suicide bomber would have a difficult time becoming a significant threat. Which, then, should we regard as the more important component of such a threat, the foreign suicide bomber, or the insurgent network that devises the campaign for employing him and facilitates his attack? Peeling problems back to their essentials, Occam's Razor suggests that it is the local Iraqi insurgent—the plan synchronizer, bomb maker, attack coordinator, and propagandist—who is the actual center of gravity in the suicide bomber scenario. In Tal Afar, the principal threat is the former Ba'athist Turkoman put in place by Saddam long before the current war began.

In summary, a long history of ethnic resistance and cross-border smuggling, combined with Ba'athist resettlement policies and measures of control prior to 2003, provided the social dynamics, cadre, and physical infrastructure conducive to organizing resistance to the occupation. In the chaos following the regime's fall, Saddam's agents could easily have exploited the status quo in Tal Afar to establish and fund covert networks of loyal intelligence operators who would then organize resistance fighter cells. Organizational efforts would no doubt have included gathering weapons caches, establishing networked contacts to aid insurgent movement and activity, giving instructions and assistance to foreign volunteers, funding public relations efforts to sow discontent, and training others in the art of insurgency.

The above hypothesis jibes with the chronology of the insurgency in Tal Afar as related to me personally by a 30-year-old Sunni male resident of the city. This man stated that in late 2003 and early 2004, the first foreign fighters started to arrive in Tal Afar from across the nearby border with Syria and from other areas in Iraq, which they had had to flee. Welcomed and housed primarily in the Sunni neighborhoods, these fighters described themselves as *mujahadeen* and bragged in the local mosques and streets that they had come to fight the "invaders."

They could not have arrived en masse uninvited and unassisted.

My contact also stated that the town leaders were primarily responsible for giving the foreigners the go-ahead to commence operations. Among those operations were activities aimed at intimidating Shi'ite families into fleeing from specific areas in northern parts of the city. The foreign fighters would then occupy many of the former households to gain control of key routes and ground, which they would exploit in future actions. At the same time, the insurgency initiated targeted assassinations and other terror attacks. One of the first citizens of Tal Afar killed in a terrorist attack was a Sunni contractor working with the United States who was murdered because he was getting "too rich." Another early casualty was Sheik Dakhil, of the Marhat clan. Significantly, his position was quickly filled by one Mullah Marhat, an individual of murky and suspect background.

Marhat entered the scene under a cloud of suspicion. As a rule, coalition forces routinely investigate the background of individuals stepping forward to assume public office. They interview would-be leaders and do background checks, especially with regard to previous military service in Saddam's army. Experience shows that most Iraqis are glad, even proud, to describe what they did in the army. Marhat, however, was very reluctant to discuss his background or his military service. Moreover, despite a three-year search, coalition forces found no official record of his former activities. He was later arrested on accusations of being a Ba'athist operative. Interestingly, immediately following his arrest, Tal Afar experienced a sudden and precipitous decline in violent insurgent activity.

The Marhat case ended successfully for the coalition, but it demonstrates a technique on the rise among the predominantly Ba'athist insurgency: the murder of certain prominent Sunni leaders clears the way for former Ba'athists to assume key leadership positions in Tal Afar's government, business sector, and tribes.

Coalition Mistakes with Iraqi Leaders

The coalition's experience with Mullah Marhat highlights a potential vulnerability in its approach to situations like those found in Tal Afar. This key vulnerability stems from a typically American overeagerness

Military officers meet with city officials in Tal Afar.

to make friends in the local community and to quickly establish a cooperative working relationship with locals. U.S. units initially engaged with anyone calling himself a sheik. Unfortunately, it now appears that they were frequently duped by persons who took advantage of U.S. ignorance of the Turkoman community generally, and of Tal Afar specifically, to successfully pass themselves off as sheiks.

Our naive and clumsy approach to community relations was particularly apparent in our initial dealings with the Marhat and Jolaq tribes, formerly relatively minor entities within the hierarchy of regional tribal-clan affiliations in and around Tal Afar. Ill-conceived coalition engagement with the sheiks of these groups, such as buying weapons from them or delivering food to them, proved to be a strategic error. Arbitrary as they were and undertaken without considering the impact such intercourse might have on the entire local situation, these acts were interpreted as favoritism aimed at undermining the prestige and authority of other, traditionally dominant, tribal groups. As a result, we angered and alienated groups that could have acted as key agents in working with the coalition to stop insurgent elements and establish stability in the community.

We also empowered many supposed sheiks who were more interested in personal gain than in aiding their fellow Iraqis. The paucity of real progress in tamping down the insurgency and rebuilding parts of Tal Afar revealed that these unscrupulous men had no influence to guarantee compliance with the law and no ability to provide accurate information on insurgents in our area of responsibility. For example, we engaged with one Sheik Mullah because we had

heard through the indigenous grapevine about his great concern for his people's safety and the economy. When we examined his activities closely, however, we discovered that he was primarily involved in reconstruction contracts for personal gain and empowerment.

Such activity is especially pernicious since resources diverted from helping the Iraqi people build their economy frequently find their way not only into the pockets of greedy men, but into the hands of insurgents themselves. It is well known that insurgents attempt to obtain money from coalition forces for supposedly legitimate ends and then use the money to fund their activities.

To uncover and counter such practices, Occam's Razor should be ruthlessly employed by enforcing an audit trail of the money paid to current sheiks. Failure to account for significant sums of money, or to produce the quality or quantity of products called for in a contract, are strong indicators that funds are being skimmed or pocketed for later use by insurgents. Another simple analytical tool might be to correlate the visits a sheik makes to Syria with the incidents of terrorist attacks upon his return to Tal Afar.

Unfortunately, hasty engagement with the lesser or even spurious sheiks continued for some time and contributed to increasing dissension and insurgent activity in the Turkoman community. Eventually, Shi'ite leaders felt compelled to call upon the Ministry of the Interior to send forces from Baghdad. In an effort to maintain their power, the Sunnis in turn called for foreign fighters, and this precipitated a surge of violence.

The upshot was a conflict between Turkoman Shi'ites who rallied around the Jolaq sheiks and their American supporters, and Sunni (Ba'athist) insurgents who initiated a wave of attacks that successfully, albeit temporarily, gained control of the northern part of the city. Although the foreign fighters were chased out of Tal Afar during Operation Black Typhoon in 2004, they later returned unmolested when U.S. forces left the city proper.

The speed and ease of the insurgents' return speaks volumes about the quality and source of inside information they clearly were being provided by local

supporters. Not surprisingly, the mayor and chief of police, both former Ba'athists, did nothing to stop the return of the insurgent fighters, who once again plunged the city into chaos. Thereafter, the stream of foreign combatants increased until the 3d ACR arrived in Tal Afar and began Operation Restoring Rights in August of 2005. However, even though the 3d ACR completely encircled the fighters, many of the latter simply disappeared from Tal Afar. This could not have happened without significant assistance from residents and the prior preparation of escape routes.[8] Clearly, the insurgents had a lot of indigenous support, much of it not apparent to outside observers.

In the final analysis, anyone applying Occam's Razor to the situation must conclude that the insurgents could not have moved in and out of the areas around Tal Afar without widespread assistance from persons well-versed in arms cache techniques, and without a functioning intelligence network manned by those with intimate knowledge of the area's geography. It is likely, too, that a large number of the insurgents were not foreigners at all, but members of the local population who could ditch their weapons and melt easily back into the general population.

The Razor and Cultural Awareness

During the 3d ACR's ensuing civil-military operations, many supposed sheiks and other figures came forward claiming to control key areas of the northern part of town. This was especially interesting—and suspect—because up until that time, most residents of northern Tal Afar had openly derided tribalism and its tradition of sheikdom, and no sheiks were known to have existed in the north.

However, investigation revealed that many residents of Tal Afar's northern neighborhoods had close ties to relatives living in the older, southern part of Tal Afar, where the city's traditional sheiks resided. These sheiks were usually modest men who willingly sheltered their relatives and friends fleeing the sectarian violence in the northern part of the city.

Originally, the identity of many of these sheiks was kept from coalition forces, but after evaluating the probable influence of the Ba'athist program of "Arabization" on Turkmenian cities, we concluded that tribes with Arabized names in north Tal Afar were, in fact, connected to tribes in the south with which the coalition had already developed a relation-

ship. We discovered, for example, that "Hawday," a name prominent in the north, was an Arabized version of Jarjary, the name of a tribe in the south. The north Tal Afar Jarjarys had had to Arabize their name when they entered the army, to accord with Saddam's policy of forced assimilation. Thereafter, whenever we wanted information on members of the Hawday tribe, we went into south Tal Afar to the neighborhood of the Jarjarys. Understanding this imposed cultural anomaly assisted us in engaging sheiks and concerned citizens, who later helped us ferret out hostile Hawday tribal members.

Conclusions

Despite some officials' wishful thinking, a significant portion of Iraqis do not want democracy. For them, the conflict is driven mainly by Ba'athist loyalists who want some measure of power back without the limiting shackles of the democratic process. Any solution we formulate to the current insurgency must take this into account. We must acknowledge that the predominantly Sunni Ba'ath party is playing a major role in directing the insurgency, and then make our plans accordingly.

In Tal Afar, this is certainly true. Our enemy there consists mainly of Ba'ath party members who were trained as Saddam's soldiers and are prepared to wage war until they regain some measure of the status they lost. Ethnic and sectarian religious strife is certainly complicating the picture, but the insurgency is being fought primarily by former Ba'athists. After fading into the background, these men stimulated disaffection and division in Iraq for their own purposes. It is more out of expediency than religious conviction that they have adopted "Allah Hu Akbar" as their current battle cry instead of "Saddam, Saddam."

If the problem in Tal Afar is essentially the product of an increasingly well-organized network of residual Ba'athist members operating in cooperation with Iraqi Ba'athists currently living in Syria and elsewhere, the way ahead seems clear: formulate a solution that will satisfy their aspirations, perhaps by giving them a share of power, while also taking effective action to deconstruct their network.

Occam's Razor would suggest that engaging the insurgents and supporters in north Tal Afar through the real sheiks who control Sunni families in the south part of the city is the simplest and

most feasible way to defeat the insurgency. Dealing realistically with these leaders will be more productive than our current practice of engaging a handful of sheiks whose names were passed on to us by previous units.

We must also embrace the concept of amnesty for those who are willing to come in out of the cold, even for those who have killed coalition members. Insurgents who have no prospect of a job or a place in the new Iraqi society will have no reason to stop fighting; in fact, they will have every reason to continue. We will also benefit by engaging radical imams in a similar manner, if for no other reason than to gather intelligence on them and their followers.

Finally, the single-minded objective of such engagement must be to secure the Shi'ite population's safety and the Sunni population's compliance with the law. Joint meetings with Sunni and Shi'ite sheiks might help the Turkoman reunite, and the sooner this happens, the sooner law and order will be restored. Tal Afar's unrest has been the result of insiders trying to build a power base, not random acts by terrorists. Bringing in a key leader from Baghdad to unite the town, agree on blood money, and settle tribal disputes (some of which we unwittingly took part in) should be our next step. Another key move should be to identify former Ba'athists and individuals with prior military experience.

A close look at former Ba'athists may uncover surprises as well. It is reasonable to assume that at least a few Kurds and Shi'a had a role in Saddam's secular army. Are Shi'a and Kurds operating against us in Tal Afar today? We won't know until we vet the population for former Ba'athists.

Tal Afar could become a shining example, a working Iraqi democracy in miniature. But we must first use Occam's Razor, tempered with cultural understanding of the Turkoman, to adjust our course. Only non-sectarian engagement in which the coalition does not take sides will lead to the intelligence and operational breakthroughs necessary to stabilize Tal Afar. A substantially larger, more loyal Iraqi security force now exists in Tal Afar, and the town has a powerful and popular mayor, but the future threat to the city should not be understated. We cannot, in good faith, turn Tal Afar over to the Iraqi Security Forces until the coalition has stabilized the security situation. *MR*

NOTES

1. Helen Chapin Metz, *Iraq: A Country Study* (New York: Kessinger, 2004), 85. Metz is my primary source for the information about Turkoman history in this article.
2. Information obtained by personal interviews and debriefings conducted by the author in Tal Afar, 2006.
3. Rajiv Chandrassekaran, *Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf and Random House, 2006), 70-71.
4. Scott Taylor, *Among the Others: Encounters with the Forgotten Turkmen of Iraq* (Ottawa, Canada: Esprit de Corps Books, 2004), 208-228.
5. *Frontline* interview with Colonel H.R. McMaster, online at <www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/insurgency/interviews/mcmaster.html>.
6. Thanassis Cambanis, "Iraq's Ba'athists Rebound on Two Fronts," *Boston Globe*, 15 May 2005, <www.boston.com/news/world/middleeast/articles/2005/05/15/in_iraq_outlawed_baathists_rebound/>.
7. Author's personal experience.
8. 3d ACR Operation Restoring Rights after action review, regimental archives, Fort Hood, Texas.

CPT Travis Patriquin

As is the custom of *Military Review*, articles accepted for publication undergo careful editing, and usually a number of rewrites, in close consultation with the author to satisfy mutual concerns and to ensure professional standards of grammar and usage are observed. Correspondence on such issues is usually done through e-mail together with phone coordination when possible. In the case of the above article, the staff of *Military Review* corresponded with the author, who was forward deployed in Iraq, over a period of several months. The process was more than usually challenging because the author was only able to work on the article periodically, in between professional responsibilities. The proposed final draft of the article was sent to him via e-mail several times during the second week of December, but without a final approving response. On 11 December, the staff of *Military Review* was saddened to learn through press accounts that the author, Army CPT Travis Patriquin, had been killed in action as a result of an Improvised Explosive Device attack in Tikrit. CPT Patriquin was reportedly a hard working, extremely pleasant individual who had a penchant for lifting the spirits of his colleagues by telling humorous stories and seeing the bright side of dark situations. He also seems to have had a rare gift for languages, having acquired not only Arabic, but Spanish, Portuguese, and two Central American Indian dialects. He is survived by a devoted wife and three young children. We presume he would have approved the final draft of his article, published here.

Anatomy of a Successful COIN Operation:
OEF-PHILIPPINES
and
The Indirect Approach

Colonel Gregory Wilson, U.S. Army

Freedom, by its nature, must be chosen and defended by its citizens.

—President George W. Bush

Colonel Gregory Wilson, U.S. Army, recently completed an Army War College Fellowship in irregular warfare and counterterrorism with the Defense Analysis Department at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. He is currently serving as the operations director for Special Operations Command South in Homestead, Florida. COL Wilson holds a B.S. from the U.S. Military Academy and an M.S. from the Naval Postgraduate School, and is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He has served in various command and staff positions in the continental United States, Europe, and the Southern Philippines.

PHOTO: Marines deployed to the Southern Philippines as part of JSOTF-P live fire during force protection training, 2004. (DOD)

THE TERRORIST ATTACKS of 9/11 have ushered in a new era of counterinsurgency to deal with Al-Qaeda-linked insurgent and terrorist organizations. The U.S. military's initial success in Afghanistan, as impressive as it was, forced the enemy to adapt. To survive, Al-Qaeda has transformed itself into a flatter, more cellular organization that seeks to outsource much of its work.[1] Thus, insurgency has become an Al-Qaeda priority in terms of rhetoric, recruitment, and spending.[2] The connection between terrorism and insurgency is now well established, and in fact there is tremendous overlap between the two.[3]

The U.S. military, though, is struggling to adapt to protracted, insurgent-type warfare. America's affinity for high-tech conventional conflict and quick, kinetic, unilateral solutions that avoid contact with the local populace has slowed its response to this complex form of conflict.[4] How, then, can the U.S. military tailor a more efficient, more effective approach to future military efforts against Al-Qaeda-linked groups around the globe? Specifically, how can the U.S. military implement a sustainable, low-visibility approach that is politically acceptable to our current and future partners, and that can help change the moderate Muslim community's perception of U.S. operations in the War on Terrorism (WOT)?

The history of insurgent conflict during the Philippines Insurrection (1899-1902), Malayan Emergency (1948-1960), and Hukbalahap Rebellion (1946-1954) shows that successful COIN operations are protracted efforts that rely heavily on indigenous security forces.[5] Therefore, the U.S. WOT strategy should emphasize working indirectly "through, by, and with" indigenous forces and building their capacity to conduct effective operations against common enemies.

The Unilateral Approach

As free societies gain ground around the world, the U.S. military is going to be increasingly restricted in terms of how it operates. An age of democracy means an

**Southern Philippines—
Joint Operations Area**

age of frustratingly narrow rules of engagement. That is because fledgling democratic governments, besieged by young and aggressive local media, will find it politically difficult—if not impossible—to allow American troops on their soil to engage in direct action.

—Robert Kaplan[6]

The current COIN campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq have demonstrated that unilateral U.S. military operations can be ineffective and even counterproductive to the democratic institutions we are trying to establish. To reduce our footprint in Iraq, our top priority now is to stand up Iraqi security forces to take over the fight against insurgents. These forces must prevail if Iraq is to achieve and maintain long-term stability.

A large foreign military presence or occupation force in any country undermines the legitimacy of the host-nation government in the eyes of its citizens and the international community. As we now know, large U.S. occupation forces in Islamic regions can create problems for us. A senior British military officer who served in Iraq has remarked that the U.S. Army there has acted much like "fuel on a smoldering fire"; he suggests that this is "as much owing to their presence as their actions."[7] If he is right and our mere presence can be counterproductive, then a tailored, low-visibility approach that plays well in the moderate Muslim community and is politically acceptable to our potential WOT partners makes sound strategic sense.

Blowback

Osama bin Laden has made the presence of U.S. forces in the Middle East a rallying point for global jihad by a new generation of Muslim holy warriors.[8] Just as the war in Afghanistan against the Soviets created the leaders of today's global terrorist network, so Iraq has the potential to produce far more dangerous second- and third-order effects. Blowback from the current war in Iraq might be even more dangerous than the fallout from Afghanistan.

Fighters in Iraq are more battle-hardened than the Arabs who fought demoralized Soviet Army conscripts in Afghanistan. They are testing themselves against arguably the best army in history and acquiring skills far more useful for future terrorist operations than those their counterparts learned during the 1980s. Mastering how to make improvised explosive devices or conduct suicide operations is more relevant to urban terrorism than the conventional guerrilla tactics the *mujahideen* used against the Red Army. U.S. military commanders say that today's militants in Afghanistan have adopted techniques perfected in Iraq.[9]

The transfer of these deadly skills to Al-Qaeda-linked insurgencies presents a clear and present danger. The world has already seen bomb-making skills migrate with deadly results from the Indonesian-based Jemaah Islamiyya to the Abu Sayyaf Group in Manila and throughout the Southern Philippines.[10] Other countries with Al-Qaeda-linked insurgencies include Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, and India.[11] Developing indigenous capacity to confront this emerging threat will become increasingly important to future WOT efforts.

The Southern Philippines

The Southern Philippines is typical of areas that are ripe for Al-Qaeda influence. It is located along ethnic, cultural, and religious fault-lines in a region that has been only loosely controlled or governed throughout its long history of occupation.[12] The area is home to a discontented Muslim population dominated by a predominately Catholic government based in Manila. Approximately 5 million Muslims live in 5 of the poorest provinces of the Philippines, in Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago. In these provinces, the majority of the population has an income well below the poverty line.

These regions are what Sean Anderson calls "grey areas"—"ungovernable areas in developing nations over which unstable, weak national governments have

nominal control but which afford criminal syndicates or terrorists and insurgent groups excellent bases of operation from which they can conduct far reaching operations against other targeted nations."[13]

Philippine "grey areas" are notorious for civil unrest, lawlessness, terrorist activity, and Muslim separatist movements. They are home or safe haven for several Al-Qaeda-linked organizations, including the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), Abu Sayyaf, and the Indonesia-based Jemaah Islamiyya. The core leaders of many of these groups received their initial training in the camps of Afghanistan and their baptism of fire in the jihad against the Soviets in Afghanistan.[14] Al-Qaeda did not originate these movements, but it has used them as vehicles to expand its global reach and spread its extremist ideology.[15]

The United States became interested in the Southern Philippines shortly before 9/11, after Abu Sayyaf kidnapped several U.S. citizens and held them hostage on their island stronghold of Basilan.[16] After 9/11, the region became a front line in the WOT when Washington and Manila set their sights on the group's destruction. Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines (OEF-P) officially began in early 2002 and is best known for Joint Task Force (JTF) 510's combined U.S.-Philippine operations on Basilan (Balikatan 02-1). Special Forces (SF) advisory efforts began in the Southern Philippines in 2002 and continue to this day.

The Diamond Model

The unconventional or indirect approach of working "by, with, and through" indigenous forces has remained consistent throughout OEF-P.[17] Led by Brigadier General Donald Wurster and Colonel David Fridovich, OEF-P planners created their guiding strategy using principles that can be found in Gordon McCormick's strategic COIN model, called the Diamond Model.[18] This model can help planners develop an effective holistic approach to cut off organizations like Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyya from their bases of popular support and to isolate, capture, or kill their members and leaders. The Philippine Government and its armed forces now call the application of principles found in the Diamond Model the "Basilan Model," after its successful use against Abu Sayyaf on Basilan in 2002.

The Diamond Model establishes a comprehensive framework for interactions between the host-nation government, the insurgents, the local populace, and international actors or sponsors (figure 1). The host-nation government's goal is to destroy the insurgents or limit their growth and influence to a manageable level. Their opponent's goal is to grow large enough to destroy the state's
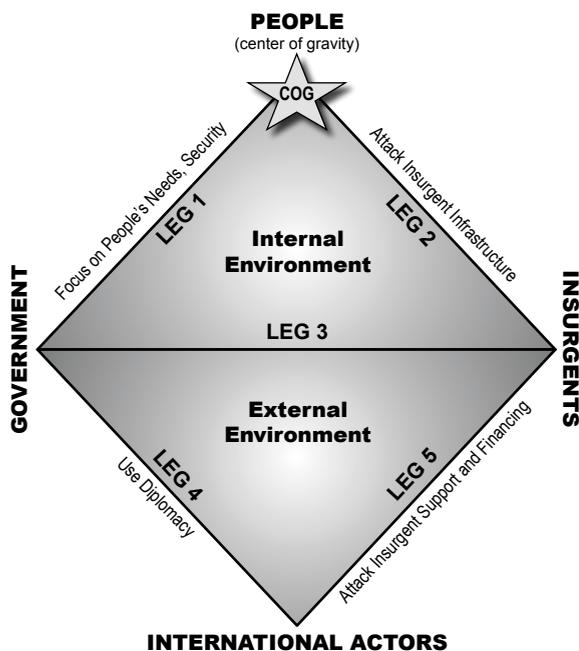
Principles of the Diamond Model

- Consider popular support the center of gravity
- Enhance government legitimacy and control
- Focus on people's needs and security
- Target insurgent safe havens, infrastructure, and support
- Share intelligence (esp. HUMINT)
- Develop indigenous security forces

Figure 1. McCormick's Diamond Model

control mechanisms and then either replace the existing government or force political concessions from it that achieve the group's objectives. Jemaah Islamiyya's and Abu Sayyaf's objectives were to create Islamic caliphates or states in the Southern Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia.[19]

To develop an effective counter-strategy, the state must first understand its advantages and disadvantages relative to the insurgents. With its armed forces and police, the state has a force advantage over the insurgents. On the other hand, the insurgents have a marked information advantage. Being dispersed and embedded in the local population, they are difficult to detect and target; additionally, they have visibility of the state's security apparatus and infrastructure and can easily target them. As McCormick asserts, "The winner of this contest will be the side that can most quickly resolve its disadvantage."[20]

The state's goal, then, should be to rectify its information disadvantage so it can effectively locate the insurgents and capture or kill them. The insurgent group's goal is to grow in strength and effectiveness so it can threaten the state's security apparatus and infrastructure before the state can overcome its information disadvantage. Time is typically on the side of the insurgents because they can often achieve their goals simply by surviving and exhausting government efforts and the national political will.

The Diamond Model can help establish the optimal strategy the state should pursue to rectify its information disadvantage and win the COIN fight. Legs 1 through 5 of the model depict the actions the counterinsurgent should take. In the case of legs 1 through 3, these actions should be sequential.[21] The upper half of the model addresses the state's internal environment. Because it suffers from an information disadvantage, the state must first pursue leg 1 to strengthen its influence and control over the local populace. McCormick defines control as "the ability to see everything in one's area of operation that might pose a threat to security and the ability to influence what is seen."[22] This level of visibility requires an extensive human intelligence network; it cannot be achieved by technological means. What military strategist John Paul Vann pointed out about U.S. counterinsurgency efforts in Vietnam is true today: "We need intelligence from the local civilians and soldiers from the area who understand the language, customs, and the dynamics of the local situation, who can easily point out strangers in the area even though they speak the same language."[23]

Gaining popular support is a zero-sum game. One side's loss is the other's gain, and vice versa. Strengthening ties with the local populace by focusing on their needs and security also denies or degrades insurgent influence over the people and leads to information that exposes the insurgent infrastructure. This allows the state to attack leg 2 with operations that disrupt the insurgent's control mechanisms over the people. These moves often lead to actionable intelligence, which the state can use to target the insurgency's infrastructure. Actionable intelligence gained by patiently pursuing efforts along legs 1 and 2 enables the state to identify and strike the insurgents along leg 3.

Military forces conducting COIN operations typically ignore legs 1 and 2 of the model and attempt to directly target their opponents. As the Vietnam war showed, this usually entails large-scale search-and-destroy operations that the insurgents easily avoid and that often produce collateral damage that alienates the people.[24] The state can defeat most insurgencies by operating effectively along legs 1 through 3, in that order.[25] The overall strategy (internal to the state) identifies the local populace as the center of gravity in the COIN fight and winning popular support as the key to the state's ability to remedy its information disadvantage and win the conflict. The indirect approach of working through the local populace and indigenous security forces to target the insurgents thus becomes the most direct path to victory.

The lower half of the Diamond Model depicts the external environment. If an external sponsor is involved, the state attacks leg 5 by directly targeting the supplies and financing flowing from the outside to the insurgents. At the same time, the state implements diplomatic operations along leg 4 to gain support and resources for its COIN efforts from partner nations and other international actors. It simultaneously employs diplomatic pressure and punitive measures to influence the behavior of insurgent sponsors.

OEF-P Lines of Operation

One of the more critical elements of COIN planning is synchronizing the overall effort with the

country team or embassy staff. The Diamond Model prompts planners to consider all elements of national power when planning WOT COIN operations.[26] In countries with well-established governments, WOT military operations play a supporting role to efforts managed by the U.S. State Department. Planning that integrates the military and country-team staff members produces optimal results. Because of the protracted nature of these operations, military and country-team staff must maintain close relationships and conduct interagency coordination on a regular basis. In the Philippines, OEF-P planners coordinate closely with the country team to facilitate interagency planning and synchronization.[27]

Applying the principles found in the Diamond Model within the political constraints of the Philippines led to the pursuit of three interconnected lines of operation:[28]

● *Building Philippine Armed Forces (AFP) capacity*. U.S. ground, maritime, and air components trained, advised, and assisted Philippine security forces to help create a secure and stable environment.

● *Focused civil-military operations*. Philippine-led, U.S.-facilitated humanitarian and civic-action projects demonstrated the government's concern for regional citizens and improved their quality of life.

● *Information operations (IO)*. Aiming to enhance government legitimacy in the region, the joint U.S.-Philippine effort used IO to emphasize the success of the first two lines of operation.

The lines of operation complemented country-team efforts to help government security forces operate more effectively along legs 1 through 3 of the model, thereby enhancing the host nation's legitimacy and control of the region; this in turn reduced the insurgents' local support, denied them sanctuaries, and disrupted their operations. Diplomatic efforts executed along leg 4 were also critical.

Balikatan 02-1

Principles found in the Diamond Model were successfully applied against Abu Sayyaf during OEF-P on Basilan Island in exercise Balikatan 02-1.[29] Located 1,000 kilometers south of Manila at the northern tip of the Sulu Archipelago in the war-torn Southern Philippines, Basilan is 1,372 square kilometers in size and home to a population of just over 300,000 people. As the northernmost island

in the Sulu Archipelago, Basilan is strategically located. It has traditionally served as the jumping-off point or fallback position for terrorists operating in Central Mindanao, and its Christian population has long been prey to Muslim kidnapping gangs.[30] In the 1990s, Abu Sayyaf established a base of operations there and began a reign of terror that left government forces struggling to maintain security as they pursued an elusive enemy.

To succeed in COIN, the counterinsurgent must first understand the root causes of the insurgency: What are the underlying conditions that make the environment ripe for insurgent activity? To answer this question, U.S. Pacific Command deployed an SF assessment team in October 2001 to the Southern Philippines.[31] The team conducted detailed area assessments down to the village level and updated them throughout the operation. They gathered vital information about the enemy situation, army training requirements, local demographics, infrastructure, and socioeconomic conditions.[32] Measurements ranging from infant mortality rates and per capita income to the number of squatters, government services, and local education levels enabled planners to "build a map of disenfranchisement to ascertain where active and passive support would likely blossom."[33] These assessments provided critical information concerning the root causes of civil unrest at the village level. They also laid the foundation for the operational plan, for as military analyst Kalev Sepp notes, "The security of the people must be assured as a basic need, along with food, water, shelter, health care and a means of living. The failure of COIN and the root cause of insurgencies themselves can often be traced to government disregard of these basic rights."[34]

In February 2002, the United States dispatched JTF-510, comprised of 1,300 U.S. troops, to the Southern Philippines. Its mission was to conduct unconventional warfare operations "by, with, and through" the AFP to help the government separate the population from, and then destroy, Abu Sayyaf.[35] The bulk of the force consisted of an air component in Mactan, Cebu, and staff and support personnel located at the JTF headquarters in Zamboanga. The tip of the U.S. spear consisted of 160 SF personnel and, later, 300 members of a Naval Construction Task Group. All U.S. forces operated under restrictive

rules of engagement.[36] Once on Basilan, SF advisers deployed down to the battalion level and moved in with their Philippine counterparts in remote areas near insurgent strongholds. The SF teams found the Philippine units in disarray and lacking in basic infantry skills and initiative. One SF adviser said, "The situation had degraded to the point that the AFP no longer aggressively pursued the insurgents. The combination of neglect and lack of military initiative had created circumstances that contributed not only to the continuing presence and even growth of insurgent groups, but to the genesis of new terrorist and criminal organizations."[37]

Using their language and cultural skills, the SF teams quickly formed a bond with their military counterparts and local villagers. Their first goal was to establish a secure environment and protect the local populace. SF advisory teams went to work immediately, honing AFP military skills through focused training activities that increased unit proficiency and instilled confidence.[38] According to one SF adviser, "SF detachments converted AFP base camps on Basilan into tactically defensible areas, and they trained Philippine soldiers and marines in the combat lifesaving skills needed for providing emergency medical treatment with confidence.

Those lifesaving skills were a significant morale booster for the AFP."[39]

Increased patrolling accompanied training, which allowed the AFP and local security forces to reestablish security at the village level and seize the initiative from the insurgents. SF advisers credited an aggressive increase in AFP patrolling with denying Abu Sayyaf its habitual sanctuary and curtailing the group's movement.[40] The SF teams played a key role in building AFP capacity by accompanying units (as advisers only) on combat operations.[41] Reestablishing security and protecting the Basilan people were the foundation for all other activities along leg 1 of the Diamond Model.

Once security was established, both civil affairs and SF Soldiers worked with their counterparts to execute high-impact projects that produced immediate and positive benefits for the local population.[42] Humanitarian assistance and civic-action projects were initially targeted to meet the basic needs of the local populace, then refined and tailored for particular regions and provinces based on assessment results.[43] As the security situation improved, the U.S. Naval Construction Task Group deployed to the island to execute larger scale projects such as well digging, general construction, and improvements to roads, bridges, and piers. In addition to enhancing military capabilities, these infrastructure projects benefited local residents. When possible, locally procured materials and workers were used in order to put money directly into the local economy. Humanitarian and civic-action projects on Basilan improved the image of the AFP and the Manila government and helped return law and order to the island.[44] A key component in leg 1 of the model, the projects earned local respect, improved force protection, and reduced Muslim village support for the insurgents. Consequently, the AFP was

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Navy medic Aaron Vandall provides Combat Life Saver training to members of the Philippine Armed Forces as part of Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines in March 2003.

Five Philippine Army soldiers try on U.S. protective vests turned over to the Philippine military as part of the RP-U.S. Military Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA), 24 January 2003.

able to cultivate closer relations with the people in insurgent-influenced areas. [45] As Colonel Darwin Guerra, battalion commander of the 32d Infantry, AFP, reported, "Where once the people supported rebels and extremists because they felt neglected or oppressed by the government, the delivery of their basic needs like health and nutrition services, construction of infrastructure and impact projects, and strengthening security in the community that the Balikatan program brought [sic] changed their attitudes and loyalty. As residents began to experience better living conditions, they withdrew support from the militants."[46]

The AFP consistently took the lead on all activities and projects throughout Balikatan 02-1, with the U.S. military playing a supporting role. Putting the AFP in the lead enhanced AFP and government legitimacy at the grassroots level and helped end passive support for the insurgents. Targeted humanitarian assistance and civic-action projects also drove a wedge between Abu Sayyaf and the local populace. At the same time, these activities provided opportunities to interact with the locals and tap into the "bamboo telegraph," the indigenous information network.[47] As villagers became more comfortable, they openly shared information on the local situation with AFP and U.S. forces.

Intelligence collection and sharing was also critical to the operation. SF advisers conducted extensive information collection activities to gain situational awareness and contribute to a safe and secure environment. They shared intelligence with the AFP and helped them fuse all sources of information to develop a clearer picture of the insurgents' organizational structure. Improved relations with local residents generated increased reporting on Abu Sayyaf activity. SF advisers also leveraged U.S. military intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance platforms, integrating these assets into intelligence collection plans to support AFP combat operations. Actionable intelligence stimulated progress on leg 3, direct AFP combat operations against Abu Sayyaf.

By August 2002, just six months later, the synergistic effects of security, improved AFP military capability, and focused civil-military operations had isolated the insurgents from their local support networks. As the security situation on Basilan continued to improve, doctors, teachers, and other professional workers who had fled the island began to return, and the Philippine Government, the U.S. Agency for International Development's Growth with Equity in Mindanao Program, the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, and various nongovernmental organizations brought in additional resources to further address the root causes of the civil unrest.[48]

Results of Balikatan 02-1

My visit to Basilan Island in 2005 revealed a vastly different environment from the terrorist safe haven once dominated by Abu Sayyaf. The island's physical landscape remained largely unchanged. The rugged mountains, jungle terrain, and remote villages that rebel groups and extremists had once found so inviting and conducive to their deadly activities were all still there. What had changed were the attitude and loyalties of the Basilan people, making the environment far less favorable for insurgent activity.

The U.S. military and the Philippine Government know that Balikatan 02-1 was a success, and the operation is now commonly referred to as the "Basilan Model." While it didn't destroy Abu Sayyaf altogether, the model proved effective in—

● Denying the insurgents and terrorists sanctuary in targeted geographic areas (Basilan Island).[49]

Characteristics

- Advise and assist—all levels
- Small footprint: 50-300 personnel
- Support and sustainability
- Distributed ops
- Low-visibility
- Intelligence sharing
- Find low tech solutions
- Interagency coordination
- Reachback
- Leverage bilateral exercises
- AFP leads / U.S. supports

Lines of Operation

- Indigenous capacity-building
- Focused civil-military ops
- Information ops
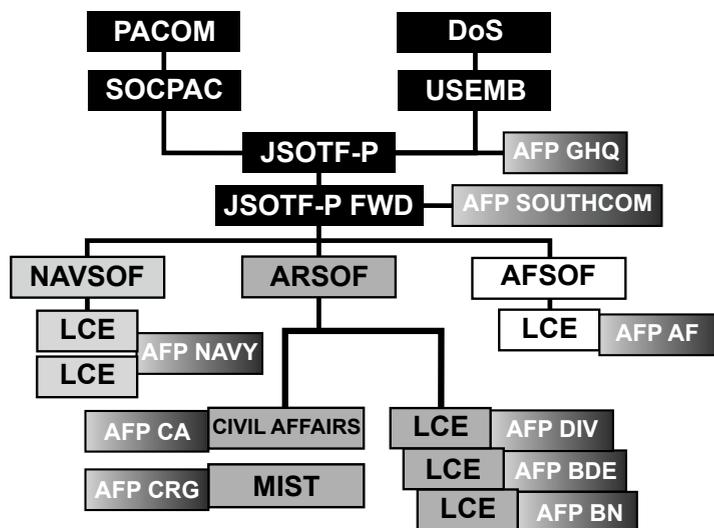
Legend: AFSOF, Air Force Special Operations Forces; ARSOF, Army Special Operations Forces; CRG, Contingency Response Group; DoS, Department of State; JSOTF, Joint Special Operations Task Force; LCE, Liaison Coordination Element; MIST, Mobile Information Support Team; NAVSOF, Navy Special Operations Forces; SOCPAC, Special Operations Component, United States Pacific Command; USEMB, U.S. Embassy.

Figure 2. Joint Special Operations Task Force, Philippines Advisory Model

● Improving the capacity of indigenous forces (AFP).[50]

● Enhancing the legitimacy of the host-nation government in the region.[51]

● Establishing the conditions for peace and development (Basilan Island).

● Providing a favorable impression of U.S. military efforts in the region.[52]

The holistic approach used on Basilan enabled the AFP to gain control of the situation, to become self-sufficient, and eventually to transition to peace and development activities. Both U.S. and AFP military forces could then focus their efforts and resources on other insurgent safe havens. This approach is characteristic of the expanding inkblot, or "white zone" strategy, used during successful British COIN efforts in Malaya.

Continuing the Fight

Despite the success of U.S. and Philippine WOT efforts on Basilan, the fight against extremism in the Southern Philippines is far from over. Although Abu Sayyaf was neutralized on Basilan and significantly reduced in size, its leaders managed to flee to Central Mindanao and the island of Sulu.[53] Using the peace process between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine Government for cover, and with assistance from Jemaah Islamiyya, Abu Sayyaf has increased its urban bombing capabilities and

extended its reach as a terrorist organization.[54] To gain better visibility on this emerging threat and to continue to assist the AFP, SF advisory efforts have adapted as well.

Soon after Balikatan 02-1, JTF-510 reorganized into a much leaner organization called the Joint Special Operations Task Force, Philippines (JSOTF-P), which continued advisory efforts with selected AFP units at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels (figure 2).[55] Follow-on JSOTF-P advisers have pursued the same strategy, but with greatly reduced resources along some lines of operation.[56] The reorganization reflects a shift in focus to indigenous capacity-building efforts, with the deployment of advisory teams to particular AFP units near terrorist safe havens or transit points in the Southern Philippines.

Deployed at the tactical level, SF advisory teams called Liaison Coordination Elements (LCE) are small, tailored, autonomous teams of Special Operations personnel from all services.[57] They advise and assist select AFP units in planning and fusing all sources of intelligence in support of operations directed at insurgent-terrorist organizations.[58] LCEs conduct decentralized planning and execution using a robust reachback capability to the JSOTF to leverage additional assets in support of AFP operations. These assets range from intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets such

as tactical unmanned aerial vehicles to humanitarian assistance to tailored information products.

The JSOTF has increasingly emphasized information operations that heighten public awareness of the negative effects of terrorism and provide ways to report terrorists to local security forces. Also featured are positive actions the government and military take to foster peace and development. The introduction of a Military Information Support Team in 2005 significantly enhanced the production of print and media products in support of U.S. and Philippine Government WOT information objectives.[59] Products include newspaper ads, handbills, posters, leaflets, radio broadcasts, and novelty items (example at figure 3). These IO efforts have helped to raise public awareness of the U.S. Government's rewards program.[60] Osama bin Laden's chief lieutenant, Ayman al-Zawahiri, has said, "More than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. We are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of Muslims."[61] If this is true, then shaping an environment less conducive to terrorist activity by raising public awareness is a true combat multiplier.

Figure 3. AFP/U.S. public information product

Indirect Approach Advantages

With U.S. forces stretched to the breaking point globally, SF advisory efforts will become more attractive to U.S. policymakers in the future. These efforts have some marked advantages over unilateral military operations.[62] Economy-of-force operations by nature, they are characterized by a small footprint, low resource requirements, and limited visibility. This makes them ideal to use in politically sensitive areas where a large foreign military presence would undermine the host-nation government's legitimacy and serve to rally opposition extremist elements. Additionally, with their low profiles, SF advisory operations can usually be sustained for a long time, a distinct benefit during protracted struggles.[63] Operations in the Southern Philippines have been ongoing since 2002, and so far they have received very little attention from the U.S. media and public.

The SF advisory approach also creates a more favorable impression of U.S. military efforts. Advisers are much more politically acceptable than Soldiers who take a direct role in combat. Humanitarian and civic-action activities performed with indigenous forces demonstrate the U.S. and host-nation government's commitment to promoting long-term peace and development. In 2002, U.S. advisers operating on Basilan went from seeing throat-slash hand gestures to receiving smiles and handshakes from local Muslims after the latter discovered the true nature of the SF's activities.[64] In 2005, U.S. military forces received a hero's welcome when they returned to Basilan for training exercises. The people repeatedly thanked them for their assistance during Balikatan 02-1.[65]

This good word has spread to the neighboring island of Sulu, a notorious Abu Sayyaf and extremist stronghold. In 2005, the Sulu provincial government asked U.S. military and AFP officials to conduct the "Basilan Model" on their island during Balikatan 06.[66] Prior to the exercise, local Islamic religious leaders asked the Muslim populace of Sulu to welcome U.S. forces.[67] Patricio Abinales, Associate Professor at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, credits the American military presence in the Southern Philippines for contributing to the emergence of reformist leaders (especially former Moro rebels) and politicians identified with "moderate Islam" who represent a change in conduct from the "guns, goons, gold" custom associated with traditional politicians.[68]

A Regional Approach

A regionally networked approach will optimize U.S. efforts to build indigenous capacity. The enemy is part of a transnational global network and flows across borders in many regions of the world like Southeast Asia. Terrorists and insurgents use ungoverned areas to their advantage so that efforts

by individual states alone will not be effective. The best way to confront a network is to create a counter-network, a non-hierarchical organization capable of responding quickly to actionable intelligence. The goal should be a networked regional capability that can seamlessly pass intelligence among SF advisory teams collocated with indigenous forces in strategic locations. In denied or unfriendly areas, surrogate forces developed and operating under the direction of SF and interagency partners should perform this task. As Steven Sloan notes, "The development of counter terrorist organizations that are small, flexible, and innovative cannot be done in the context of a unilateral approach to combating terrorism. There must be unity of action on the regional and international level that breaches the jurisdictional battles among countries that often seem to take precedence over an integrated war against terrorism."[69] The U.S. Government, military, and people must understand that these long-duration efforts require patience and determination. Gaining access, fostering trust, building relationships, and developing an indigenous or surrogate military capacity can take years, and success can often be difficult to measure. SF advisory teams must deploy forward to access indigenous capability and develop the situation in critical areas near suspected terrorist safe havens and transit locations. Once they complete their assessments, more refined plans ranging from small-scale LCE operations to larger Basilan-type efforts can be developed. This strategy has the added benefit of being preventive instead of just reactive. Positioning SF advisory teams as "global scouts" forward will provide early warning and allow our policymakers to assist our partners in shaping a more favorable environment.

Basilan in Iraq?

The "Basilan Model" and follow-on U.S. efforts offer a template for a sustainable, low-visibility approach to supporting America's allies in the WOT. In Iraq, where unilateral conventional operations have often been ineffective and even counterproductive, we should consider employing SF advisory teams on a large scale. Because they know the geography, language, and culture of the region and are skilled in working "by, with, and through" indigenous forces, SF is uniquely suited to adeptly navigate Iraq's politically and culturally sensitive terrain to enable effective host-nation operations against our common enemies.

By itself, however, just building the host-nation's capacity to capture or kill insurgents will not guarantee victory. The United States must employ a holistic approach that enhances the legitimacy of the host-nation government and its security forces in the eyes of the local populace. Using the Diamond Model, it must focus on the people at the grassroots level as the enemy's center of gravity. Ultimately, we will win the "long war," as the *Quadrennial Defense Review* now calls it, by gaining broader acceptance of U.S. policy within the moderate Muslim community. The best way to do this is by working in the shadows, "by, with, and through" indigenous or surrogate forces to marginalize the insurgents and win over the people. In an irony befitting the often paradoxical nature of counter-insurgency warfare, "the indirect approach" offers us the most direct path to victory. **MR**

DOD

A U. S. Army Special Forces Soldier conducts security assistance training for members of the Phillipine Armed Forces on the Zamboanga Peninsula, 20 March 2003.

NOTES

1. John Arquilla and David F. Ronfeldt, "Netwar Revisited: The Fight for the Future Continues," in *Networks, Terrorism and Global Insurgency,* ed. Robert J. Bunker (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 9.

2. Daniel Byman, "Going to War with the Allies You Have: Allies, Counterinsurgency, and the War on Terrorism," *Strategic Studies Institute* (November 2005): 2.

3. Ibid., 5.

4. For insights on common problems with U.S. military COIN operations as observed by a senior officer in one of our closest allies in the WOT, see Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster, British Army, "Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations," *Military Review* (November-December 2005).

5. Kalev I. Sepp, "Best Practices in Counterinsurgency," *Military Review* (May-June 2005), and Byman, 2.

6. Robert D. Kaplan, "Imperial Grunts," *Atlantic Monthly Online*, October 2005, 2, <www.theatlantic.com/doc/200510/kaplan-us-special-forces/2>.

7. Aylwin-Foster, 4.

8. According to an Al-Qaeda fatwa delivered in 1996, "The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies—civilian and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate al-aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grips, and in order for their armies to move out of all lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim." Full text available online at <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html>.

9. Peter Bergen and Alec Reynolds, "Blowback Revisited," *Foreign Affairs* (November-December 2005): 4.

10. Zachary Abuza, "Balik Terrorism: The Return of the ASG [Abu Sayyaf Group]," *Strategic Studies Institute* (September 2005): 31.

11. John P. Sullivan, "Terrorism, Crime and Private Armies," in *Networks, Terrorism and Global Insurgency*, 72.

12. The Philippines were occupied by the Spanish from 1542 to 1898; the United States from 1898 to 1941; the Japanese from 1941 to 1944; and the United States again from 1944 to 1945. The United States granted the Philippines full independence in 1946.

13. Sean K. Anderson, "U.S. Counterinsurgency vs. Iranian-Sponsored Terrorism" in *Networks, Terrorism and Global Insurgency,* 85.

14. Abuza, 2.

15. Ibid., 5. Jamal Khalifa, Osama bin Laden's brother-in-law, was dispatched to the Philippines in 1991 and established a network of Islamic charities that have been linked to terrorist financing in the region.

16. The Abu Sayyaf Group conducted numerous kidnappings prior to 9/11, but it is best known for kidnapping three American citizens, including a missionary couple, and several wealthy Filipino citizens from Dos Palmas Resort on the island of Palawan, 27 May 2001. ASG subsequently moved the hostages to Basilan Island.

17. The "indirect approach" was first advocated by British military theorist, journalist, and historian Basil Henry Liddell Hart to prevent a repeat of earlier trench warfare deadlock. His theory included a form of blitzkrieg using both tanks and infantry.

18. In 1994, Dr. Gordon McCormick created the triangle insurgent/COIN model. He later created the Diamond Model to capture the interaction with external international actors. See Gordon H. McCormick, "A 'Pocket Guide' to Internal War," Department of Defense Analysis, Naval Postgraduate School, forthcoming.

19. Maria Ressa, *Seeds of Terror* (New York: Free Press, 2003), 124.

20. Class notes from Dr. Gordon McCormick's "Seminar on Guerilla Warfare," Department of Defense Analysis, Naval Postgraduate School, October 2005.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Rick Webster, "Counterinsurgency: The John Paul Vann Model," *Sitrep* (Winter/Spring 2004), <www.lists.opn.org/pipermail/org.opn.lists.vwar/2004-May/001227.html>.

24. Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army in Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1988), 190.

25. McCormick, class notes.

26. For a more detailed discussion of applying strategic counterinsurgency models to the planning process, see LTC Eric Wendt, "Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling," *Special Warfare Magazine* (September 2005).

27. Close coordination with the ambassador, the Joint United States Military Assistance Group, the regional affairs team, local representatives of the United States Agency for International Development, the political-military adviser, and other key members of the country team will ensure unity of effort.

28. Joint Special Operations Task Force—Philippines (JSOTF-P) lines of operation were developed by the JSOTF-P and Special Operations Command, Pacific staff.

29. Balikitan means "shoulder to shoulder" in Tagalog. While the U.S. Government views OEF-P efforts in the Southern Philippines as military operations in a declared hostile-fire area, the Philippine Government describes them as training exercises to avoid perceived constitutional restrictions against foreign troops participating in internal combat operations.

30. COL Darwin Z. Guerra, "Peace-Building in Basilan: The Army's 103rd Brigade Soldier's Final Battle*,"* unpublished, 1.

31. COL Dave Maxwell, "Operation Enduring Freedom—Philippines: What Would Sun Tzu Say?", <www.army.mil/professionalwriting/ volumes/volume2/june_2004/6_04_3.html>.

32. Wendt, 10-11.

33. Ibid.

34. Sepp, 9.

35. Maxwell, 1.

36. Cherilyn A. Walley, "Impact of the Semi-permissive Environment on Force-protection in the Philippines Engagement," *Special Warfare*, 2004, 1, <www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0HZY/is_1_17/ai_n954388>.

37. Ibid., 4. Interview of an SF adviser by Dr. C. H. Briscoe.

38. MAJ Joe McGraw, SF Detachment Commander on Basilan during Balikatan 02-1, interview by the author, Monterey, CA, 19 January 2006. Training initially focused on basic individual infantry skills and progressed to more advanced collective skills. Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) units have very little training ammunition and rarely fire their weapons other than in combat situations.

39. C. H. Briscoe, "Reflections and Observations on ARSF [Army Special Forces] Operations during Balikatan 02-1," *Special Warfare*, 2004, 1, <www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0HZY/is_1_17/ai_n9543891>.

40. Ibid., 1.

41. McGraw interview. SF advisers initially were not allowed to accompany AFP units below the battalion level during operations, but after a lengthy mission review process (CONOPS), advisors were allowed to work at company level toward the end of the operation.

42. "A 'PACOM-imposed force cap' on Army SF personnel and heavy weapons in the exercise area of operations constrained the use of CA [civil affairs] teams. That compelled the commander of Forward Operating Base 11 to task SF detachments with the CA mission." C. H. Briscoe, 1.

43. Cherilyn A. Walley, "Civil Affairs: A Weapon of Peace on Basilan Island," *Special Warfare*, 2004, 3. <www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0HZY/is_1_17/ai_n9543 878>.

44. C. H. Briscoe, 1.

45. Ibid., 1.

46. Guerra, 2.

47. McGraw interview.

48. After security was reestablished during Balikatan 02-1, the Philippine Government, and the Growth with Equity in Mindanao Program, the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, and various nongovernmental organizations provided economic and developmental assistance to Basilan Island. The U.S. Government provided an average of $80 million of economic and developmental assistance a year to the Philippines from 2002 to 2006, of which 60 percent was designated for the Mindanao region. See U.S. Department of State, Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2006 (P. L. 109-102).

49. The ASG no longer poses a threat on Basilan. Its armed strength has fallen from an estimated 1,000 in 2002 to somewhere between 200 and 400 in 2005. Thomas Lum and Larry A. Niksch, "The Republic of the Philippines: Background and U.S. Relations," Congressional Research Service Report to Congress, 10 January 2006, 8.

50. AFP forces deployed on Basilan improved their capacity while working directly with Army Special Forces during Balikatan 02-1. Follow-on security assistance train-and-equip modules and SF advisory efforts have continued to build AFP capabilities.

51. Balikatan 02-1 enabled the Philippine Government and AFP to reduce security forces on Basilan Island by 70 percent and transition to peace-building activities.

52. Sepp, 10.

53. Khaddafy Janjalani assumed leadership of the ASG after Abu Sabaya's death during an AFP-led, U.S.-assisted operation in June 2002.

54. Lum and Niksch, 7.

55. JSOTF-P has fluctuated between 50 and 300 personnel. Advisory teams interface at the strategic level with the U.S. Embassy in Manila and the AFP General Headquarters in Manila; at the operational level, with AFP Southern Command in Zamboanga; and at the tactical level, with select AFP combat units. Advisory teams also work with AFP civil affairs and psychological operations forces.

56. Humanitarian assistance and civic-action project funding was greatly reduced after Balikatan 02-1. Some funding was diverted to tsunami relief in 2005.

57. Liaison Coordination Elements generally consist of 4 to 12 SF advisers who are embedded with select AFP ground, naval, and air forces down to the battalion level.

58. JTF-510 advisory efforts were directed strictly at the ASG while JSOTF-P advisory efforts have expanded to include Jemaah Islamiyya.

59. This Military Information Support Team consists of psychological operations personnel who develop combined products with the AFP Civilian Relations Group. Products are approved through both AFP and U.S. chains of command.

60. U.S. Government rewards programs in the Philippines have led to the apprehension of 23 terrorists. Products are designed by AFP and U.S. personnel working together to ensure they are portrayed in the correct cultural context. Muslim soldiers within the AFP have played a key role in this effort, translating products into native languages like Talsug.

61. Cited in a speech by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld to the Council on Foreign Relations, Harold Pratt House, New York, NY, 17 February 2006, <www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2006/sp20060217-12574.html>.

62. Stretched by frequent troop rotations to Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army has become a "thin green line" that could snap unless relief comes soon, according to Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Thin Green Line*, Report to the Pentagon, <msnbc.msn.com/id/11009829/>.

63. Sepp, 9. SF advisory efforts in El Salvador were conducted for over 12 years.

64. Robert Kaplan, *Imperial Grunts* (New York: Random House, 2005), 245.

65. Author's experience on Basilan, March 2005.

66. Author's experience on Sulu, February 2005.

67. Roel Pareno, "Sulu sultan leads Jolo rally backing Balikatan," *Philippine Star*, 12 Feb 2005.

68. Patricio Abinales, "American Military Presence in the Southern Philippines: A Comparative Historical Overview," *East-West Center Working Papers, Politics and Security Series* 7, (October 2004): 14.

69. Stephen Sloan, "Forward: Responding to the Threat," in *Networks, Terrorism and Global Insurgency*, xxi.

A MODEL COUNTERINSURGENCY:
Uribe's Colombia (2002–2006) vs FARC

Thomas A. Marks, Ph.D.

L ITTLE IS HEARD OF U.S. involvement in counterinsurgency (COIN) in Colombia. That which does appear is often inaccurate and ideologically skewed. Yet progress in America's "number three war" has been significant and appears all the more impressive given the increasing difficulties experienced in Iraq and Afghanistan.

What is noteworthy is that the approach being used is "classic counterinsurgency." In this, there is considerable irony, because many of the significant aspects of the campaign were developed and implemented by American-educated leaders, assisted, both directly and indirectly, by Americans. That the Colombians have improved upon the original foundation makes examination of the case all the more compelling and urgent.

Background to Conflict

Upon taking office in August 2002, President Álvaro Uribe Vélez of Colombia was faced with a difficult strategic situation that required a fresh approach. This was forthcoming in a new document, the *Democratic Security and Defense Policy*, which radically reoriented the state's posture from negotiating with to confronting its principal security challenge, an insurgency inextricably linked to the narcotics trade and other criminal activity.

Although multifaceted in its dimensions, the new policy effectively assigned the cutting-edge role to the Colombian armed forces, most prominently the dominant service, the army. It required the forces to pursue COIN aggressively against a well-funded, entrenched adversary within a complex international environment decidedly unsympathetic to internal war campaigns. Regardless, the armed forces performed in impressive fashion.

These same armed forces had already set the stage for the shift in policy by pursuing a reform movement that had enabled them to conduct more aggressive operations even as Uribe's predecessor, President Andres Pastrana (1998-2002), had unsuccessfully sought a negotiated settlement with the main insurgent group, *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, or FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), and to a lesser extent with the distant second group, *Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional*, or ELN (National Liberation Army). Continued combat was necessary because neither FARC nor ELN altered its military posture during negotiations. To the contrary, FARC used Bogota's provision of what was supposed to be demilitarized space, the *Zona de Despeje* (or *Area de Distension*), to facilitate an intensification of the conflict via main force warfare while it continued to conduct terror and guerrilla actions.

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PHOTO: Colombian President Álvaro Uribe Vélez extends holiday greetings to soldiers and police. (AFP)

Colombia

- - - ELN Influence
——— FARC Influence
Colombia's insurgency circa 2000

ZONA de DESPEJE
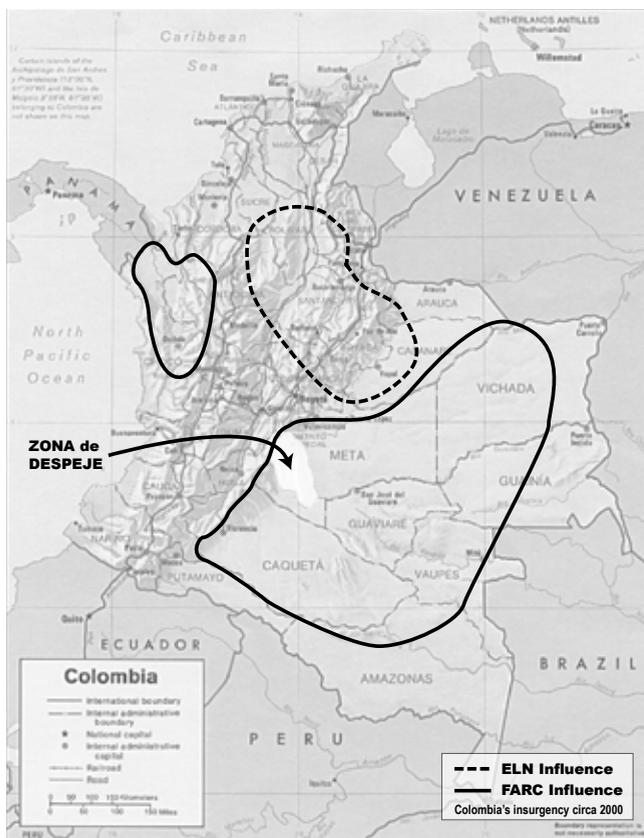
Base 800442 9-85

Thus, Colombia's COIN approach during the Pastrana years was not the result of deliberation and consultation within the government, but of an uneasy, unstated compromise, as Pastrana and his intimates negotiated with a duplicitous insurgent leadership on one hand, while on the other, they confronted the security force's growing unwillingness to accept the administration's increasingly discredited strategic calculus. When, in the face of all evidence to the contrary, Pastrana attempted to push through a second *Zona*, this one for the ELN, he faced a virtual popular revolt in the designated area. Cutting his losses prior to the first round of that year's presidential elections, Pastrana ordered the military in February 2002 to reoccupy the original *Zona*.

Situation Prior to Uribe's Election

Lack of government leadership during the Pastrana years had left security matters to the army (*Ejerctio Nacional*, or COLAR); navy, of which the marines were a part; and air force. The state, in other words, did not engage in counterinsurgency. This meant that although annual military plans included a basic civic action component, they were necessarily incomplete. That this did not prove disastrous stemmed from the nature of the major

security threat, FARC (ELN was essentially a law and order concern).

Committed ideologically to Marxism-Leninism, FARC had increasingly drifted to a vaguely defined "Bolivarian" populism that had little appeal in Colombia. Polls consistently found the movement with minimal popular support or even sympathy. Its efforts at armed propaganda had fallen off to nothing after a mid-1980s high, and it was increasingly corrupted by reliance for funding upon criminal activity—drugs, kidnapping, and extortion (in that order, perhaps $250 million total). Consequently, its approach to insurgency, modeled after "people's war" doctrine of the Vietnamese variant filtered through, in particular, the FMLN (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front) of El Salvador, had become a perversion of the original and had more in common with the *focismo* of Che Guevara than Maoist armed political action built upon mass mobilization.

FARC's reliance upon the normal apparatus necessary to support armed campaigning—base areas and mobility corridors—resulted in a dual center of gravity vulnerable to Colombian military attack: the insurgent units themselves and their sources of sustenance. Allowing for the low numbers organized in a nationwide support base (frequently inspired by terror), the armed units basically comprised the movement.

FARC's vulnerabilities had been recognized by the new military leadership that emerged following Pastrana's inauguration. They had crafted their

In this captured photo, a FARC sapper applies natural camouflage. FARC sappers have in the past been trained by Vietnamese, Cuban, and FMLN operators. They specialize in infiltration attacks.

approach to neutralize FARC's strategy even as they instituted a far-reaching and comprehensive military reform process that affected everything from recruiting (a largely draftee COLAR became one-third volunteer, with key units essentially 100 percent "professionals"), to military schooling, to assignment policies, to structure, to operational art. The result was a reclaiming of the strategic initiative by the time of Uribe's advent.

Military reform was central to all that occurred during the Pastrana years. A combination of internal dislocation caused by the growing drug trade, U.S. efforts to "punish" Colombia during the Samper administration (1994-98) for inadequate "coopera-tion" in counter-narcotics (CN) efforts, and mediocre senior military leadership had all combined to crip-ple a sound military. Reform, primarily a COLAR project, touched upon virtually every aspect of the institution, but focused mainly on revitalizing the military education system, turning lessons learned into operational and organizational modifications, and developing sound NCO leadership to enhance small unit performance. Simultaneously, greater attention was paid to human rights instruction, infor-mation warfare, and joint and special operations.

The profound institutional and strategic shifts outlined above occurred as the United States, in the aftermath of 9-11, altered the approach of the Clinton years (1992-2000) and dropped the artificial barrier that had separated counter-narcotics (CN) from COIN. This was critical because, during the Clinton administrations, the war had been arti-ficially divided in accordance with the demands of American domestic politics. Washington was compelled to focus upon CN to the virtual exclusion of COIN. Only where COIN objectives could be subsumed within CN action was U.S. aid allowed to assist in the security campaign.

Consequently, the U.S. contribution to *Plan Colombia*, a multifaceted effort to identify Colom-bia's critical areas for action to facilitate national revitalization, was structured wholly to support CN (for projects and allocations, see Table 1). Its cen-terpiece was an American-funded, -equipped, and -trained CN brigade manned by COLAR personnel but dedicated entirely, for legal reasons contained in the implementing legislation, to support of eradication. The brigade was severely limited in its operational and geographic scope, even though it

U.S. Contribution $ 1,318.6 Billion	
Support for Efforts in Southern Colombia	$416.9 M
Support for Interdiction (includes FOLs*)	$378.1 M
Support for Colombia National Police	$115.6 M
Alternative/Economic Development	$106.0 M
Human Rights/Judicial Reform	$122.0 M
Regional Support	$180.0 M

*FOL: Forward Operating Location

Table 1. U.S. Allocations for *Plan Colombia*.
($ figures derived from Colombian military briefing)

had several times the number of helicopters in the entire COLAR aviation inventory.

Of greater consequence than the lack of fully relevant support was the battlefield fragmenta-tion and distortion—the disruption to unity of effort—that the U.S. strategy entailed. Committed to assistance in the only fashion politically viable, and in an America forced to focus upon the supply side of its own drug problem, U.S. officials, forces, and individuals tended to embrace the flawed logic that Colombia's problem was narcotics, with the security battle merely a by-product. Insurgent real-ity was stood on its head.

American urgings that Colombian armed action focus upon a narcotics center of gravity were rejected by the military's leaders (often in conflict with the Pastrana administration). As far as they were concerned, U.S. input during this period was appreciated, but tangential to the real issue, COIN.

Committed to area domination by regular (largely draftee) brigades and divisions, with strike forces organic to each of these units, COLAR would deploy but limited additional forces to augment the CN bri-gade. The focus of the internal war, in its estimation, had to be the population, 95 to 96 percent of which lived *outside* the drug-producing zones of the *llanos*, or eastern savannah.

Ironically, even the eventual drop in the bar between CN and what came to be labeled CT (for counterterrorism) assistance, did not change this situation. Although U.S. funding was impressive in raw figures (see Table 2), it was still overwhelmingly committed to a CN campaign driven by its own internal measures (most prominently, hectares of narcotics fields eliminated).[1] Controversial due to its reliance upon aerial spraying, the eradication effort

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
INC/ACI*	57	200.1	686.4	48	243.5	412	313	313
INC/ACI†	0.5	5.75	208	0	134	168	150	150
FMF	0	0.44	0.02	4.49	0	93	98.45	99.2
IMET	0.863	0.92	0.9	1.04	1.165	1.676	1.7	1.7
ATA	0	0	0	0	25	3.28	0.2	3.92
506	41.1	58	0	0	0	0	0	0
1004	11.78	35.89	68.71	150	84.9	136	110.2	110.2
1033	2.17	13.45	7.23	22.3	4	13.2	13.2	13.2
TOTAL	**113.4**	**314.6**	**971.3**	**225.8**	**492.6**	**827.2**	**686.8**	**691.2**

Legend: ATA, Anti-Terrorism Assistance; FMF, Foreign Military Financing; IMET, International Military Education and Training; INC/ACI, Int'l Narcotic Control/Andean Counterdrug Initiative (*funding for counter-drug arms transfers, training, services; †funding for counter-drug economic and social aid); 506, Emergency Drawdowns; 1004, CN from Defense Budget; 1003, Riverine CN from Defense Budget; *Not included*– ETA, Excess Defense Articles ($10.1 million total); ESF, Economic Support Funds ($7.0 million total). *(figures in millions of dollars)*

Table 2. U.S. Assistance, 1997–2005. (as briefed by the U.S. State Department)

59 BCG (each with approximately 40 percent of the manning of a line battalion, but with additional machine guns and mortars).

The regular formations that comprised the rest of COLAR were overwhelmingly draftee. Domination of local areas was the linchpin of the counterinsurgent effort, and a variety of imaginative solutions were tried to maintain state presence in affected areas. Essentially, the draftee regular units were used in area domination and local operations, the BCG and BRIM to strike at targets of opportunity. Specific missions that required specific skills, such as guarding critical infrastructure or operating in urban areas, were carried out by dedicated assets, as were special operations.

But in the absence of local forces, which had fallen afoul of constitutional court restrictions and thus were disbanded, it was difficult to consolidate gains. As areas were retaken, they could not be

incorporated a variety of other components, from air and riverine interdiction to alternative development, but its actual impact upon insurgent operational capabilities proved difficult to measure.

Also clouding the picture were periodicals of record in the United States that tended to lump overall U.S. aid figures into "support for the Colombian military," thus reviving a Vietnam-era stereotype of a hapless ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) held together by American money and "advisors." Nothing could have been further from reality in Colombia. The bulk of U.S. funding to date has gone mainly to the CN effort (e.g., 85 percent of the 2005 figure above), with only incidental impact (from this source) upon the Colombian forces. The funding that has gone directly to the Colombian military has been important, especially as dispersed through the actions and programs of the highly regarded military assistance mission, but during the Pastrana years, Colombia's armed forces were quite on their own in both their operations and their reforms.

Colombia's basic military framework for waging counterinsurgency was created by the geographical assignment of the 5 COLAR divisions (18 brigades) and a joint task force, with a division-strength national reaction force.[2] Of its 145,000 troops, COLAR had some 20,000 in volunteer counterguerrilla units organic to its brigades and divisions. Altogether, the volunteer units amounted to 47 counterguerrilla battalions (*batallones contraguerrillas*, or BCG) and 3 mobile brigades (*brigades moviles*, or BRIM) each comprised of 4 BCG, for a total of approximately

courtesy of author

A local-forces platoon, part of the Home Guard that has been key to Colombia's successful COIN approach, prepares for an inspection prior to a mission.

General Fernando Tapias Stahelin, General Jorge Enrique Mora Rangel, and General Carlos Alberto Ospina Ovalle, the three architects of COLAR's dramatic reform.

garrisoned with home guards. Instead, regular units rotated in and out in a perpetual shell game designed to keep FARC off balance (to a lesser extent ELN; only FARC operated with main forces).

Further complicating the situation, a legal framework that did not respond to the needs of internal war meant that all action was carried out under the provisions of peacetime civilian law. The Pastrana administration passed no emergency or anti/counter-terrorist legislation of any sort. This sometimes placed soldiers in absurd situations, particularly since the police were not available to accompany operations, being preoccupied with their own efforts to survive. Half a dozen times, for instance, towns and their police garrisons found themselves attacked by FARC forces using homemade but nonetheless potent armor.

Faced with such an array of challenges, it was a credit to the power of the military reform movement and the improvements made by its leadership that the strategic initiative had been regained by mid-2002. This occurred because the reform movement in the dominant service, COLAR, was driven by personalities who evinced an understanding of counterinsurgency and Colombia's unique circumstances. Thus they were able, despite the state's lack of strategic involvement, to arrest the negative trends that had emerged with growing force as early as the Samper administration.

Most importantly, the reform leadership defeated FARC's attempt to transition to main-force warfare (i.e., mobile or maneuver warfare, stage two in the people's war framework). Using the *Zona* as the staging ground for attacks by "strategic columns" comprised of multiple battalion-strength units, FARC found itself bested by the CG (Commanding General) IV Division, MG (Major General) Carlos Alberto Ospina Ovalle, who worked intimately with

his superior, CG COLAR (*Comandante del Ejercito*), General Jorge Enrique Mora Rangel, and CG Joint Command (*Comando General de las Fuerzes Militares*), General Fernando Tapias Stahelin.[3]

This trio dominated operational planning throughout the Pastrana years, with Mora eventually taking Tapias' place (upon the latter's retirement). Ospina, after serving as CG IV Division, became COLAR Director of Operations, under Mora; then IG (Inspector General) Joint Command, under Tapias, who used the IG principally as a combat inspectorate; and, finally, CG COLAR (with full general rank) when Mora moved up upon Uribe's inauguration. When Mora himself retired in November 2003, Ospina became CG Joint Command.

What these officers shared was a correct understanding of Colombia's war and a well-developed approach to institutional transformation and strategy realized in operational art. Mora and Ospina were noted for their close working relationship and the general esteem they were held in throughout the armed forces. Both had proven themselves tactically time and again as they advanced through the junior ranks, then operationally and strategically as more senior commanders.

Ospina was apparently the most combat-decorated officer in COLAR at the time he became its CG, in addition to being universally regarded as COLAR's "brain trust" with a deep knowledge of insurgency and counterinsurgency. Working together under Tapias, Mora and Ospina fashioned highly effective COLAR annual campaign plans that forced FARC onto the defensive. Their correct appreciation of the situation, though, could not be translated into a true national counterinsurgency until Uribe's election.

Uribe's *Democratic Security and Defense Policy*

A third-party candidate who won an unprecedented first-round victory in May 2002, Uribe introduced a dynamic style to security affairs that prominently included producing, early in his

administration and with U.S. encouragement, the aforementioned *Democratic Security and Defense Policy* (officially released in June 2003). Unlike the *Plan Colombia* of the Pastrana-Clinton years (written with U.S. input), which had been a virtual catalog of national ills with proposed solutions beyond Bogota's ability to operationalize or fund, the new policy was intended to be a course of action. As such, it was built upon a fairly basic syllogism:

A. Lack of personal security is at the root of Colombia's social, economic, and political ills.

B. This lack of personal security stems from the state's absence from large swaths of the national territory.

C. Therefore, all elements of national power need to be directed toward ending this lack of national integration.

Addressing this assessment was the policy itself, its thrust stated directly: "Security is not regarded primarily as the security of the State, nor as the security of the citizen without the assistance of the State. Rather, it is the protection of the citizen and democracy by the State with the solidarity and co-operation of the whole of society. . . . This is, in short, a policy for the protection of the population." According to the policy, citizens and the stability of the country were threatened by an explosive combination of "terrorism; the illegal drugs trade; illicit finance; traffic of arms, ammunition, and explosives; kidnapping and extortion; and homicide."[4] The hitherto intractable nature of Colombia's security conundrum stemmed from the interlocking nature of these threats.

It was this dynamic at which Uribe's plan was aimed. If one course of action stands out as central to the whole, it is "consolidating control of national territory," the indispensable element of any counterinsurgency. The plan details a "cycle of recovery" that evokes images of the approach used in successful counterinsurgencies in Thailand, the Philippines, and Peru, and it outlines precisely the strategic approach to be used:

● "The Government will gradually restore state presence and the authority of state institutions, starting in strategically important areas.

● "Once the Armed Forces and the National Police have reestablished control over an area, units comprising professional soldiers, *campesino* soldiers [i.e., local forces] and National Police

Carabineros [police field force] will maintain security and protect the civilian population. This will enable state organizations and criminal investigation authorities to work in the area.

● "Once a basic level of security has been established, the State will embark upon a policy of territorial consolidation, re-establishing the normal operation of the justice system, strengthening local democracy, meeting the most urgent needs of the population, broadening state services and initiating medium to long term projects aimed at creating sustainable development."[5]

Necessarily, since Colombia's plan calls for nothing less than waging internal war against a hydra-headed threat, the security forces undertake the most prominent and difficult tasks. Although responsibilities are outlined for all state bodies, it is the security forces that are to provide the shield behind which restoration of legitimate government writ takes place.

Under the Ministry of Defense (*Ministerio de Defensa Nacional,* or MDN) the security forces prepared their own plans to implement the *Democratic Security and Defense Policy*.[6] Both the military's Joint Command and the national police (*Policia Nacional*, or CNP) were subordinate to MDN and used as their guide the strategic document drawn up by Defense Minister Marta Lucia Ramirez de Rincon and her staff after consideration of the Uribe policy. Their product was issued as a four-year vision applicable to the entire Uribe presidency. COLAR's objectives were, for all practical purposes, those of the Joint Command.

The central elements remained "protection of the population" and "elimination of the illegal drugs trade in Colombia," to be accomplished through the application of national will, resources, and power. As the premier element of national power in the internal war at hand, the military clarified its role further in a "general military strategy" issued by CG Joint Command, General Mora. This is still the key document regarding the application of military action to support the president's "democratic security" counterinsurgency approach.

Implementing Uribe's Plan

With the framework established, implementation followed. In this, the military was far ahead of other state elements, since it had already gone through dramatic change during the Pastrana years. So far-reaching were the military reforms that, in many

respects, the armed forces presented Uribe with a new tool upon his taking office. The key had been a continuity of exceptional leadership able to reorient, under difficult operational and material conditions, the military's warfighting posture.

Central to this reorientation was the inculcation in the officer corps of greater professional knowledge concerning not only the operational and tactical mechanics of internal war, but the strategic knowledge of insurgent approaches and aims. It was here that Mora's faith in Ospina's understanding of counterinsurgency paid off.

Ospina was adamant that seeing the insurgents as merely narcotics traffickers or criminals or terrorists obscured the deadly symbiosis that drove the conflict. Whatever it engaged in tactically, whether terror or the drug trade, FARC was a revolutionary movement that sought to implement people's war as its operational form, to include focusing upon the rural areas to surround the urban areas.

Hence, as concerned the security forces, the strategic and operational threat had remained relatively constant in nature, regardless of increasing insurgent (especially FARC) involvement in the drug trade and other criminal activity. The insurgents sought to dominate local areas, eliminating through terror those who persisted in their opposition. Guerrilla action targeted the police and smaller military units, with task-organized columns (*columnas*) appearing as main forces whenever a target invited. Other, nonviolent, elements of the FARC people's war approach—mass line, united front, political warfare, and international action—remained anemic to the point of irrelevance, leaving the "violence" line of operation the only real issue.

As noted previously, when Uribe took office, the military had already spent nearly four years developing an effective COIN approach specifically applicable to Colombia. The strategy recognized the need to dominate local areas by providing a security umbrella under which the normal functions of the state could be exercised. The operational vehicle for carrying out the effort was to place a "grid" over the target area, with specific forces carrying out specific missions, all coordinated in such manner as to stifle insurgent activity. The immediate problem was that there had not been enough units or enough funding.

Counterinsurgency is manpower and resource intensive. Uribe sought to provide both assets to a

A soldier on patrol takes a moment to chat with a passerby. Although Colombia's forces face unremitting attacks from international rights organizations, the military is one of the country's most popular institutions.

military leadership that was already out of the starting gate. Not only did he raise the military's general funding level, but, in a dramatic gesture of commitment, he also asked Congress to levy a one-time war tax for a substantial expansion of actual forces, primarily COLAR (which in mid-2004 reached a strength of some 202,000). The tax brought in approximately $670 million, which was allocated to *Plan de Choque 2002-2006* (*Plan Shock*), a phased scheme to substantially increase the specialized COLAR forces needed to make the grid viable.

Units of all types were integrated into the force structure according to plans predating Uribe, but hitherto unfunded: new BCG and BRIM were added, with every division getting its own organic BRIM (IV Division received two; COLAR-wide, there are now at least 17 BRIM, up from the previous three) and others going to the general reserve (if all formations are considered, there are now roughly 100 BCG, up from the Pastrana total of 59); urban special forces (joining "rural" special forces, the traditional mode of operation); special transportation network protection units (*Plan Meteoro*, or *Plan Meteor*); high-mountain battalions specifically situated and equipped to block insurgent mobility corridors through hitherto inaccessible heights; strengthened infrastructure protection units (PEEV, from *Plan Energético y Vial,* or *Energy and Road Plan*); and local forces (*Soldados de mi Pueblo,* "Home Guards") to provide security, particularly for rural urban centers.[7]

At the same time and from the same funding source, individual soldier effectiveness was to be improved by converting draftee slots to volunteers at the rate of 10,000 per year—an expensive undertaking, since it costs approximately ten times more to field a volunteer.

All components were related to each other. The standing up of local-forces platoons, for instance, although initially intended to enhance the population's security, was soon found to produce a much greater information flow to the forces, which enabled more accurate and intense employment of regular and strike units. Greater activity in an area forced the insurgents to move, especially the leaders, presenting targets for the upgraded special operations capability. Loss of leaders led to surrenders, which psychological warfare units exploited with a variety of innovative programs, from rallies to radio broadcasts. Fewer insurgents meant greater freedom of movement, and special units secured the transportation arteries, just as they did the critical infrastructure. Business picked up; the economy improved; kidnappings and murders dropped substantially.

If there was one element in the grid that provided the missing link, it was the deployment of local forces. These were indispensable to establishing state presence in affected areas and neatly side-stepped legal objections (and fierce opposition from international human rights organizations) by utilizing a forgotten law, discovered still on the books, that allowed a portion of the national draft levy to opt for service in hometown defense units.

These 40-man units were constituted as regular platoons assigned to complement regular battalions stationed nearby. They were trained, armed, and equipped as regular soldiers; officered by regulars; and fielded systematically according to *Plan de Choque* funding. Soon, they were present in more than 600 locations selected according to the Joint Command campaign plan. Most were COLAR assets, although a number were run by the marines, mainly in a special "mini-divisional zone" assigned to the marines, south of navy headquarters in Cartagena on the Caribbean coast.

Local forces had all the more impact because the police, responding to the same need for government presence if security was to be guaranteed, systematically established a presence in every *municipio* (county) in the country. Those areas from which they had been driven, or that historically had been considered too dangerous for police presence, were manned by police field forces, the Carabineros, under regular CNP jurisdiction. The Carabineros functioned in units of the same size and type as the COLAR local forces, but they were more mobile and often better armed. Where necessary, they constructed fort-like police stations to project state presence. Backing them up was a highly trained reaction force.

Incorporation of police involvement into the grid highlighted a further development: the increasingly joint and interagency nature of Colombian operations. Although the military services had always answered to CG Joint Command, they had previously functioned together more as a matter of courtesy than command. This had not posed any insuperable problems, particularly given COLAR's dominance, but it was not the ideal way to conduct counterinsurgency, where unity of command is crucial. It was especially the case that the CNP, under Pastrana, was not integrated at the national level in any of the counterinsurgency planning. This ended under Uribe.

Within the military itself, a clear trend toward greater "jointness"–which had emerged under Tapias as CG Joint Command and matured under Mora (and Uribe)—blossomed under Ospina. Plans to implement "joint operational commands" in place of the exclusively COLAR divisional areas met with fierce resistance in parochial circles, but were being pushed through by late 2004.

This transformation alone would be enough to produce a measure of turmoil within the military. Even the existence of the integrated *Fuerza de Tarea Conjunta* (Joint Task Force), controlled by CG Joint Command and operating in FARC's traditional base complexes in the east, generated disquiet in some circles—particularly as it became clear that it was a model of what is to come. If present plans are pushed through, the individual services will become more like "service providers" in the U.S. sense, while CG Joint Command will exercise operational control of joint forces that resemble U.S. combatant commands (e.g., Southern Command, which supports Colombia's effort). Such a development will be entirely logical for waging counterinsurgency, but will represent a sea-change in the way Colombian services have historically functioned.

Integration extended beyond the military. Other government agencies were directed to participate. The state's involvement brought a new closeness to integrated efforts that hitherto had normally depended upon interpersonal relations in areas of operation. In particular, law enforcement and judicial authorities became an important part of operations. This provided government forces with enhanced flexibility, because the police and officials could engage in actions not legally devolved to the armed forces (e.g., the right to search).

Operationally, the guiding document was the Joint Command's multi-year *Plan Patriota* (Plan Patriot), which prioritized areas of insurgent activity according to FARC's dispositions and activities—and outlined sub-plans for the group's neutralization. FARC's demise was to be achieved via the tested technique of "holding" in "strategic maintenance areas," where the situation was already considered in hand, while concentrating forces in "strategic operational areas" where insurgents still operated freely. The first such operational area was Cundinamarca, the state surrounding Bogota, which throughout 2003 was systematically cleared of major insurgent presence. So complete was the effort that FARC assessments outlined a disaster of the first magnitude, even as the security forces "moved on" to the insurgent base complexes in the east, especially in the area of the former *Zona*.

"Moved on," of course, has meant only a concentration of forces for the purpose of conducting the continuous operations, unlimited in time but directed at a particular space, that the Joint Command has termed *masa dispersa* (dispersed mass).[8] These are conducted under tight operational security. Once Cundinamarca was cleared, Fuerza de Tarea Conjunta assumed priority of effort and systematically combed the "strategic rearguard," as FARC termed its decades-old base complexes, restoring government presence and popular freedom of movement and livelihood. A particular chore was to deal with the numerous and widespread unmarked minefields FARC had emplaced.

Challenge of Assessing COIN Progress

Uribe was able to deliver the state commitment, strategic framework, and enhanced resources that propelled take-off. While he provided the dynamic

COLAR soldiers imitate a FARC *cortina*, a kind of human wave assault, during training. Realistic training courtesy of lessons learned has been one result of the army's transformation.

leadership, the Defense Ministry's job was to offer further guidance but, in particular, to engage in matters of policy that allowed the military forces to exist and operate. A confusion of roles—a desire to lead the military rather than manage it—led to the replacement of Defense Minister Ramirez in November 2003. Ramirez had clashed repeatedly with the military leadership. CG Joint Command Jorge Mora also stepped down.

The Minister and CG were replaced, respectively, by Jorge Alberto Uribe Echevarria and Carlos Ospina. Moving into the CG COLAR position was the COLAR Director of Operations, MG Martin Orlando Carreño Sandoval. Mora had planned to step down in December, in any case, so the transition was smooth. Minister Uribe adopted a more careful style than his predecessor, and there were no significant changes in the 2004 planning and policy guidance: the military was left to lead the implementation of the counterinsurgency. In this, however, Carreño did not inspire the support necessary to keep his position more than a year. He was replaced in November 2004 by the Fuerza de Tarea Conjunta commander, MG Reinaldo Castellanos Trujillo. Subsequently, Minister Uribe himself, weary of criticism in congress, stepped down and was replaced by Camilo Ospina Bernal. Castellanos, however, was himself replaced only a year later by MG Mario Montoya.[9] Ultimately, in the second Uribe administration, both Carlos Ospina and Minister Ospina stepped down, and Ospina's deputy, LTG Freddy Padilla, became CG

Joint Forces. Juan Manuel Santos became Minister of Defense.

Such personnel upheaval notwithstanding, military support for the *Democratic Security and Defense Policy* proceeded in near textbook fashion. Politically, the danger was that Colombia would become distracted, as it was by the debate that surfaced about Uribe's then still low-key effort to be allowed to run for a second term, which required constitutional amendment. To oppose a second term for Uribe all but demanded that his first-term record be attacked. The attacks, however, did not involve direct assault on the security forces; rather, they argued that too much effort was being placed upon security, that "social matters" were just as important. The precise point of Uribe's approach, however, was that the second was not possible without the first.

Nevertheless, what emerged was a FARC response that sought to strike at the counterinsurgents' *will* to persevere. If Colombia's operational implementation of its plan had been successful just where the United States had stumbled in Iraq and Afghanistan—the Colombians successively dominating areas and restoring government writ—this did not prevent critics at home and abroad from attacking Bogota's approach. Their criticism allowed FARC to appear much stronger than it was. Insurgent tactical assaults were given strategic consequence with spin. This spin came not from FARC, but from the president's political enemies and from the media's often dubious reporting. The result was that FARC's minor tactics, inconsequential in and of themselves, stood a chance of generating strategic reversal for the state.

It could be argued that this is the very stuff of insurgency, where every action is intended to have a political consequence. True as far as it goes, the observation misses the point that, in today's international environment, what insurgents and terrorists do is in one sense irrelevant: few citizens accept their proffered agendas. But their actions provide ammunition for political attacks occasioned by the normal infighting inherent to democratic politics. Rather than targeting their intended mass base, the insurgents try to cut corners by attacking the will of their enemies. This is what happened in Colombia.

As it was, Uribe was able to adroitly fend off the attacks even while successfully overseeing and completing an arduous process of constitutional amendment and reelection that culminated in an unprecedented second term in office (beginning August 2006) after another first-round victory in the presidential vote. Uribe's win ensured that operational implementation of his strategic framework would continue. This was significant because the approach, as discussed above, was both correct and sustainable, thereby satisfying two of the three requirements of successful counterinsurgency.

What the political controversy highlighted was a little understood element in successful counterinsurgency. With a correct and sustainable approach in place, the counterinsurgent "plays for the breaks," those shifts in the internal or external situation that work against the insurgent and favor the state. Such play normally requires an extended period of time and leads to a "protracted war." This long time-frame makes it difficult for democracies to sustain counterinsurgency campaigns, particularly in the present world environment where there is little agreement upon strategic ends and means, much less operational and tactical concerns. Yet it does not in any way obviate the reality that there is no other option.

How then was the state to think about the tremendous progress it had made in Uribe's first term? What future steps would allow Colombia not only to assess sustainability but to continue its success?

What drives any assessment is the nature of the situation on the ground *as it can be measured*. Efforts to judge COIN progress in Colombia have produced a variety of statistics. These have been used to support both proponents of *Democratic Security*'s efficacy and opponents who question, if not the approach as a whole, certain of its emphases and components.

Statistics, in other words, are a double-edged sword:

● First, there is the *political* reality: efforts to arrive at metrics for assessing the progress of an approach, although absolutely necessary, take on meaning only as they are interpreted by an audience. All parties to the present Colombian political debate, for example, agree that by any metric utilized (e.g., a decline in kidnapping and murder), there has been demonstrable (even stunning) progress towards normalcy. Yet there is little agreement as to what normalcy, as an end-state, should actually look like.

● Second, there is the *empirical* reality that the causes behind insurgency cannot be statistically explained. Hence, to measure COIN progress by gauging how much the country has moved toward a notional state of normalcy is like looking at annual percentage increases in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) without actually being able to measure the GDP itself. "Progress," then, ends up being a state of popular mind, a belief by the populace (and its leaders) that the situation is improving.

In the matter of statistics, a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators has given rise in Colombia to the judgment that progress is being made. This does not mean, however, that merely advocating "more of the same" is the prescription for further action so much as "staying the course."

Democratic Security has been built upon acceptance by the political authorities of the Uribe administration position that the Gordian knot in Colombia's security impasse is FARC. Only FARC continues to seek state power while simultaneously demonstrating the capacity to negate state armed capacity. ELN, the "other" insurgent group, is a nuisance, while the vigilante AUC (*Autodefensas Unida Colombia*, or United Self-Defense Groups of Colombia), the so-called paramilitaries, have historically been a consequence of lack of state presence. As the state has expanded its control, the AUC has been willing to strike demobilization deals. ELN has likewise indicated a desire to open a peace process. In contrast, negotiations with FARC have not proved successful, so only armed action by the state remains. The desired goal is reincorporation of FARC into the political process, but it is recognized that incentive must be created by armed action.

Compelling FARC to undertake a course of action necessarily involves neutralizing its ability to remain viable. Thus, the intent of the government's counterinsurgency grid is to attack FARC's ability to recruit, sustain itself, move, and initiate actions. Domination of populated areas such as Cundinamarca prepared the way for the present operations against FARC's "strategic rearguard" in the former *Zona* and other southern areas. These operations continue to this day due to the sheer size of the counter-state FARC constructed over four decades. The forces committed to these and other priority efforts have *not* been robbed from established counterinsurgency

areas (effectively, the army's divisional zones), but deployed from new assets. Their actions are sustainable virtually indefinitely.

That the government's operations have made life more difficult for FARC is unquestionable. But just how difficult is the query that cannot be answered definitively. The least reliable way to judge results is to match FARC casualties with the organization's order of battle. The top figure of some 17,000 combatants (reached during the Pastrana administration) is now put at below 13,000, with most counts claiming that AUC combatants at the time of their demobilization actually outnumbered their FARC rivals (ELN was perhaps a fifth the size of FARC). It is not that these numbers are necessarily wrong; rather, it is unlikely that they mean much given the realities of an insurgent movement operating with a minimal but adequate support base and funding generated outside any popular base.

During the Mora and Ospina tenures, the need to count insurgent casualties was not driven by the Colombian military, which made a concerted effort to stay away from the "Vietnam body-count trap." Instead, the political authorities (many of whom have business backgrounds) and the press felt it necessary to give the public the numerical equivalent of sound bites that elevated quantitative measures to heights the military itself did not

courtesy of author

Greatly debilitated, FARC (and ELN) now rely on terror. Soldiers guard the site of a bombing in La Union, Antioquia Department. Insurgents had bombed the houses of 11 families who had rallied against them.

subscribe to. The military's approach was clear if one inspected its internal documents. These gave pride of place not to body count, but to measures of FARC's initiative and armed capacity (such as the ability to initiate major attacks).

Not only do the military's metrics contrast sharply with the indicators favored by the political authorities and the press, but they also serve to highlight the abuse of statistics that became a routine part of the present political debate surrounding President Uribe's desire to earn a second term. Critics of Uribe and the *Democratic Security* approach regularly claimed to possess data showing an explosion of FARC incidents and initiative, but their position was not backed by realities on the ground. What must ultimately drive any assessment is the *nature* of the incidents being counted. The military knows this and has incorporated such an approach into its own analysis. *Nature* can involve anything from size to context.

An insurgent group such as FARC, forced from mobile warfare back to guerrilla and terror actions, of necessity needs to up the ante. This FARC attempted to do by cultivating an association with the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), which sent some two dozen training teams into FARC areas before the pipeline was effectively shut down in 2001. FARC efforts to utilize a variety of PIRA terror techniques rarely or never seen in Colombia, ranging from the precise placement of bombs to inflict maximum structural damage, to the use of secondary explosions to wreak havoc upon crews responding to incidents, were all designed to inflict maximum casualties—and generate maximum terror. That they failed to do so left FARC with the one option it has now pursued: pinprick attacks that can produce tactical heat but lack strategic fire.

In only one way can FARC's tactical actions have strategic or even operational significance: if they can be parlayed into political consequence. Strategic, operational, and even tactical techniques for using violent action to effect political gain are a central element of the people's war approach used by FARC. They are recognized as such in FARC doctrine, and they were critical to the FMLN effort in El Salvador that was so important to FARC's doctrinal evolution. A key issue is whether FARC is attempting to use its tactical efforts to exploit rifts in the Colombian political spectrum. Captured docu-

ments and information gleaned from prisoner interrogations demonstrate that FARC is well aware that by inflicting casualties and appearing to be "alive" despite all that the security forces have done, it can provoke political problems of sufficient magnitude to damage or even end *Democratic Security*.

It is ironic that the strategic progress of *Democratic Security* is unlikely to negate completely FARC's tactical ability to initiate guerrilla and terror actions. But the group's "successes" in these low-level actions really count for little. For instance, there have been many mine casualties among the security forces, but that has little to do with anything save FARC's extensive use of the internationally banned weapons. Mines do not hold towns and villages, and they do not create sympathy for the insurgents; they are indiscriminate defensive weapons. Most COLAR casualties from mines, in fact, have been suffered as the army pushes ever deeper into insurgent base areas and dismantles the FARC counter-state.

Eliminating the "strategic rear guard" is crucial. There is a common misconception that "guerrillas" are self-sustaining, obtaining all they need either by

Democratic Security covers all bases: comic books, cartoon shows, a website, school appearances, and other psyop products have been deployed to win over Colombia's newest generation.

generating it or capturing it from the government. In reality, insurgents can rarely if ever obtain crucial components of their war effort, notably arms and ammunition, from within the battlespace and thus must pursue outside acquisition. FARC indeed gets most of its weapons and ammunition from abroad. Even food, as demonstrated by massive caches uncovered in the strategic rearguard throughout 2004 and 2005, is stockpiled and pushed forward to combatants. Eliminating the base areas and their stockpiles therefore eliminates FARC's ability to mass and forces it to engage in terror and guerrilla warfare, which can be much more easily managed by the enhanced capabilities and presence of the state.

Faced with this profound threat to its viability as an insurgent movement, FARC must respond. As a consequence, there should be no doubt that "violence" in Colombia will continue indefinitely. Yet the state should continue to do precisely what it is already doing: meeting the insurgency in a "correct" and "sustainable" manner. The Uribe approach is certainly correct in the way it conceptualizes the problem and seeks to respond to it. The approach is also sustainable, in its present form, because it demands no unacceptable investments of human or material resources–or of will. It will face adjustments if the U.S. contribution ends, but it is unlikely this will happen for some time.

What has not registered fully on the Colombian political class is that a correct and sustainable approach is always put in place in order to play for the breaks. There is no formula for how long the process will take. In the Philippines, OPLAN *Lambat Betag* (Net Trap) took approximately six years to produce dramatic results; in Thailand, Prime Minister (PM) Order No. 66/23, "The Policy for the Fight to Defeat the Communists," required roughly half that after its implementation.

Still, if the spectacularly successful Peruvian approach against *Sendero Luminoso* took just somewhere in between the length of these two campaigns, normalcy in Ulster was achieved only through a grueling 25-year effort. And Ulster was but the size of the small American state of Connecticut, with just half its population. Colombia is the size of California, Nevada, Utah, and Idaho, with a population of 42 million. Hence, patience must be as much a part of the equation as a desire to create precisely the correct mix of techniques that will produce demonstrable results.

Lessons Learned

Formal announcements in the first quarter of the new Uribe administration seemed to portend a necessary shift in emphasis in *Democratic Security* implementation, from strike to consolidation. Yet the announcements occurred even as a string of distressing events shook public confidence in the administration. Particularly disturbing were several highly publicized episodes of institutional corruption apparently driven by the need to produce quantifiable results in response to political demands, as well as evidence of political links between prominent backers of Uribe and the outlawed AUC. Nevertheless, the unease and its attendant debate served the useful purpose of highlighting two issues that emerge time and again in the assessment of any counterinsurgency:

● *Leadership matters*. Uribe has proven to be the right man at the right time, as have figures in other places and times—one thinks of Magsaysay in the Philippines or Templer in Malaya. Four and a half years, which is all that Uribe has had so far, is not enough time to see through a counterinsurgency. Uribe is keenly aware that his success in winning a second term has brought with it the responsibility not merely to do more of the same, but to recalibrate success in such manner as to deliver "victory." Defining victory in a counterinsurgency, as indicated above, is tricky, but clearly the metrics any political actor uses to measure his standing will be the benchmarks. Overall, Uribe has offered a model of skillful, dynamic leadership.

It is the armed forces that have been the key element, because they provide the security upon which all else that has happened depends. Can they continue to function in the manner of the past eight years? Have the myriad reforms been institutionalized? The answer would seem to be affirmative on both counts. It might especially be noted that institutionalization is as much a function of individuals as structure and procedures. Colombia's military reformers have been followed by others who, in their career particulars, look much like Mora and Ospina.

Despite the optimistic assessment above, we should not underestimate the extent of the challenge facing the military, mainly COLAR, as a result of its expansion and increased operational tempo. COLAR was previously a draftee force of "in and out" enlisted ranks led by a professional

officer corps. It now is one-third volunteer. These individuals expect to make the military a career. A host of issues, from family welfare to promotion requirements to NCO rank, must be codified and then allowed to mature.

Adding to the challenge is the continuous nature of the small-unit operations conducted to keep FARC on the run. Everything from block-leave procedures to family counseling (e.g., to cope with a rising level of turmoil within families in a force that historically has had relatively few disciplinary problems) has had to be instituted. Topping all this is the ever-present threat of corruption in an environment saturated with the easy money of the narcotics trade.

In the field, the strategic initiative has seen some tactical setbacks. This was predictable. The insurgents, after all, also have a learning curve. As FARC has been forced to break up into small units, the security forces have done likewise. This has created opportunities for FARC to surprise isolated or tactically sloppy government units with rapid, medium-sized concentrations that then disperse. The technique is not new, but recent actions have seen FARC grappling for a middle ground between "large" and "small" concentrations, so that it can attack platoon- or squad-size positions without exposing itself too much. Such measures, though seeking tactical initiative, are strategically and operationally defensive—and an indication of just how successful the government has been. Before the military reforms kicked in, in the Samper/early Pastrana years, FARC fielded large columns that would attack even reinforced companies.

Beginning in February 2005, FARC units, responding to instructions from the organization's secretariat, began an effort to inflict maximum casualties. Their intent, obviously, was to exploit the pressure for "no bad news" placed upon the military by the political structure. They sought to spook at least a proportion of the Colombian "chattering classes" into viewing the normal give-and-take of tactical action as a sign of larger strategic defect. Although they could have a strategic impact by manipulating perception and spurring on the debate about "sustainability," in reality, FARC's small, hard-to-prevent tactical successes have meant nothing to the strategic situation.

The current favorable strategic situation, some have argued, could be undone in a flash by follow-

on personalities. Is this likely? No, for all of the reasons discussed above. In particular, both the reforms and the demands of internal war have accelerated change in military (particularly COLAR) leadership. Warfighters who would be as comfortable in the U.S. system as their own have begun to dominate promotion boards, with "service in the field" as the salient factor in selection. This is a critical element, since the military is the shield for all else that occurs in the counterinsurgency.

As combat-tested officers have begun to dominate the services, the question emerges as to what sort of men they are (there are no female general officers in Colombia). In terms of the institution they have made, the results disprove the constant drumbeat about lax standards and abuses that outsiders, especially international human rights organizations, often make. To the contrary, the military, under its reform-minded leadership, has consistently emerged in Colombian polls as one of the most respected institutions in the country, with favorable numbers reaching near the 80th percentile.

In sum, the reforms have endeavored to demand more from officers professionally, particularly as regards the mechanics and theory of warfighting. This has resulted in greater knowledge at the strategic and operational levels of war as well as increased tactical expertise.

Put together, military popularity and effectiveness have undoubtedly contributed to President Uribe's own consistently high rating with the public. It remains to be seen how recent scandals will affect his position, but the damage is unlikely to be long-lived or deep.

For his part, Uribe has dealt with the military in an increasingly sophisticated and collegial manner. He especially grew to respect the professional judgment of Carlos Ospina, when Ospina was CG Joint Command. This allowed Ospina to exercise a degree of influence and to be heeded when he counseled caution at appropriate times. It remains to be seen, in the post-Ospina command environment, if Uribe will be so dominant as to upset the civil-military balance necessary for the armed political campaign that is counterinsurgency.

● *The strategic approach is critical.* The strategic approach, with its operational (lines of action and campaigns) implementation, must be the foremost concern of leadership in a counterinsurgency. To

NCOs conduct hand-to-hand training at a professional school. Improved NCO professionalism is another sign of army reform.

this end, Uribe was fortunate to have officers of the caliber of Mora and Ospina. If Mora saw COLAR through its early transformation, Ospina not only finished the job, but implemented the central operations of Plan Patriota. He had to do this even as resources remained constrained and demands rose for greater emphasis upon other national priorities.

It is not enough, say critics, to regain control of the population; areas seized and held must be consolidated. The military is keenly aware of the point at issue—and has U.S.-supported programs designed to address this dimension of the conflict. The real questions revolve around resource allocation and timing. Here, Uribe has stood his ground, remaining true to the spirit of his strategy: security is the necessary basis for all that follows. Now, in his second term, he has indicated that he intends to exploit counterinsurgency gains and put additional emphasis upon consolidation.

It is precisely the substantial progress made in restoring a semblance of "normal life" that has allowed internal debate over other issues to surface, to include discussion of trends in civil-military relations. The latter is often overlooked in judging the effectiveness of military leaders, but here, too, Colombia has been well served. Ospina, in particular, sought to implement a very "American" vision of the military's subordinate relationship to civil authority.

However, as with the emphasis upon combat as the key determinant for promotion, so the reinforcement of civilian authority as the final word

in matters of moment has not sat well with some military elements. It is President Uribe's understanding that healthy civil-military relations depend upon an invisible line not being crossed—by either side—that has tempered any military discontent and made operations function as smoothly as they have under various defense ministers. The military has maintained firmly its right to determine operational and tactical particulars, and President Uribe seems to have acquiesced.

That COLAR continues to transition from its "German" heritage (transmitted historically through Chilean vectors) to an "American" model has been stated directly in command briefings to officers. (The air force has long looked to America for inspiration, the navy to the British.) Yet this has not led to an uncritical adoption of either U.S. forms or procedures. American difficulties in Iraq, stemming at least in part from the intervention of civilian leadership in military operational efforts, have been a poignant reminder that a balance must be struck between obedience to civilian authority and institutional independence. In Colombia, what this balance should be has been left deliberately indeterminate.

Challenges to Come

In the larger sense, Uribe's national policy has always stood upon three legs, not merely security but also fiscal health and social development. Fiscal health is necessary for all else to proceed and has given no grounds for complaint. Social development remains at the heart of all illegal actors' ability to recruit manpower. It, too, has been addressed by progress in the other two sides of the triangle. That one would wish for greater emphasis or speed is a judgment call that imprudently ignores demonstrable progress.

Although the *Democratic Security* approach might not require major adjustments, there are strategic areas that bear close monitoring, especially by Washington in this, a critical theater of the battle against global insurgency:

● *The battle is not over.* U.S. support, both materiel and personnel, will play an important role for the foreseeable future. It must be maintained. Unfortunately, a tendency has emerged in U.S. circles that seeks to interpret realities on the ground

in terms that speak to the artificial deadlines created by funding legislation. This is extraordinarily dangerous, particularly the notion that the war is won and it is time to talk of winding down U.S. aid and converting Colombian forces to other uses (such as United Nations peacekeeping).

● *The U.S. Government needs to grasp the true nature of Colombia's struggle*. In some U.S. political and media circles, the conflict is still labeled counter-narcotics, *or* counter-terrorism, *or* counterinsurgency, *or* something else. It is all of these things and must be approached in a unified manner. This is precisely what the Colombians have been fighting to achieve, and they have made dramatic strides, although these have come at considerable political and personal cost for key players such as President Uribe, former Minister Uribe, and former CG Joint Command Ospina.

● *The drive toward unity of effort must extend to the U.S. side*. Greater effort is necessary to raise the level of awareness in Washington that what happens in Colombia underpins our Latin American position. This is not a new domino theory so much as a recognition that, in the present strategic environment, Latin America is the forgotten theater, Southern Command the forgotten command, and Colombia our forgotten but closest, most reliable ally. At a time when the forces of the radical left are again on the march throughout the hemisphere, to include advocating a severely restricted fight against drugs, Colombia's interests coincide with those of the United States. More than that, Colombia remains a stable democratic state committed to reform and the market economy. Its contrast with an increasingly unstable and strategically dangerous Venezuela could not be greater.

● *Operationally, recognition of the points above should lead to an enhanced relationship between U.S. and Colombian forces and the two countries' strategic cultures*. Military cooperation could be enhanced in myriad ways, in particular by augmenting training programs so that they more accurately reflect the close relations between Washington and Bogota. Simultaneously, both governments should encourage closer relations between U.S. and Colombian centers of strategic thought, risk assessment, and regional analysis. Colombia has a

level of expertise and analytical capability surpassing any in Latin America, but its talents have been underutilized. They could make a greater contribution to *Democratic Security,* as well as the larger war against terrorism.

There are other areas one could highlight, such as the desire for even greater force strengths and mobility assets. Yet these must be carefully balanced against available resources and the system's ability to absorb any more inputs. Burnishing what the Uribe administration has already done should pay greater gains than seeking to load any more requirements onto the system.

What bears repeating is the point to which this analysis has returned often: the present effort is both correct and sustainable; it is the right strategic posture required for progress and popular security. Hence, continued care must be exercised to ensure that *Democratic Security* remains a multifaceted approach—a strengthening of the state's governance, finances, and democratic capacity enabled by the ever more powerful and capable shield provided by the security forces. By themselves, these facets are not the *solution*—that lies in the use of *legitimacy* to *mobilize* response against those using political violence for illegitimate ends—but they will certainly *enable* it. **MR**

NOTES

1. At one point Colombia was third in U.S. foreign aid, behind only Israel and Egypt.

2. A sixth division was organized during the Uribe administration from what previously had been the Joint Task Force (which had been positioned in the extreme south). The COLAR order of battle thus became I Division (2, 4, 11, 17 Brigades); II Div (5, 14, 16, 18 Brigades); III Division (3, 8 Brigades); IV Division (7, 9 Brigades); V Division (1, 6, 13 Brigades); and VI Division (12, 26, 27 Brigades). Later, in July 2005, a seventh division was created when the very large I Division area was split. The new VII Division (based in Medellin) had assigned to it 17, 11 (both from I Div) and 14 Brigade (from II Div). The former Caribbean-bounded I Div heartland became a joint command. Additionally, the national reaction force, or FUDRA (*Fuerza de Despliegue Rapido*), which matured during the Pastrana administration, is a light division equivalent, with 3 mobile brigades and 1 Special Forces brigade (of 4 SF battalions). An independent task force (Omega) of virtual division strength operates in the south.

3. Literally, "Commanding General of the Military Forces," which accurately defines the authority and responsibility inherent to the position. I have rendered it as "CG Joint Command" to facilitate my analysis.

4. See *Democratic Security and Defense Policy*, 23-30.

5. Ibid, 42.

6. Recent official documents have dropped "nacional" from their translations of Ministerio de Defensa Nacional.

7. Initially, the local-forces were called *Soldados Campesinos* (Peasant Soldiers), a name the troops themselves disliked—Colombia, despite its substantial agricultural sector, is classified as approximately three-quarters urban, and the units were universally located in rural towns. Hence, *Soldados de mi Pueblo* ("Home Guards" would be the most useful rendering) came to be used simultaneously.

8. *Masa dispersa*, or "dispersed mass," is a slang rendering of the technique. It is not a formal term.

9. MG Mario Montoya was promoted to lieutenant general (the highest rank in the Colombian military system) in early December 2006.

ANBAR AWAKENS:
The Tipping Point

**Major Niel Smith, U.S. Army, and
Colonel Sean MacFarland, U.S. Army**

Hard is not hopeless.

—General David Petraeus,
testimony to Congress,
September 2007

Major Niel Smith commanded B Company, 2d Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment, in Tal Afar and then served as a brigade S3 staff officer for current operations in the Ready First during Operation Iraqi Freedom V. He currently is the operations officer at the U.S. Army-Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. MAJ Smith holds a B.A. from James Madison University. His deployments include two tours in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Colonel Sean MacFarland commanded the Ready First Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, in Al Anbar province, returning with the unit in February 2007. He holds a B.S. from the United States Military Academy and an M.S. from Georgia Tech, and he is a graduate of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. COL MacFarland's deployments include Operations Desert Shield/ Desert Storm and two tours as part of Operations Iraqi Freedom. He currently serves as chief of the Iraq Division, Strategic Plans and Policy Office (J5), Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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PHOTO: A U.S. Army Soldier from Task Force 1-35 searches for insurgents across the street from Outpost 293 in Ar Ramadi, Al Anbar Province, Iraq, after the outpost was attacked by mortar and small arms fire, 24 July 2006, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Air Force, TSGT Jeremy T. Lock)

THE STUNNING SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS in Al Anbar province during 2007 fundamentally changed the military and political landscape of Iraq. Many, both in and outside the military (and as late as November 2006), had assessed the situation in Anbar as a lost cause. The "Anbar Awakening" of Sunni tribal leaders and their supporters that began in September 2006 near Ramadi seemed to come out of nowhere. But the change that led to the defeat of Al-Qaeda in Ramadi–what some have called the "Gettysburg of Iraq"— was not a random event.[1] It was the result of a concerted plan executed by U.S. forces in Ramadi. Tactical victory became a strategic turning point when farsighted senior leaders, both Iraqi and American, replicated the Ramadi model throughout Anbar province, in Baghdad, and other parts of the country, dramatically changing the Iraq security situation in the process.

The "Ready First Combat Team"

The 1st Brigade of the 1st Armored Division, the "Ready First Combat Team," was at the center of the Anbar Awakening. When we arrived in Ramadi in June 2006, few of us thought our campaign would change the entire complexion of the war and push Al-Qaeda to the brink of defeat in Iraq. The Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, and Airmen who served in or with our brigade combat team (BCT) enabled the Anbar Awakening through a deliberate, often difficult campaign that combined traditional counterinsurgency (COIN) principles with precise, lethal operations. The skilled application of the same principles and exploitation of success by other great units in Anbar and other parts of Iraq spread the success in Ramadi far beyond our area of operations (AO) at a pace no one could have predicted.

The Ready First enabled the Anbar Awakening by—
- Employing carefully focused lethal operations.
- Securing the populace through forward presence.
- Co-opting local leaders.
- Developing competent host-nation security forces.
- Creating a public belief in rising success.
- Developing human and physical infrastructure.

The execution of this approach enabled the brigade to set conditions, recognize opportunity, and exploit success when it came, to create a remarkable turnaround.

Ramadi on the Brink

In the summer of 2006, Ramadi by any measure was among the most dangerous cities in Iraq.[2] The area of operations averaged over three times more

attacks per capita than any other area in the country. With the exception of the embattled government center and nearby buildings held by a company of Marines, Al-Qaeda-related insurgents had almost complete freedom of movement throughout the city. They dominated nearly all of the city's key structures, including the city hospital, the largest in Anbar province. Their freedom of movement

allowed them to emplace complex subsurface IED belts, which rendered much of the city no-go terrain for U.S. and Iraqi Army (IA) forces.

The situation in Ramadi at this point was markedly different from that in Tal Afar, where the Ready First began its tour of duty. Although Ramadi was free of the sectarian divisions that bedeviled Tal Afar, it was the provincial capital, it was at least four times more populous, and it occupied a choke point along the key transit routes west of Baghdad. Perhaps recognizing these same factors, Al-Qaeda had declared Ramadi the future capital of its "caliphate" in Iraq. Local Iraqi security was essentially nonexistent. Less than a hundred Iraqi police reported for duty in June, and they remained in their stations, too intimidated to patrol. Additionally, the fledgling IA brigade nearest Ramadi had little operational experience.

In late 2005, the Sunni tribes around Ramadi attempted to expel Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQIZ) after growing weary of the terrorist group's heavy-handed, indiscriminate murder and intimidation campaign.[3] A group calling itself the Al Anbar People's Council formed from a coalition of local Sunni sheiks and Sunni nationalist groups. The council intended to conduct an organized resistance against both coalition forces and Al-Qaeda elements, but, undermanned and hamstrung by tribal vendettas, it lacked strength and cohesion. A series of tribal leader assassinations ultimately brought down the group, which ceased to exist by February 2006. This

A smoke plume caused by a terrorist attack at the government center in downtown Ramadi, Iraq, 13 March 2006.

U.S. Army, SFC David D. Isakson

collapse set the conditions that the brigade found when it arrived in late May. The assassinations had created a leadership vacuum in Ramadi and, by cutting tribal ties to outside tribal centers, had isolated the city. For their part, the tribes had adopted a passive posture, not wishing to antagonize a powerful Al-Qaeda presence in and around Ramadi. In short, as the Ready First prepared to move from Tal Afar, their new AO was essentially in enemy hands.

Actions in Summer and Autumn, 2006

The situation in Ramadi clearly required a change in coalition tactics. We had to introduce Iraqi security forces (ISF) into the city and the rural areas controlled by the enemy. But, even with a total of five Marine and Army maneuver battalion task forces, the Ready First did not have enough combat power to secure such a large city by itself. The Iraqi Army and at some point, the Iraqi Police (IP), had to be brought into play. They would help, but we understood that without the support of the local leaders and populace, any security gains achieved solely through lethal operations would be temporary at best. In particular, we had to overcome the fallout from the unsuccessful tribal uprising of 2005. We had to convince tribal leaders to rejoin the fight against Al-Qaeda.

Developing the plan. We reckoned the brigade had to isolate the insurgents, deny them sanctuary, and build Iraqi security forces, especially police forces, to succeed. The staff developed a plan that

centered on attacking Al-Qaeda's safe havens and establishing a lasting presence there to directly challenge the insurgents' dominance of the city, disrupting their operations, attriting their numbers, and gaining the confidence of the people. We intended to take the city and its environs back one neighborhood at a time by establishing combat outposts and developing a police force in the secured neighborhoods. The plan called for simultaneously engaging local leaders in an attempt to find those who had influence, or "wasta," and to get their support. We recognized this as a critical part of the plan, because without their help, we would not be able to recruit enough police to take back the entire city.

We also realized that in the plan's initial stages, our efforts at fostering local cooperation were highly vulnerable. A concerted AQIZ attack on the supportive sheiks could quickly derail the process, as it had in 2005-2006. We therefore took some extraordinary measures to ensure the survival of tribal leaders who "flipped" to our side. We established neighborhood watches that involved deputizing screened members of internal tribal militias as "Provincial Auxiliary Iraqi Police," authorizing them to wear uniforms, carry weapons, and provide security within the defined tribal area. In the more important tribal areas, combat outposts manned by U.S. or IA forces would protect major routes and markets. In a few cases, we also planned to provide direct security to key leaders' residences, to include placing armored vehicles at checkpoints along the major access roads to their neighborhoods.

We designed our information operations (IO) efforts to alienate the people from the insurgents while increasing the prestige of supportive tribal leaders. We also made friendly sheiks the conduits
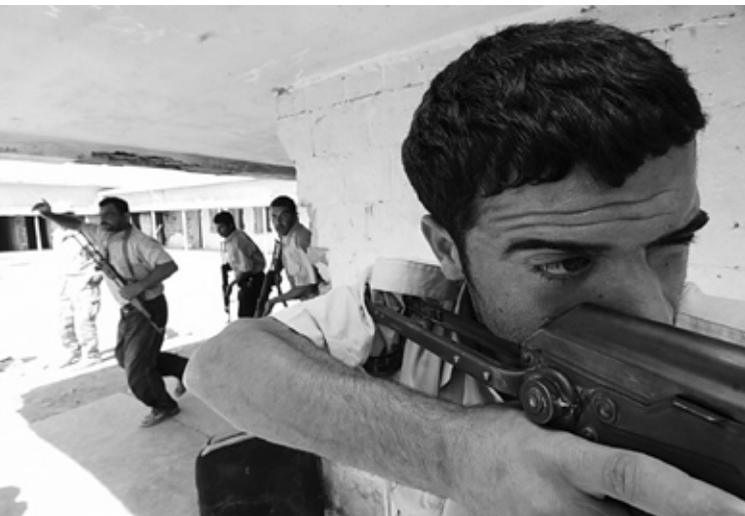
Iraqi police recruits guard the perimeter during close-quarters combat training at the police training academy in Ramadi, Iraq, 25 September 2006.

for humanitarian aid efforts, such as free fuel disbursements. Wherever we established improved security, we established civil military operations centers (CMOCs) and began the process of restoring services to the area. After securing Ramadi General Hospital, we began an extensive effort to improve its services and to advertise it throughout the city. Prior to our operation there in early July 2006, the hospital's primary function had been treating wounded insurgents, with most citizens afraid to enter the facility. We also took a different IO tack with the sheiks. Instead of telling them that we would leave soon and they must assume responsibility for their own security, we told them that we would stay as long as necessary to defeat the terrorists. That was the message they had been waiting to hear. As long as they perceived us as mere interlopers, they dared not throw in their lot with ours. When they began to think of us as reliable partners, their attitudes began to change. Still, we had to prove that we meant what we were saying.

Experience in Tal Afar taught us that competent local police forces were vital for long-term success. An AQIZ intimidation campaign had all but eliminated the previous police force, and a suicide bomber killed dozens of potential recruits during a recruiting drive in January 2006, an event that caused recruitment to shut down for six months. In June 2006, the Ramadi IP force claimed approximately 420 police officers out of 3386 authorized, and only about 140 of these officers ever showed up to work, with less than 100 present for duty on any given day. We realized that new recruiting was the key to building an effective police force.

Recruiting local security forces. Our desire to recruit local Iraqis into the IP was the catalyst for the Awakening movement's birth in September 2006. The way we went about it helped to prove that we were reliable partners, that we could deliver security to the sheiks in a way that broke the cycle of Al-Qaeda murder and intimidation. In the bargain, the Government of Iraq would assume the burden of paying their tribesmen to provide their security. The situation was a winner any way you looked at it. The tribes soon saw that instead of being the hunted, they could become the hunters, with well trained, paid, and equipped security forces backed up by locally positioned coalition forces.

We began the process by shifting our recruit-

ing center to a more secure location, at one of our forward operating bases (FOBs) located closer to the tribes that had indicated a willingness to join the ISF. This shift helped to deter attacks and other forms of intimidation that had undermined previous recruiting drives. We maintained secrecy by communicating information about the recruiting drive only to sympathetic sheiks who wanted to protect tribesmen sent to join the IP. This technique resulted in a steadily growing influx of new recruits. Over the six-month period from June to December 2006, nearly 4,000 police joined without incident.

This influx taxed the brigade security forces cell, composed of the deputy commander and a small staff of highly capable officers and NCOs. The majority of the population in Al Anbar had either forged ID papers or none at all, so the recruiters had to determine the true identify and reliability of the potential recruits. Insurgent infiltration of the police force was (and still is) a problem in Iraq, and is inevitable; however, the Ready First made use of several methods and technologies to mitigate this risk.

Biometric automated tool sets (BATS) proved extremely useful in screening recruits and preventing previously caught insurgents from joining. Convincing supportive sheiks to vouch for their tribal members was a second filter in the screening process. From June to December, more than 90 percent of police recruits came from tribes supporting the Awakening, and the sheiks knew whom to trust.

> *When U.S. strategy in Iraq called for pulling American forces back to large, heavily protected bases last year, Army Colonel Sean MacFarland was moving in the opposite direction. He built small, more vulnerable combat outposts in Ramadi's most dangerous neighborhoods. 'We did it where Al-Qaeda was strongest,' MacFarland says. The outposts housed U.S. troops, Iraqi security forces, and civil affairs teams. It was a risky strategy that put U.S. soldiers in daily battles with insurgents.*
>
> —Jim Michaels, "An Army colonel's gamble pays off in Iraq," *USA Today*, 30 April 2007.

Our ISF cell understood the importance of paying the new police to prove that they were respected and their service was valued. As a collateral benefit, the growing IP force also created a small engine for economic development by providing jobs in addition to security for the local community. Each recruit received a bonus if accepted for training. Officers also received a bonus if they served as active police members for 90 days. These boosts injected more vitality into the economy.

New Iraqi Army recruits also received incentives to join. One obstacle to recruitment was that locals were hesitant to join the IA because of the possibility of receiving an assignment far from home. To mitigate this, IA Division G-1s assigned the jundi (junior Soldiers) to an Iraqi battalion close to their homes. This "station of choice" option helped eliminate a major constraint of recruitment possibilities for the IA.

Both Iraqi Police and IA jundi assigned to Ramadi were required to attend a one-week urban combat training course run by the Ready First's field artillery unit to ensure that they could fight and survive once they joined their units. This focused training improved their confidence and discipline in urban combat, and significantly enhanced ISF effectiveness in small-unit actions. In time, the local IA brigade took responsibility for conducting the IA and IP courses with a cadre of drill sergeants, which helped forge closer bonds between the two services and instilled an increased sense of confidence in the Iraqi security forces.

The Ready First made every effort to help unqualified Iraqi recruits become police officers or soldiers. The most frequent disqualifier of recruits was the literacy requirement. The brigade commenced adult literacy classes, on a trial basis, for the illiterate recruits. These classes also had a positive, albeit unintended, collateral benefit. As security improved, hundreds of women enrolled in the classes—about five times more than we expected. The fact that women eventually felt safe enough to seek education reinforced the impression of improved security while directly attacking Al-Qaeda's ability to influence the population.

As the benefits of cooperation with our recruiting efforts became obvious to the various local sheiks, more and more of them expressed an interest in cooperating with us. This interest eventually resulted in an Al-Qaeda reprisal that, although tragic, was instrumental in bringing the sheiks together in the Awakening movement.

Securing the populace. Past coalition operations in Ramadi had originated from large FOBs on the outskirts of town, with most forces conducting "drive-by COIN" (or combat)—they exited the FOB, drove to an objective or patrolled, were attacked, exchanged fire, and returned to base. Because the physical geography and road network in Ramadi enabled the enemy to observe and predict coalition movements, nearly every movement into the center of the city was attacked multiple times by improvised explosive devices, RPGs, or small arms, often with deadly results. Moreover, the patrols played into the insurgents' information operations campaign: Al-Qaeda exploited any collateral damage by depicting coalition Soldiers as aloof occupiers and random dispensers of violence against the populace.

It was clear that to win over the sheiks and their people, our BCT would have to move into the city and its contested areas. Thus, we decided to employ a tactic we had borrowed from the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment and used successfully in Tal Afar: the combat outpost, or COP. Our COPs normally consisted of a tank or infantry company team based in a defensible local structure in a disputed area. Eventually, the COPs included an Iraqi Army company wherever possible as they became emboldened by our presence. Later, we began to establish Iraqi Police substations at or near the COPs as well. At this early stage, the outposts provided "lily pads" for mechanized quick-reaction forces, safe houses for special operations units, and security for civil-military operations centers. In rural areas, the COPs sometimes doubled as firebases with mortars and counterfire radars.

Because we now maintained a constant presence in disputed neighborhoods, the insurgents could no longer accurately trace and predict our actions. Frequent and random patrols out of the COPs prevented AQIZ from effectively moving and operating within the local populace. At the same time, the COPs enhanced our ability to conduct civil-military operations; intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance (ISR); and IO.

These outposts also acted as "fly bait," especially in the period immediately after a new COP

was established. Experience in Tal Afar taught us that insurgents would attack a newly established outpost using all systems at their disposal, including suicide car bombs. These attacks usually did not end well for the insurgents, who often suffered heavy casualties. During the establishment of the first outpost, in July 2006, the enemy mounted multiple-platoon assaults. The frenzy of attacks on the new outposts culminated in a citywide battle on 24 July 2006 in which AQIZ forces were severely beaten and sustained heavy casualties. By October, attacks were far less fierce, with elements consisting of a handful of men conducting hit-and-run type operations. These noticeable decreases in enemy strength indicated our plan to decimate their ranks was clearly working. Constant coalition presence, insurgent attrition, and loss of insurgent mobility freed the people from intimidation and sapped any support for AQIZ.

The COPs also allowed us to control the infrastructure in Ramadi and use it to once again support the populace. This was the case with the Ramadi General Hospital. We established a COP just outside the hospital's walls while an IA unit secured the premises. Within days, the hospital was providing quality medical attention for the first time in a year, and the IA was detaining wounded insurgents who had come seeking treatment.

We continued to build new outposts in the city and surrounding areas until our redeployment transition began in February 2007. The strategy was not unlike the island-hopping campaign in the Pacific during World War II. With new outposts established in an ever-tightening circle around the inner city, we wrested control of areas away from the insurgents. As areas became manageable, we handed them over to newly trained Iraqi police forces (whom we kept a watchful eye on), and used the relieved forces elsewhere to continue tightening the noose. All these developments in securing the populace required an accompanying development of key alliances with tribal leaders, the history of which is inseparable from the operational story of the Anbar Awakening.

Courting local leaders. Convincing the local sheiks to join us and undertake another uprising was an immense challenge, but obtaining their support was the lynchpin of the second part of our strategy. We knew it would be pivotal when we

> *The police station in Ta'meen, a district of Ramadi, occupies a wreck of a building—its roof shattered by shells, its windows blown out, its walls pockmarked by shrapnel. That is not unusual in Iraq. What makes this station extraordinary is that a city in the heart of the infamous Sunni Triangle, a city that once led the anti-American insurgency, has named it after a U.S. soldier—Captain Travis Patriquin. The honor is well deserved. Captain Patriquin played a little-known, but crucial, role in one of the few American success stories of the Iraq war. He helped to convert Ramadi from one of Iraq's deadliest cities into arguably the safest outside the semi-autonomous Kurdish north. This graveyard for hundreds of American soldiers, which a Marine Corps intelligence report wrote off as a lost cause just a year ago, is where the U.S. military now takes visiting senators to show the progress it is making.*
>
> —Martin Fletcher, "How life returned to the streets in a showpiece city that drove out Al-Qaeda" *The Times*, London, 31 August 2007.

arrived in Ramadi in June. The sheiks' memory of their first, failed attempt at establishing the Al Anbar People's Council (late 2005-early 2006) was the main obstacle to our plan in this regard. The Sunni tribal alliance was fragmented and weak compared to the growing Al-Qaeda forces that controlled Ramadi in those days.

At the same time, area tribal sheiks had no great love for U.S. forces or the Iraqi Army. Early in the

> *[COL MacFarland] agreed to set up police stations in their areas, but only if the sheiks would provide 100 men to serve as police elsewhere in the city. Last year there were roughly 100 police patrolling Ramadi. Now there are about 4,000. And where there were once 4 outposts, there are 24, where Americans and Iraqis live together.*
>
> —Tom Bowman, "U.S. Soldiers, Iraqi Police Unite to Redeem Ramadi," *NPR All Things Considered*, 22 February 2007.

insurgency, they had directly and indirectly supported former-regime nationalist insurgents against U.S. forces, and as a result they had temporarily established an alliance of convenience with AQIZ. Many tribal members were killed or captured combating coalition forces, which diminished the sheiks' ability to provide income for their tribes. These conditions in turn enabled AQIZ to recruit from those families in need of money. Another aggravating factor was that IA forces initially stationed in Anbar consisted largely of southern Iraqi Shi'ites. Ramadi area inhabitants regarded them as agents of the Sadr militia or Badr Corps, with a covert agenda to kill off Sunni tribes and enable a Shi'ite takeover of Anbar.

Nevertheless, the tribal leaders were still fed up with Al Qaeda's violence and frustrated by their own loss of prestige and influence in their traditional heartlands. The brigade staff believed that by offering convincing incentives, we could create a tribal alliance that could produce lasting security in Ramadi. To persuade the tribes to cooperate, we first needed to understand the human terrain in our AO, and that task fell to an outstanding and talented junior officer, Captain Travis Patriquin.

An Arabic-speaking former Special Forces Soldier and an infantry officer assigned as the Ready First's S-9/engagements officer, Patriquin coordinated brigade-level local meetings and discussions. He quickly gained the sheiks' confidence through his language and interpersonal skills and developed strong personal bonds with their families. He strengthened these bonds during meetings between the brigade commander or deputy commanding officer and the sheiks. Battalion and company commanders also worked on improving relations with the townspeople on a daily basis. Thus, the sheiks' growing trust of the brigade's officers led them to support our efforts to reinvigorate police recruiting.

The combined effects of the engagement efforts were eventually hugely successful. However, some staff officers outside the brigade became concerned that we were arming a tribal militia that would fight against Iraqi security forces in the future. To allay those concerns and to pass on the "best practices" we had developed in Ramadi, Captain Patriquin created his now-famous PowerPoint stick-figure presentation "How to Win in Al Anbar."[6] This slideshow perfectly captured the Ready First's concept for winning the tribes over to our side.

We deliberately placed our first IP stations manned with newly recruited Sunni tribesmen where they could protect the tribes that were supplying us with additional recruits. This tactic gave the IPs added incentive to stand and fight and effectively ended Al-Qaeda's murder and intimidation campaign against the men serving in the ISF. In a significant change of circumstance, the newly minted IPs quickly became the hunters, arresting a number of insurgents and uncovering tremendous weapons caches. By the end of July 2006, AQIZ was definitely feeling the pinch.

In reacting to the pressure, Al-Qaeda inadvertently aided our efforts by overplaying its hand. The group launched a series of attacks against the new IP stations. On 21 August, the insurgents attacked a newly established IP station in a tribal stronghold with an immense suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (SVBIED). The IPs, however, refused to be scared away. Despite offers of safe haven at a nearby coalition base, the survivors remained at their posts, ran their tattered flag back up the flagpole, and even began to conduct patrols again that same day.

Hours later, Al-Qaeda attempted to intimidate future recruits by murdering and desecrating the body of a leading local sheik who had been instrumental in our early push at recruiting tribe members into the ISF. The attack inflamed tribal sentiment against AQIZ and drove several fence-sitting tribes to support our police recruitment.

A significant leader for the burgeoning movement emerged in Sittar albu-Risha, a younger sheik who resided on the west side of town and who was reputed to have smuggling and business connections throughout Anbar. In addition to having questions about Sittar's true motives, some were concerned that we would be placing too much stock in a relatively junior sheik and undercutting ongoing negotiations with Anbar tribal leaders who had fled to Jordan. However, with each successful negotiation and demonstration of trustworthiness by Sittar, we were able to whittle away at these reservations.

The Tipping Point

Sheik Sittar was a dynamic figure willing to stand up to Al Qaeda. Other, more cautious, sheiks were happy to let him walk point for the anti-AQIZ

How to Win the War in Al Anbar   by CPT Trav

HI!

This is an American Soldier. We'll call him Joe. Joe wants to win in Al Anbar But sometimes it seems like other people don't share that idea.

How can Joe win in Al Anbar? By fighting the insurgents?

Nice Moustache!!

The Sheik and Joe drink Tea. Mmm good Chai.. Joe says Militias are bad, but Iraqi Police are good. Would the Sheik Let his men join the Iraqi Police? Yes, yes he will. (Iraqi Police stay in their local areas, and can effectively defeat murder and intimidation campaigns by their presence, unlike the Iraqi Army, which might send him somewhere far away..)

Iranian influence on Iraq is bad. I see now. Iraq for Iraqis!!

Moustaches for everyone!

The Sheik brings more Sheiks, more sheiks bring more men. Joe realizes that if he'd done this three years ago, maybe his wife would be happier, and he'd have been home more. Mohammed gets to meet the Sheiks. They realize he's not such a bad guy, which is good for Iraq. Joe grows a moustache, because he realizes that Iraqis like people with moustaches and have a hard time trusting people without one.

EVERYONE WINS! Except terrorists (which is OK because terrorists suck!)

Selected slides from the PowerPoint presentation created by Captain Travis Patriquin. On 6 December 2006, Captain Patriquin was killed in action in Ramadi by an IED. Numerous sheiks attended his memorial service.

tribes in the early days, when victory was far from certain and memories of earlier failed attempts were still fresh. In *The Tipping Point,* Malcolm Gladwell writes that three types of individuals are necessary for a radical change, or a "tipping point," to occur: mavens, salespersons, and connectors. In brief, mavens have the goods, salespersons spread the word, and connectors distribute the goods far and wide.[7] In Ramadi, the Soldiers of the Ready First were the mavens who had the goods—in this case, the ability to form, train, and equip ISF and new leaders. The brigade and battalion commanders acted as salesmen. We identified Sittar as a connector who could get the people to buy into

the Awakening. All the elements were in place for transformation; we only had to decide if we trusted Sittar. When our salesmen decided to take a risk with this connector, the effect was amazing in its speed and reach.

On 9 September 2006 Sittar organized a tribal council, attended by over 50 sheiks and the brigade commander, at which he declared the "Anbar Awakening" officially underway. The Awakening Council that emerged from the meeting agreed to first drive AQIZ from Ramadi, and then reestablish rule of law and a local government to support the people. The creation of the Awakening Council, combined with the ongoing recruitment of local

A power struggle has erupted: al-Qaeda's reign of terror is being challenged. Sheikh Sittar and many of his fellow tribal leaders have cast their lot with the once-reviled U.S. military. They are persuading hundreds of their followers to sign up for the previously defunct Iraqi police. American troops are moving into a city that was, until recently, a virtual no-go area. A battle is raging for the allegiance of Ramadi's battered and terrified citizens and the outcome could have far-reaching consequences.

—Martin Fletcher, "Fighting back: the city determined not to become al-Qaeda's capital," *The Times*, London, 20 November 2006.

security forces, began a snowball effect that resulted in a growing number of tribes either openly supporting the Awakening or withdrawing their support from AQIZ.

Although recruiting and establishing the neighborhood watch units was an important and necessary step to securing Ramadi, it was not sufficient to remove AQIZ influence in the city completely. We needed more police officers who would join us inside the city, which our Soldiers called "the heart of darkness." A critical agreement emerging from the council resulted in commitments to provide more recruits from local tribes to fill out requirements for police forces.

Soon after the council ended, tribes began an independent campaign of eradication and retaliation against AQIZ members living among them. Al-Qaeda's influence in the city began to wane quickly. U.S. and Iraqi units operating from COPs killed or captured AQIZ's most effective elements while resurgent IP and tribal forces raided their caches and safe houses. By late October, nearly every tribe in the northern and western outskirts of Ramadi had publically declared support for the Awakening, and tribes in the dangerous eastern outskirts of the city were sending out feelers about doing the same. The stage was set for a major change in Ramadi.

The Battle of Sufia

AQIZ did not sit idly as it slowly lost its dominance of both the terrain and the populace. Attacks

remained high through October 2006 (Ramadan) inside the city limits while SVBIED attacks against and harassment of new COPs and IP stations located outside the city occurred regularly. These attacks often inflicted casualties on the nascent security forces. Casualties were not enough to slow the Awakening, however, and support continued to expand for the movement.

AQIZ long counted on a secure support base on the east outskirts of town in the Sufia and Julaybah areas. These rural tribal areas were some of the most dangerous in the Ramadi AO, and intelligence indicated they harbored a large support network for the insurgents operating inside the city. AQIZ learned that one of the major sheiks of the Sufia area was considering supporting the Awakening and that he had erected checkpoints to keep out insurgents. Facing a threat to its vital support areas outside of town, AQIZ acted quickly to maintain its grip there.

On 25 November, 30 to 40 gunmen in cars drove into the Albu Soda tribal area and began murdering members of the tribe. AQIZ forces took the tribal militiamen attempting to defend their homes by surprise, killing many while looting and burning their homes. A group of civilians fled in boats across the Euphrates River and reached an Iraqi Army outpost where they breathlessly described what was happening. The IA battalion relayed the information to our brigade TOC, where the operations staff reallocated ISR platforms and immediately called for Captain Patriquin to provide an Iraqi account of the situation.

Within an hour, Patriquin had gained an understanding of the situation through phone calls to the local sheiks. The brigade headquarters quickly made a crucial decision—we would support the Albu Soda tribe in defending itself. The BCT commanders and staff cancelled a planned battalion-sized combined operation in east Ramadi that was just hours from execution. The battalion commander who was responsible for that area, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Ferry of 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry (Manchus), quickly diverted his force away from the planned operations to assist the Soda tribe in defending its homes. The decision was immediate and the response rapid, underscoring the brigade's flexibility in recognizing and adapting quickly to take advantage of opportunities, rather than following plans in lockstep.

Armed militants drive through Ramadi, Iraq, 5 December 2006.

Ready First TOC coordinated F-18 attacks that overtook and destroyed the fleeing vehicles in a blazing fury as M1A1 tanks maneuvered to engage. Armed Predator UAVs and M1A1 tanks in ambush positions finished off others attempting to escape. In the end, the Al Qaeda forces suffered far more casualties than the Albu Soda tribe. By nightfall, several companies of infantry and some M1A1 tanks had reinforced tribal defenders, further demonstrating coalition commitment.

Once again, AQIZ's intimidation attempt spectacularly back-fired: tribes joined the Awakening movement at a rate that proved difficult to keep up with, even expanding into the neighboring Fallujah and Hit AOs. Within two months, every tribe in Sufia and Julaybah had declared support for the Awakening, and four new combat outposts had been constructed to secure the populations. An area previously deemed high threat and used as a staging ground for AQIZ mortar attacks became almost completely secure. Tribal

U.S. Marine Corps aircraft arrived overhead to perform "show of force" sorties designed to intimidate the insurgents and convince them that air attack was imminent. Next, a ground reaction force from Task Force 1-9 Infantry began preparations to move to the area and establish defenses for the Albu Soda tribe. Because we were viewing the area using aerial sensors, our vision of the fight was indistinct, and we were unable to separate insurgents from the friendly tribesmen. We did not want to attack the friendly tribe by mistake, so we undertook actions to intimidate the insurgents by firing "terrain denial" missions. Explosions in empty nearby fields raised the possibility of suppressive artillery fire in the minds of the enemy. Complemented by the roar of fighter jets, the startled AQIZ forces became convinced that massive firepower was bearing down on them. They started to withdraw, separating themselves from their victims.

As AQIZ gunmen began fleeing the area, they loaded into several cars, three of which our sensors identified. Our UAV observed a body dragging behind one of the cars, evidently an Albu Soda tribesman. The insurgents obviously meant to terrorize and insult the tribe through this act of mutilation, but they also triggered a boomerang reaction by clearly identifying themselves. The

While Al-Qaida has been driven from the city, it has not been driven from Anbar Province, nor from Iraq. But Ramadi—which the Marines thought in August 2006 was fully under control of the insurgents, is THE example of Iraqi-American co-operation. There is an economic boom taking place: there are rebuilding projects; the porcelain factory is re-opening next month, shops are re-opening, and better-quality food and goods are for sale in the markets—and salaries have risen 20 percent in the last six months. For as Mayor Latif Obaid said to me in April when I attended his 3rd Economic Development Conference, Ramadi is open for business— come visit us!

—Andrew Lubin, "Ramadi: Building on Success," *On Point*, 30 October 2007.

members inside Ramadi began supporting the Awakening as well, and security rapidly improved. Once a tribal area joined the Awakening, enemy contact in those areas typically dropped to near zero, as IP, IA, and U.S. forces provided security. Bases once under daily mortar and small arms attacks became secure areas and transitioned to IP control, freeing U.S. forces to pursue AQIZ elsewhere.

Overall, by February 2007, contacts with insurgents dropped almost 70 percent compared to the numbers in June 2006, and they had dramatically decreased in complexity and effect. The combination of tribal engagement and combat outposts had proved toxic to AQIZ's efforts to dominate Ramadi.

Rebuilding

Clearing and holding are the bloody but relatively straightforward part of any counterinsurgency effort; building the infrastructure to sustain military success is the complicated part. In Ramadi, it was essential to begin building at the beginning of a clearing operation, so there would not be a gap between establishing security and implementing projects.

While civil affairs projects are obviously vital to the success of a clear, hold, build campaign, building human infrastructure, which includes installing government officials and agency directors, is just as vital. One of the keys to success in Tal Afar was the establishment of a credible local government with a mayor respected by the populace. In Ramadi, there was no local governance when we arrived. We prevailed upon the provincial council to appoint a mayor—one acceptable to the tribes—to coordinate development for the city. This appointment was important because it relieved the governor of municipal level duties and allowed him to focus on issues elsewhere in the province. We then worked with the mayor to ensure that schools, hospitals, sewers, power stations, and other infrastructure all returned to pre-war normalcy as soon as possible. In fact, the western part of Ramadi was undergoing redevelopment even while combat operations in east Ramadi continued during autumn. This rebuilding effort demonstrated that normal services could function again and helped convince the people of Ramadi that local security improvements were permanent.

We wanted to encourage people living in still-embattled neighborhoods that joining the Awakening was both possible and in their best interest. To that end, we held the first "Ramadi Reconstruction Conference" in January 2007 at Sheik Sittar's home. Sheik Sittar invited all of the local sheiks, any government officials we could find, and local contractors. Following a brief on all ongoing projects, we explained the different ways coalition forces could be of assistance in reconstruction. The participants broke down into geographically based small groups, led by our five maneuver task force commanders and their local partners, to design and refine plans for reconstruction. The commanders discussed local needs and, just as importantly, local reconstruction capabilities. Everyone was asked to return in March to brief plans. Accordingly, we were able to begin reconstruction in cleared parts of Ramadi before the fighting was over elsewhere. Maintaining the initiative in this way was the single most important thing we did throughout the campaign.

Why We Succeeded

Clearly, a combination of factors, some of which we may not yet fully understand, contributed to this pivotal success. As mentioned before, the enemy overplayed its hand and the people were tired of Al-Qaeda. A series of assassinations had elevated younger, more aggressive tribal leaders to positions of influence. A growing concern that the U.S. would leave Iraq and leave the Sunnis defenseless against Al-Qaeda and Iranian-supported militias made these younger leaders open to our overtures. Our willingness to adapt our plans based on the advice of the sheiks, our staunch and timely support for them in times of danger and need, and our ability to deliver on our promises convinced them that they could do business with us. Our forward presence kept them reassured. We operated aggressively across all lines of operation, kinetic and non-kinetic, to bring every weapon and asset at our disposal to bear against the enemy. We conducted detailed intelligence fusion and targeting meetings and operated seamlessly with special operations forces, aviation, close air support, and riverine units. We have now seen this model followed by other BCTs in other parts of Iraq, and it has proved effective. Indeed, the level of sophistication has only improved since the Ready First departed in February 2007. Although, perhaps

groundbreaking at the time, most of our tactics, techniques, and procedures are now familiar to any unit operating in Iraq today.

The most enduring lessons of Ramadi are ones that are most easily lost in technical and tactical discussions, the least tangible ones. The most important lessons we learned were—

● Accept risk in order to achieve results.

● Once you gain the initiative, never give the enemy respite or refuge.

● Never stop looking for another way to attack the enemy.

● The tribes represent the people of Iraq, and the populace represents the "key terrain" of the conflict. The force that supports the population by taking the moral high ground has as sure an advantage in COIN as a maneuver commander who occupies dominant terrain in a conventional battle.

No matter how imperfect the tribal system appeared to us, it was capable of providing social order and control through culturally appropriate means where governmental control was weak.

Conclusion

The men assigned and attached to the Ready First paid a terrible price for securing Ramadi. In nine months, 85 of our Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines were killed, and over 500 wounded in some of the toughest fighting of the war. Only the remarkable results they achieved, and the liberated citizens of Ramadi who can now walk the streets without fear, temper the grief caused by their sacrifice. It is gratifying to see our model adapted and used elsewhere in the War on Terror. It proves once again that America's Army is truly a learning organization. In the end, probably the most important lesson we learned in Ramadi was that, as General Petraeus said, "Hard is not hopeless." *MR*

NOTES

1. Frederick W. Kagan, "The Gettysburg of This War," *National Review*, 3 Sep 2007.
2. Megan K. Stack and Louise Roug, "Fear of Big Battle Panics Iraqi City," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 June 2006.
3. For the purposes of this essay, the multiple insurgent groups are broken into two main categories: former regime elements (FRE), consisting of former Baathists and other nationalists, and Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQIZ), consisting of Islamic fundamentalist insurgent groups.
4. The "How to Win in Al Anbar" presentation became famous quickly, even gaining mention on several news talk shows. It can be downloaded at <http://abcnews.go.com/images/us/how_to_win_in_anbar_v4.pdf>.
5. Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2000).

Addendum: Anbar Awakens

Colonel Sean MacFarland, U.S. Army

Colonel Sean MacFarland commanded the Ready First Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, in Al Anbar province, returning with the unit in February 2007. He holds a B.S. from the United States Military Academy and an M.S. from Georgia Tech, and he is a graduate of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. COL MacFarland's deployments include Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm and two tours as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He currently serves as chief of the Iraq Division, Strategic Plans and Policy Office (J5), Joint Chiefs of Staff.

You old guys need to get over that s—t.

Young Marine to Marine sergeant major when asked how he felt about fighting alongside an Army unit in Al Anbar, Iraq.

PHOTO: With U.S. Navy SEALs aboard, a USMC patrol boat works Lake Habbaniyah, South of Ramadi, in November 2006. An Army National Guard Apache flies overwatch. (courtesy of author)

IN THE MARCH-APRIL 2008 ISSUE of *Military Review*, Major Niel Smith and I wrote about the accomplishments of the Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, and Airmen who fought in Ramadi from June 2006 through February 2007. I would like to elaborate on an important point raised in the article: the Al Anbar campaign was a model of joint operational effectiveness.

One of the great legacies of the fight for Al Anbar province will be the enduring, mutual respect earned by the various service-members who fought side by side. This respect was nowhere more evident than in Ramadi, where our Army brigade combat team, the 1st BCT, 1st Armored Division (Ready First Combat Team), fought under the command of I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF). The Ready First was not a pure Army BCT. It contained U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) elements, including a reinforced rifle battalion (initially 3/8 Marines and later 1/6 Marines), two rifle companies from a Marine Expeditionary Unit (2/4 Marines), a riverine patrol unit, an air and naval gunfire liaison platoon, and a civil affairs detachment. The Air Force supported the Ready First with an air liaison team embedded in the BCT. The brigade staff itself was a de facto joint organization—it had Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine officers and NCOs throughout. The electronic warfare officer, a Catholic chaplain, and the head surgeon were all Navy commanders. The civil affairs and public affairs officers were Marines. Outside the brigade, support came from a Marine logistics group and I MEF's air combat element. Numerous other external USMC units, including a platoon from a radio battalion, a postal unit, explosive ordnance disposal teams, fire-fighting teams, air traffic controllers, and military transition teams, also provided support. So did the Navy, in the form of surgical teams and corpsmen, SeaBee battalions, electronic warfare experts, and SEAL platoons from SEAL Teams 3 and 5.

The Ready First enjoyed a particularly good working relationship with the Special Forces and other special operations forces in and around Ramadi. Soldiers bestowed the affectionate nickname of "Army SEALs" on the members of SEAL Team 3 in Ramadi who fought and died alongside them. The brigade is particularly proud of its association with SEAL MA2 Mike Monsoor, who while supporting an operation in Ramadi won the Medal of Honor.

The Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen in Ramadi were deeply grateful for the lifesaving heroics of their Navy doctors and corpsmen. The spiritual aid given by Navy chaplains to all services will never be forgotten. The skill

and courage of Marine Corps pilots who attacked targets to assist troops in contact will likewise never fade from memory. In return, the Army's Apache pilots won the respect of Marines and Sailors who, in the mix, also came to rely on Army Paladins for timely and accurate fire support.

A command could not have asked for a better higher headquarters. The I MEF staff was dedicated to ensuring that there were no "haves" and "have-nots" among the units in Al Anbar. Often, the Army received first priority, ahead of the MEF's own Marines. The MEF commander at the time, Major General Richard C. Zilmer, ensured the Ready First had the resources it needed to fulfill his intent, and he never questioned or second-guessed us, even during the darkest hours. His forbearance demonstrated his trust in, and respect for, the professionalism and competence of the Soldiers under his command.

Altogether, the joint effort in Ramadi worked because, no matter what service uniforms they wore, professionals dedicated to the mission performed as expected. This professional dedication evinced itself in shared values and shared understanding. It was not uncommon to see Soldiers and Marines march forward side by side in final honors at memorial services for their lost comrades. At times, the helmets atop inverted M4 carbines reflected a mix of Army and Marine Corps camouflage.

The U.S. Army and the U.S. Marine Corps, each today without peer in its domain of land warfare, have not shared such a strong bond of common experience and understanding since the island campaigns of World War II. The services should nurture those bonds and sustain them over time. Those who share experiences on the battlefield with comrades from sister services can help strengthen these bonds and create closer ones by contributing to the discourse. Articles and other forms of media spawned from joint endeavors, co-written perhaps in cooperative cross-service efforts, will help feed the knowledge base for all services and make us stronger yet as a joint force. **MR**

Master at Arms Second Class Michael A. Monsoor, United States Navy Awarded the Medal of Honor

The family of U.S. Navy SEAL Master at Arms Second Class Michael A. Monsoor accepted the Medal of Honor, awarded posthumously, during a ceremony at the White House on 8 April 2008.

On 29 September 2006, Navy SEAL Michael A. Monsoor was serving as a member of a sniper overwatch element on a rooftop in an insurgent-held sector of Ramadi. The enemy assaulted the element, engaging them with rocket-propelled-grenade and small-arms fire. As enemy activity increased, Petty Officer Monsoor took position with his machine gun between two teammates on an outcropping of the roof. An insurgent threw a hand grenade, which bounced off Monsoor's chest and landed in front of him. Although only he could have escaped the blast, Monsoor chose instead to protect his teammates. Instantly and without regard for his own safety, he threw himself onto the grenade to absorb the force of the explosion with his body, giving his life to protect the lives of his two teammates.

Commander's Assessment: SOUTH BAGHDAD

Lieutenant Colonel Ross A. Brown, U.S. Army

THE CHALLENGES a battalion commander faces in Iraq are as great as any U.S. battalion commanders faced in other wars. After a year of combat, from March 2005 to March 2006, I developed an assessment of my Area of Operations (AO) in southern Baghdad that, based upon discussions with my peers, encapsulates many of the challenges other battalion commanders face elsewhere in Iraq. This article attempts to explain those challenges and my conclusions about them, as well as my perspective of what we need to do to win, at least in my former AO.

To prepare myself and my unit, the 3d Squadron (Thunder Squadron) of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment for combat in Iraq, I read historical descriptions of counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, the draft field manual on COIN (FM 3-7.22), and all the lessons-learned I could find. I discovered that counterinsurgency is almost universally defined as the combined military, paramilitary, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat an insurgency. In such a fight, the host country's population is the strategic and operational center of gravity; thus, winning the people's confidence and support is the centerpiece for operations at those levels. Although there aren't any centers of gravity at the tactical level, gaining the local population's confidence and support is just as important as in the higher echelons of operations.

The Problem

The Army's Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) offers a template for solving problems. The first step in the process is to conduct mission analysis in order to scope the military problem and identify its components. Subsequent steps in the MDMP seek to solve the military problem by leading to the execution of activities according to a plan or order. Although I began my tour using only a few components, or bullets, to outline my military problem, the number of bullets increased as my tour wore on. By the end, I had 16:

● The enemy blends into the population.

● The enemy learns and adapts and is usually about a week behind us tactically.

● The enemy rapidly reseeds its leadership and is diverse—there are multiple different groups operating in the AO with multiple cells.

● The enemy uses Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) as an offensive weapon.

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- The terrain does not easily support tracked movement and forces the use of predictable routes.

- The AO is an enemy support zone with caches, meeting places, training, etc.

- There are no large population centers in the AO.

- The population is at best neutral, but seems to support the insurgents.

- The majority of the population is Sunni, with small enclaves of Shi'a spread throughout the AO.

- Wahabbists/Salafists are operating along the Tigris River.

- There are five different tribes in the AO, each with multiple sheiks.

- Coalition engagement with the AO's population was spotty prior to our arrival.

- Unemployment is high.

- We have multiple Iraqi Security Force (ISF) partnerships.

- There are effectively no funds to buy and use informants.

- We are fighting a fight the squadron did not train for.

I anticipated that the number of components defining my problem would initially increase as I conducted operations and learned more about my AO, but I thought that by the end of my tour they would be dramatically reduced. Not only did they increase, but even with a much greater understanding of the complexities of my area, I was unable to solve my problem prior to being relieved by my successor. The fact is that we could have continued to fight the war in my area for the foreseeable future. Everything was contingent upon the population allowing the conflict to exist and their continued willingness to replace the insurgents we killed or detained.

The Enemy

When we left our AO, we were fighting multiple known insurgent groups, the most infamous of which was Al Qaeda in Iraq. In terms of battlefield geometry, I defined the *battle zone* in Multinational Division-Baghdad's (MND-B's) area of responsibility as central Baghdad. The capital is the strategic focus for the enemy in MND-B and where he benefits his cause the most by killing civilians and ISF. His mayhem there undermines the credibility of the government, spreads fear, sows the seeds of a sectarian divide, and generally attracts the most international interest. The areas that surround central Baghdad, particularly my AO in the south, are best characterized as *support zones* where the enemy lives, trains, plans, and prepares for operations. While the enemy did conduct operations against my cavalry squadron, I characterized these as tactical operations, lower in priority to the strategic operations in central Baghdad and the more beneficial tactical operations against the ISF. Although the insurgent groups we faced had different political objectives, I concluded that there was some synchronization between them since attacks were not sporadic and tended to following discernable trends from month to month. I also came to believe that the groups were linked logistically, and we attempted throughout the year to disrupt all the groups' activities by limiting their logistical support.

The People

Understanding the history, language, customs, and traditions of the people among whom you are fighting is essential in a counterinsurgency. Most of the cultural preparations for our operations in Iraq amounted to a few classes on Iraqi customs and one on basic language. Our officers worked through the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment's recommended reading list, designed to broaden our understanding of the Iraqi people and their country, but there were few discussions about the readings—there simply wasn't much time available after regular predeployment training and maintenance. The relative lack of cultural training wasn't critical, however, because 60 percent of the Soldiers in my squadron had served in Operation Iraqi Freedom I. Having returned from Iraq only 11 months before, my Soldiers already had a working knowledge of Iraq's customs and language.

I concluded that the people in our AO would allow the insurgents to move freely through them and live among them unless we or the ISF were physically present 24 hours a day. I also believe that the people are withholding their loyalty to both the newly elected government and the insurgents until they think they know who is going to win. From my perspective, the majority of the people have survived by "going along to get along" throughout the years, and they are convinced that to commit to either side too early could cost them their lives.

In my dealings with the Iraqi people, I was struck by their penchant for interpreting everything

SFC Kim Bradshaw, NCO in charge of the author's personal security detachment, inspects one of the patrol bases the squadron used to control its area of operations, September 2005.

through the lens of individual self-interest. This applied to both the civilians and the ISF. The concept of putting community or country first was less important than individual best interest. I also had the sense that they didn't care much what kind of government they'd ultimately have, whether it would be a democracy, theocracy, or autocracy. The people's priority was to ensure that their basic needs were satisfied, and the government or group that could best do that would gain their favor. Throughout my year in Iraq, I used this premise of "satisfying basic needs" to allocate funds and prioritize projects. In the end, Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" was a very applicable tool for understanding the people's

> ***In my dealings with the Iraqi people, I was struck by their penchant for interpreting everything through the lens of individual self-interest.***

requirements and prioritizing civil-military projects. It also led to my minimizing discussion on the benefits of a democracy. If you drink the same water as your cows, you're likely not interested in a U.S. Soldier explaining the advantages, theory, and practice of Jeffersonian democracy.

It is important to understand the tribal structure of Iraq and your AO, and I knew little about either when I first arrived in Baghdad. What I learned over time was that first and foremost, tribes will protect their own. Individuals willing to provide information about insurgents or criminals would do so about members of other tribes, but never about members of their own. Another thing I learned was that despite a forest of satellite dishes pumping popular Arabic media into every home and hut in my AO, word of mouth was the most trusted form of communication within the tribes. It became something that I would try to influence in my discussions with sheiks and tribal elders. I also came to realize that sheiks had no real power and therefore, I didn't spend too much time wooing them. A trusted sheik told me that he could influence the perspective of those 40 years and older, but had very little influence over younger tribe members. Since the vast majority of those I was fighting were younger than 40, the sheiks couldn't help me much.

Some COIN thinkers believe that civil-military projects can influence the loyalty of the people. I concluded that while the Iraqis in my AO would accept gifts, money, and projects, such perks did little to sway them to our side. As a result, I used the very limited project money I was given to build soccer fields for kids (in the hopes that we'd have better luck with the next generation), to satisfy basic human needs like clean water per Maslow's Hierarchy, and to make it easier to do my mission by, for example, improving roads. In the end, I told my subordinates that all project money would be used for our mission first and the Iraqi people second.

The ISF

During my tour, our squadron was partnered with two Iraqi Ministry of the Interior (MOI) battalions and two Iraqi Army (IA) battalions. While each

unit had different strengths and weaknesses, there were some commonalities among them. For one, very few of the Iraqi officers or NCOs we worked with had had any formal military training. We are currently building a professional education infrastructure with the Iraqis, but in the meantime, U.S. commanders need to know who and what they are working with.

Since most ISF leaders are chosen from within the ranks, sycophancy is valued more than education, effectiveness, or professionalism. The result, at least in our case, was ineffectual units and frustration among those Iraqi soldiers who wanted to lead, fight, and win. Additionally, the units we worked with were either all Shi'a or all Sunni, and there were no Kurds. This led to a bias for or against the populations in which the units were operating. One of our IA partners was a Shi'a battalion whose commanding officer was also sheik of the tribe from which the battalion's soldiers came. His executive officer was his son. He told me that if we left Iraq, he would move his battalion south to defend the community that he and his soldiers were from. Unfortunately, I believe that as long as we have sectarian-based units comprised of soldiers from the same communities, we won't be able to develop a viable national army whose loyalty to country is greater than loyalty to community and religion.

A commander new to theater must also understand the prevailing mindset of his Iraqi partners. While the MOI special commando units we soldiered with were very offensive-minded, our IA partners were more defensively oriented. IA leaders were generally more comfortable establishing checkpoints or working out of forward operating bases (FOBs) than conducting raids. Nevertheless, we found that when we had Iraqis under our command during U.S.-initiated offensive operations, they proved to be tough, capable soldiers.

Another challenge was that our ISF units had very limited planning, command and control, and logistics capabilities. Our internally generated military transition teams (MiTTs) focused their energy on developing these capabilities at the company and platoon level while my own headquarters focused on the ISF battalion staffs. We introduced our counterparts to the MDMP, helped them create logistics systems, and augmented their very limited and ineffective communications architecture.

> *…we found that when we had Iraqis under our command during U.S.-initiated offensive operations, they proved to be tough, capable soldiers.*

When working with the ISF, Operations Security (OPSEC) is a consideration that shapes all operations. A prudent commander will always keep in mind the fact that some of his ISF partners could be insurgent infiltrators or sectarian sympathizers, and he will take the steps necessary to ensure OPSEC. When we worked with the MOI, all planned targets for an operation had to be vetted by MOI headquarters before permission was given to my partnership unit to proceed. This requirement caused one of my largest and most complex operations to fail when an insurgent spy in MOI headquarters gave the enemy our target list (thankfully, this leak did not result in the loss of life of any of our Soldiers). The Ministry of Defense is more supportive of multinational operations and didn't require permission above the IA brigade headquarters for our operations.

When I left Iraq, the ISF in my area were clearly incapable of providing security or conducting operations without our support and guidance. I often wondered whether they were as interested in winning the war as we were or whether they just needed a paycheck. I'm glad to report that, in spite of my apprehensions, the ISF improved consistently throughout our tour of duty.

How to Lose

As a result of suffering casualties and, at one time, feeling as if we were losing the war, I came to several conclusions about how a unit can lose in Iraq. The surest way to lose is to be predictable. Leaving the FOB at the same time every day, using the same routes or vehicles, reacting to attacks or events in the same way—all offer the enemy predictable behavior that he can then target. Closely related to being predictable is failing to learn and change. To be effective, units must create an environment in which initiative is rewarded and everyone is committed to learning and changing in order to maintain the initiative. I set up weekly skull sessions in my squadron

The surest way to lose is to be predictable.

battle-rhythm during which commanders and staff sought to solve the problems we were facing. The sessions were free-wheeling, combative—and productive. There is no place for group-think in combat and particularly in counterinsurgencies. I am most proud of the fact that the organizational energy of my squadron was focused on winning by seizing the initiative and creating as many problems for the enemy as possible. It's not easy to do this, but the battalion commander can begin by creating an environment that leads to a learning organization.

Another way to guarantee that you will lose is to conduct U.S.-only operations and presence patrols. Putting an Iraqi face on all operations reinforces the legitimacy of the government and the ISF while also making it easier to identify foreign fighters and conduct effective tactical questioning. The Iraqis can quickly discern different Arabic accents, and they can get the most out of potential detainees and locals through tactical questioning. The people feared the ISF much more than U.S. Forces and were generally more willing to talk to their countrymen and provide information about the enemy. Sometimes we used this to our advantage by threatening to allow the ISF to talk to potential detainees in our place. The Iraqi people in my AO knew that our treatment of them was guided by the Law of Land Warfare and our rules of engagement, but they weren't sure if the new Iraqi Army had transitioned from Saddam's Army and its abusive treatment of the people.

All patrols in Iraq are combat patrols. I told my leaders in Kuwait that if there was no military necessity for a patrol or no clearly defined purpose for an operation, then we wouldn't do them. To conduct a presence patrol and lose a Soldier's life was grounds for relief or worse in my view. I gave patrol leaders the authority to cancel a patrol until they and their Soldiers clearly understood what their objective was and what was expected of them during and at the end of the patrol. Although only one patrol was cancelled by a patrol leader during our year in Iraq, I believe the empowerment my subordinates felt ensured that our combat patrols had the proper focus and value in defeating the enemy.

Senior-level commanders in Iraq have stated that U.S. forces will increasingly operate from large

FOBs. To do so without also establishing patrol bases in the AO would have caused our squadron to lose and to suffer far more casualties than we did. Not only do we provide the enemy predictability by operating from large FOBs, but we are also unable to establish or maintain a secure environment in the AO if we are constantly moving in and out of it. The U.S. Marines in Vietnam, the British throughout their recent military history, and my own squadron in Iraq proved that living among the people is the most effective way to establish a secure environment and to protect our own forces.

Mass and its application in a counterinsurgency is probably worthy of an article in and of itself. My own conclusion is that the sequential application of mass along all lines of operations (LOOs) in an AO will fail. Unless the enemy is planning to attack, he will move to other, safer, places once a friendly offensive operation is communicated or initiated. We have only to look at the results of operations in Fallujah and Tal Afar for examples of this. While some insurgents decided to stay and fight in both of these cities, others left to fight another day in another place of their own choosing. To be effective in my AO, I had to spread resources equally among my subordinate units and then conduct precision offensive operations based upon intelligence from informants. Had I massed in one area and then sequentially massed in another with the expectation that once clear an area would remain clear, then we would have lost in our AO. We simply can't mass and "win in the west" and then, based upon a decision point, mass and "win in the east" if we are to be victorious in a counterinsurgency.

There is a requirement, then, to mass simultaneously along all LOOs throughout an AO. We had four lines of operation in our area: combat operations, ISF

> *…living among the people is the most effective way to establish a secure environment and to protect our own forces.*

operations, information operations, and civil-military operations. To be effective, we couldn't just focus on one or two LOOs; we had to integrate all four lines into each of our operations and the overall campaign, and we had to apply them simultaneously. As an example, when we executed a raid, we included our ISF partners, used tactical psychological operations teams and our own Soldiers to ensure the public knew what our intent was, and then followed up the raid the next day by making goodwill gestures to the population, such as distributing soccer balls, repairing roads, or providing clothing and food. The integration and simultaneous application of all four lines in each operation during the campaign prevents the enemy from focusing on one line. Over time, it creates depth along each line of operation.

How to Win

By the time we redeployed, I thought we were winning the war in our AO. Although I don't believe we could have completely extinguished the insurgency with the limited resources we had available, we were winning. To get to where we were, we came up with 10 commandments for winning the COIN war in south Baghdad:

● Keep instructions clear and operations simple.

● Constantly modify tactics to maintain the initiative.

● Use civil-military ops for the mission, not the people.

AFP, 2005

The author, right, with SFC Kim Bradshaw and CPT Robert Guillen, attempts to identify the position an insurgent observer used to detonate an IED about an hour earlier, September 2005.

● Mass throughout the depth of the battlespace and along all LOOs—create multiple problems for the enemy.

● Establish patrol bases throughout the battlespace to disrupt, control, project, and defeat.

● Execute continuous and complementary air assault, mounted, and dismounted operations.

● Conduct precision offensive operations based on multi-sourced human intelligence.

● Use Special Forces to complement conventional operations and augment intelligence.

● Engage sheiks to gain intelligence and execute info ops.

● Clear–Hold–Build/Project to create interior lines.

We have already discussed most of the bullets above, but I would like to highlight a few more. I began operations primarily using M1114s (up-armored Humvees). Although the M1114 is a very capable vehicle, our tanks and Bradleys proved to be much more effective in protecting the force and deterring or destroying the enemy. During our year in Iraq, 30 of our combat vehicles were destroyed, to include 6 tanks, 10 Bradleys, and 14 M1114s. Had we not used mainly heavy tracked vehicles, we would have had many more casualties. Some may argue that a tank or Bradley deters effective interaction with the public. My priority was to protect the force first, knowing that once our Soldiers and our Iraqi partners were talking to the people on the ground, their mode of transportation wasn't important. I'd also like to highlight that if we used tracked vehicles for an operation, we always put our Iraqi partners under armor, either in M113A3s or Bradleys, to protect them and ensure they knew that we thought their lives were as important as our own Soldiers' lives.

As our tour wore on, our dismounted operations increased. Although we were a heavy armored cavalry squadron, the demands of counterinsurgency in Iraq require all ground maneuver Soldiers to be physically tough, capable of conducting long dismounted operations in temperatures over 100 degrees Fahrenheit and under body armor. We also executed over 30 air assaults, using anywhere from

For a more detailed explanation of recommendations dealing with convoy operations and IED avoidance, to include schematics and recommended march order, see the 3/3 Armored Cavalry After Action Report, dated March 31, 2006, which can be found on the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) database at the following webpage address:

https://call2.army.mil/focus/pubs/index.asp

2 to 18 aircraft. I concluded that the helicopter is decisive in Iraq. Transports can speed Soldiers to the right locations, and attack aviation can acquire, kill, or otherwise deter the enemy. In the end, the continuous sequencing and complementing of air assault, mounted, and dismounted operations maximized the element of surprise, disrupted the enemy, and ensured we were not predictable.

So how did we know we were winning? Measures of effectiveness are among the most hotly debated issues in Iraq. Everybody has an opinion, but we set stock in the following:

● A decrease in the number of attacks against the squadron and IA forces in the AO.

● An increase in the number of informants offering targetable information.

● An increase in the number of caches located.

● Demonstrated willingness of locals to work on or support projects initiated in our AO.

● An increase in the number of local leaders willing to support our initiatives or start their own (e.g., neighborhood watch with IA support).

As the ISF matured, they increasingly conducted independent reconnaissance patrols and area security operations. Based upon their interaction with the population during these patrols, and after the establishment of patrol bases permanently manned by an Iraqi infantry company (with a small squadron MiTT) throughout the AO, the number of informants increased tenfold. Information from these informants provided the intelligence necessary to gain and then maintain the initiative in our AO.[1]

After receiving information about enemy activities or locations, we would launch a raid to destroy or detain insurgents and their caches. To win, battalion commanders must develop an informant network that will drive their operations. Although a lack of funds to buy informants prevented us from

challenging the insurgents to the degree that we wanted, the ISF proved invaluable in developing an informant network that my subordinate commanders, tactical human intelligence team, and intelligence officer could leverage.

At some point in the rotation, I read an article about Andrew Krepinevich's argument for adopting a "Clear-Hold-Build" strategy in Iraq.[2] While I liked this basic concept, I further modified it and integrated the establishment of patrol bases, which we had used in Ranger school and I had observed the British using in Bosnia. IEDs were our greatest threat, and although we were attempting to kill the emplacers and manufacturers and destroy the means to make IEDs, we knew we would have to deliberately clear routes in the AO before establishing patrol bases. My subordinate commanders together developed a technique that integrated ground-penetrating radar, dismounts, an explosive ordnance detachment, tanks, Bradleys, and aviation. Not a single Soldier was killed or seriously wounded utilizing this technique, and we discovered and destroyed over 50 IEDs.

After the route had been cleared to an abandoned house or one belonging to a known insurgent, we occupied the home and rapidly established security and a permanent traffic control point. We manned the route leading to the patrol base with permanent mounted or dismounted patrols in depth, and we never relinquished control of it. As a result, we severely disrupted the enemy's ability to emplace IEDs. After establishing patrol bases throughout our AO and securing the routes that led to them, we did not lose a Soldier to an IED. Additionally, by securing the routes that led from our FOB to our patrol bases, we effectively created interior lines that allowed us to mass quickly, move relatively securely, and provide logistical support expeditiously.

After establishing patrol bases throughout our AO and securing the routes that led to them, we did not lose a Soldier to an IED.

Although the interior lines were valuable for defense and logistics, we were offensively oriented, and so we also used the secure lines and bases to project our influence further into the AO. Conducting offensive operations from our patrol bases, we severely disrupted the enemy's lines of communication to Baghdad as well as his ability to plan and prepare for operations against us. Concurrently, we built upon our success by focusing civil-military projects on the locals' quality of life while the continuous security we were now able to provide led to increased, albeit limited, economic activity. The enemy responded to our patrol bases with more ambushes, snipers, and mortar fire, but we met them with massed direct fire and indirect fires. When the Lightweight Countermortar Radar was digitally linked to our Paladin battery, we limited the enemy's ability to fire mortars. At the same time, we created a niche in the COIN fight for our superior firepower and artillery.

Conclusion

As the ISF became more confident and capable, they conducted more independent security operations while we conducted combined/multinational offensive operations. This modus operandi played to both our strengths and, coupled with operations along the other LOOs, severely hindered the enemy's ability to move freely in the population; it put him on the defensive. According to the measures of effectiveness we had compiled, at the end of our tour we were winning the war in our AO. To turn winning into lasting victory, however, we needed additional assets that weren't available.

I used the graphic below to explain our challenges to the sheiks in my AO:

In general terms I told them that an unstable, violent environment all but prohibited economic investment and ensured unemployment, which were the sheik's greatest long term concerns. No long term investment and no jobs then led to a thriving insurgency as the people supported and participated in the fighting to express dissatisfaction with their ineffectual government and the U.S. occupation. The result was more violence directed against the people, their property, the ISF, and our squadron. I suggested to the sheiks that we break this cycle along the lack of stability/security line. I told them that being partners against the insurgency was the only way to establish the secure environment that would break the insurgency's back and deliver the economic benefits their people deserved.

As I look back now, I have to say that the greatest hurdle we had to overcome in our area was the Iraqi people's reluctance to partner with us and the ISF against the insurgency. In the end, we could continue to provide a certain degree of security and to disrupt the insurgency, but without the people's moral resolve and support, any hope of decisive victory was scant. The people's lack of commitment spilled over into the ISF—our military partners were never as committed as we were to building the new Iraq. Our own side is culpable, too. As I stated earlier, we were never really resourced to defeat the insurgency in our AO. Nor was our commitment to victory matched by the other representatives of national power. There was very little if any contribution from the diplomatic, financial, and law enforcement agencies of the U.S. and Iraqi governments. Their help either trickled down in tiny amounts or didn't come at all.

In sum, I was convinced upon leaving Iraq that given the circumstances we faced and the resources that were committed, we would have continued to fight the war in my AO for the foreseeable future. *MR*

NOTES

1. Almost no reliable information for executing operations came from our higher headquarters. They contributed by fusing intelligence from multiple headquarters in an attempt to identify enemy trends across the larger AO, and by providing resources that helped answer my priority intelligence requirements.
2. Andrew F. Krepinevich Jr., "How to Win in Iraq," *Foreign Affairs* (September-October 2005), <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20050901faessay84508/andrew-f-krepinevich-jr/how-to-win-in-iraq.html>.

Fighting "The Other War"
Counterinsurgency Strategy in Afghanistan, 2003-2005

Lieutenant General David W. Barno, U.S. Army, Retired

Strategy without Tactics is the slowest road to Victory. Tactics without Strategy is the noise before Defeat.
—Sun Tzu

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PHOTO: The author at TF Phoenix. TF Phoenix was responsible for the training and equipping of the Afghan National Army. Left to right are LTC Lyles, Operations Officer, TF Phoenix; BG Moorhead, Commander, TF Phoenix; MG Weston, Chief, Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan; and LTG Barno. TF Phoenix was based in eastern Kabul. (DOD)

AFGHANISTAN IN MID-2003 was at a point of transition—a strategic fork in the road. Major combat operations had ended in 2001, devolving into a long-term pursuit of Taliban and Al-Qaeda remnants, and humanitarian support was beginning to enlarge the nascent reconstruction effort; but Taliban-related activity was increasing in the south and east of the country, while heavily armed militias continued to dominate many areas. Politically, however, optimism across the nation was almost tangible. Plans were underway for a nationwide *loya jirga* (grand council) to draft a new constitution, an effort to begin the democratic process that would move beyond the 2002 jirga, which had appointed Hamid Karzai the leader of a transitional government. Additionally, presidential and parliamentary elections were being planned for 2004.

The Bonn process had organized the overwhelming international sympathy toward Afghanistan with lead nations designated to oversee security sector reform.[1] International support for stabilizing Afghanistan was strong, focused upon the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), which was led by the renowned and influential Algerian diplomat Lakhdar Brahimi. A 5500-person International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) had transitioned into a NATO-led mission, but remained confined to security duties in Kabul. On balance, however, the nationwide writ of the provisional government in Kabul was tenuous at best, and increasing security concerns threatened to undermine both international support and the nascent political process.

Unfortunately, the U.S.-led military coalition was not well postured to counter the rising threat. Coordination between the military and interagency partners was hampered by a U.S. Embassy and military headquarters separated by over forty kilometers. Unity of effort suffered; the military command and control situation was in flux; our tactical approach was enemy-focused and risked alienating the Afghan people; and the substantial draw of operations in

Iraq had put severe limits on the availability of key military capabilities for Afghanistan. To make matters more difficult, the American military leadership was rotating, and the first U.S. ambassador since 1979 had departed with no replacement. Clearly, without a significant change in course, Afghanistan was at risk.

This article outlines the changes subsequently made to U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. It depicts the approach, begun in October 2003, to create a successful counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign in "the other war" that resulted in over two years of relative stability and progress. It also provides a brief assessment of the situation in Afghanistan now, as we move toward the end of 2007.

The Military Situation— Summer 2003

In mid-2003, the U.S.-led coalition embodied over 12,000 troops representing 19 nations. It was led by Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF)-180, formed in June 2002 as the forward headquarters in Afghanistan and based at the old Soviet airbase at Bagram, a 20-minute helicopter flight north from Kabul.

The U.S. had downsized the original CJTF in the spring of 2003, replacing a powerful and well-resourced three-star-led headquarters (XVIII Airborne Corps) and a subordinate division headquarters (Task Force 82) with a single division-level headquarters (10th Mountain Division).[2] As a result, operational tasks once performed by the corps headquarters and tactical tasks performed by the division headquarters were now assigned to one headquarters struggling to oversee both levels of war for a very large theater of operations.

In Kabul, an Office of Military Cooperation (OMC) had been formed in mid-2002 to take on the mission of building the Afghan National Army (ANA), and de facto a number of political- military tasks as well.[3] The focus of the U.S. military effort in the aftermath of the December 2001 fall of the Taliban had been two-fold: to hunt down the remnants of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban across the rugged landscape of southern and eastern Afghanistan, and to build the ANA. "Nation-building" was explicitly *not* part of the formula.[4]

Despite the presence of a large U.S.-led combined and joint civil-military operations task force (CJCMOTF) then based in Kabul, the military focus on reconstruction was limited. Four provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) had been created—two American teams at Gardez and Konduz, a British effort at Mazar-e-Sharif, and a New Zealand mission in Bamian. All four were in relatively quiet areas. There was no PRT presence in the more volatile south and only one in the east (at Gardez), although an expansion of four more PRTs had been planned for the spring of 2004.

Overall, the military span of control in Afghanistan was vast: one division-size joint task force headquarters (with a series of temporary commanders in the summer of 2003) supported over 10,000 soldiers of a multinational force conducting security and reconstruction efforts across a nation the size of Texas with a population of 31 million. (Afghanistan is nearly 50 percent larger than Iraq and has 4 million more people).[5]

Of even greater concern, only one ground maneuver brigade had tactical responsibility for this immense battlespace. To complicate matters, Special Forces, civil-military operations, aviation, and logistics commands operated throughout the battlespace, but reported individually to the CJTF-180 headquarters in Bagram—not to the ground brigade commander.[6]

The primary approach on the ground was enemy-centric. Conventional units operated out of sizeable bases such as Bagram or Kandahar or smaller forward operating bases such as Shkin or Orgun-e. They gathered intelligence, planned operations, and sortied on "raids," which could be small, prolonged patrols of some days' duration or battalion-size operations lasting several weeks (e.g., Operation Mountain Lion). Underlying these actions was the concept that intelligence drives operations; as a result, tactical operations inevitably remained focused on the enemy.

This "raid strategy" combined with the small number of troops had the effect of largely separating coalition forces from the Afghan people. The tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) units used often worsened this separation. "Tossing" whole villages in a cordon-and-search operation based on an intelligence tip, regardless of its accuracy, could quickly alienate a neutral or even friendly populace.

At the time, the U.S. military had not published COIN doctrine since Vietnam, and units had relatively little training in COIN before their arrival

in country. There was much "learning by doing" and even disagreement as to whether the fight in Afghanistan was a COIN fight at all. In fact, unit commanders were forbidden from using the word "counterinsurgency" in describing their operations—they were executing a "counterterrorist" mission in keeping with U.S. strategic guidance and an operational focus on the enemy.[7]

In view of this situation, the commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) recognized the need for a different headquarters configuration. In October 2003, he ordered a new three-star coalition headquarters to stand up in Kabul and focus on political-military efforts, permitting the two-star JTF headquarters at Bagram to focus more fully on tactical operations.[8] This initiative represented a distinct break from the previous belief that the overall military headquarters should be somewhat removed from the capital, in part to avoid entanglement in the political complexities of a city of three million Afghans. Kabul was interlaced with all manner of international embassies, special envoys, NATO ISAF units, UNAMA, and a plethora of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), all working to bring a better future to Afghanistan—but in a free-wheeling, confusing, and sometimes counterproductive mix. "Kabul will consume you," warned one senior U.S. commander who had served in Bagram.[9]

A Counterinsurgency Strategy

Although the story of how we created a three-star operational headquarters with no existing core staff (and from a start point of six members!) in an ongoing operational environment holds important lessons of its own, the centerpiece of this article is the evolution of a COIN strategy for Afghanistan.[10] The latter story began shortly after my arrival in country, when Lakhdar Brahimi asked us to develop an approach to address the deteriorating security situation in the south and east of the country. The UN had responsibility for devising and implementing a plan to hold Afghan presidential and parliamentary elections in 2004, and it was becoming clear that the organization would be unable to extend its reach into significant parts of the Pashtun southern half of Afghanistan if the security situation continued to remain dangerous there. Moreover, a strong Taliban offensive was expected in the spring of 2004, which would further threaten the elections and thus undermine the "roadmap" set forth by the international community in the Bonn Process.

After 10 days of intense staff work led by my talented director of planning, a British colonel whose 22-man J5 (future plans) shop now comprised over two-thirds of our entire staff, we were able to propose a new approach to security and stability to take into 2004.[11] Initially called "Security Strategy South and East," this effort quickly grew into a comprehensive COIN approach for Afghanistan. Ultimately, it evolved into a detailed campaign plan co-written with the U.S. Embassy and broadly shared by the Afghans and international community. Titled "Counterinsurgency Strategy for Afghanistan," the plan was crafted in the absence of U.S. military doctrine, but reflected a solid knowledge of classic COIN approaches. The bookshelves in my Kabul offices at the embassy and military compound were well stocked with my own COIN readings and several senior British officers on my staff supplied important operational insights from their Northern Ireland tours.[12]

To outline our strategy in simple terms, we created "The Five Pillars" diagram (figure 1). This graphic became a powerful tool for explaining the basics of our strategy to civilians, and within the command it circulated down to the very lowest tactical levels. In addition to providing an extraordinarily effective means of communicating complex ideas, it helped us implement the strategy's fundamentals.[13]

Overarching Principle 1: The People as Center of Gravity

The core principle animating the new strategy was our identification of the Afghan people as the center of gravity for COIN (roof of the five pillars).[14] This constituted a sea change in practice from earlier approaches, which had held that the *enemy* was the center of gravity and should be the focus of our military effort (a determination driven in part by the U.S. strategic outlook in 2003, which viewed nation-building as an inappropriate military task).

In making this change we were motivated by both classic counterinsurgency practice as well as thoughtful consideration of Afghan military history. In late 2003, international forces comprised nearly 20,000 armed foreigners living in the midst of 31 million (often armed) Afghans who, throughout
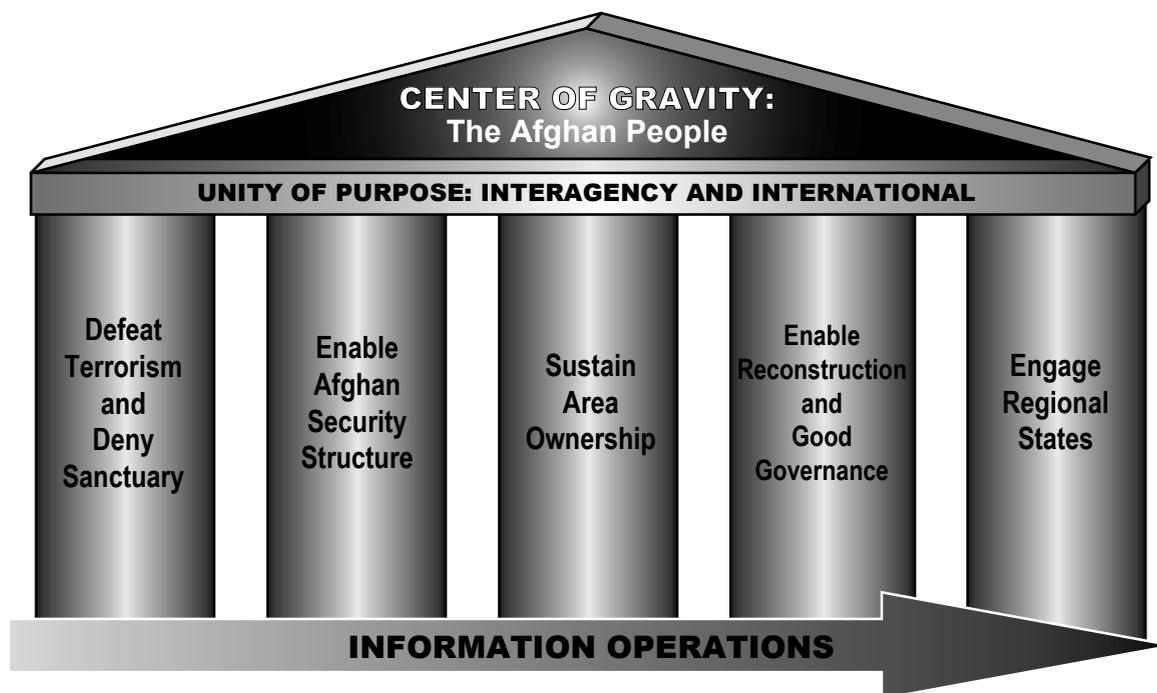
Figure 1. CFC-A counterinsurgency strategy, 2003-2005.

their history, had shown immense enmity to foreign forces. Two successive British expeditions in the 19th century and the massive Soviet invasion in the late 20th century had provoked virulent responses from the people of Afghanistan—each ending in the bloody demise of the foreign military presence. In fact, the "light footprint" approach taken by U.S. force planners was, in many respects, derived from a strong desire not to replicate the Soviet attempt at omnipresence.[15]

In our emerging strategy, I viewed the tolerance of the Afghan people for this new international military effort as a "bag of capital," one that was finite and had to be spent slowly and frugally. Afghan civilian casualties, detainee abuse, lack of respect shown to tribal elders, even inadvertent offenses to the conservative Afghan culture—all would have the effect of spending the contents of this bag of capital, tolerance for foreigners, more quickly.

With "respect for Afghans" as our watchword, we decided that convincing the Afghan people to commit to their future by supporting elections for a new government would be the near-term centerpiece of coalition efforts. Thus, our military "main effort" in 2004 would be explicitly to "set the conditions for a successful Afghan presidential election"—certainly an unconventional military focus.

One of the changes in our military approach evinced by this focus on the population was a near-ironclad prohibition against using airpower to strike targets not directly engaged in close combat with coalition troops. Air strikes based solely on technical intelligence were almost entirely eliminated owing both to their conspicuous lack of success and the unintended casualties they characteristically caused among Afghan civilians. In my estimation, this new judicious reserve in the application of coalition firepower helped sustain the people's fragile tolerance of an extended international military presence. In essence, we traded some tactical effect for much more important strategic consequences.

Overarching Principle 2: Unity of Purpose

A second principle of our strategy was interagency and international unity of purpose. Militarily, this was paralleled by a deliberate and measured reorganization to achieve unity of command in coalition operations. As noted above, our military organizational structures had evolved unevenly as forces echeloned into Afghanistan in disparate increments following the Taliban's fall in late 2001. During the execution of that early operational phase, most U.S. troops were based outside of Afghanistan, and those
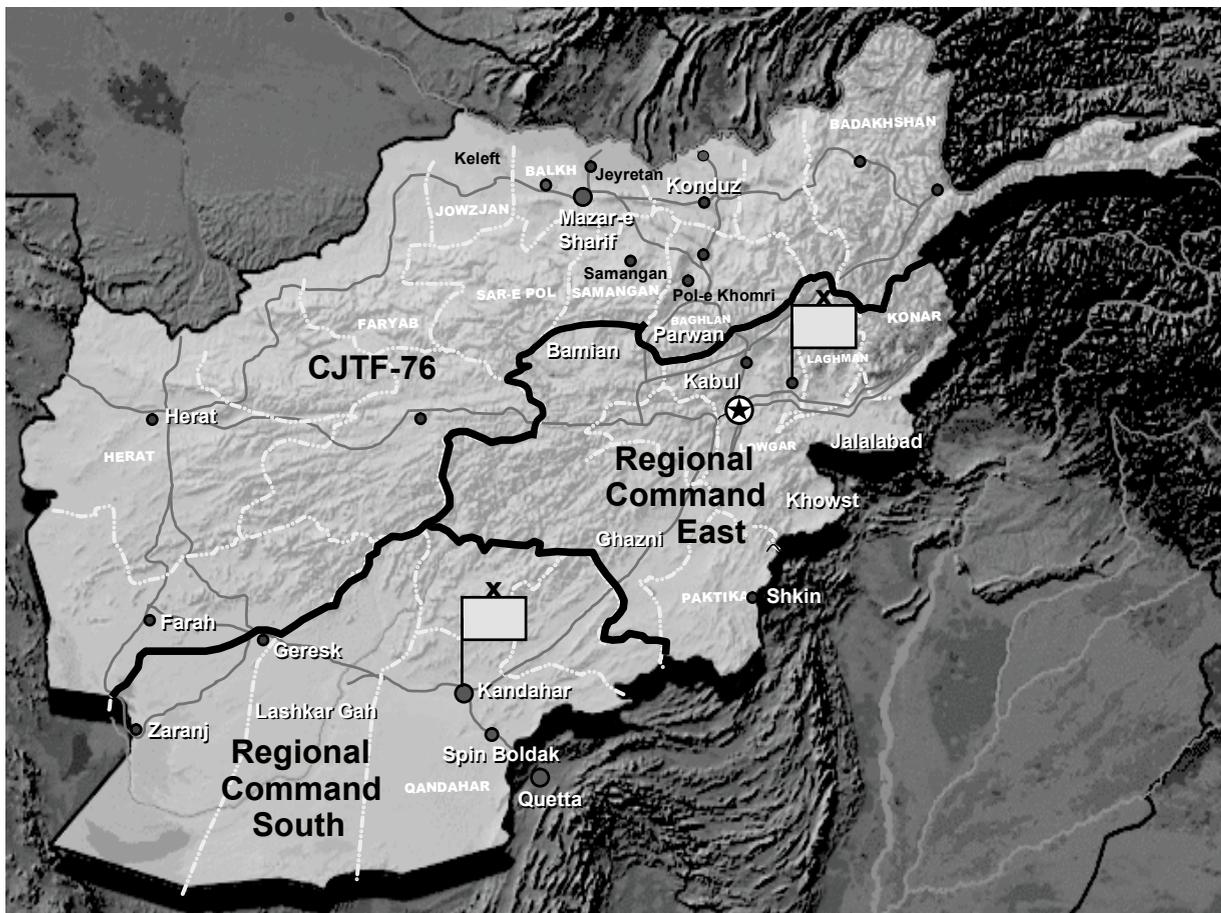
Figure 2. U.S. and Coalition Battlefield Geometry, May 2004

in-country had only begun to establish what would become long-term operating bases. During 2002, Bagram and Kandahar became the primary base locations for large units, logistical infrastructure, and coalition airpower. As more units were added to the mix, and as the coalition presence continued long beyond initial expectations, a patchwork line of command authorities had evolved—an unsurprising situation given the need to cover a huge country with a small sliver of forces.

Our moves over the next months focused on establishing two ground brigade-level headquarters, one assigned the hazardous south and the other the volatile east (figure 2).[16] (The northern half of the country remained largely free from any enemy threat, and thus became an economy-of-force area.) The brigades' headquarters in the south and east became centers for regional command and control of forces in the vast southern half of the country. Each brigade was assigned an area of operations spanning its entire region. All organizations operating in this

battlespace worked directly for or in support of the brigade commander. This was a striking and powerful organizational change.

Establishing unity of purpose in the non-military sphere was much more difficult. Arguably, the greatest flaw in our 21st-century approach to COIN is our inability to marshal and fuse efforts from all the elements of national power into a unified whole. This failure has resulted in an approach akin to punching an adversary with five outstretched fingers rather than one powerful closed fist.

Oftentimes, this rift has had its origin in relations between the U.S. chief of mission (i.e., our ambassador) and the military commander—each reporting to different chains of command in the midst of a nation embroiled in a counterinsurgency war. Afghanistan in 2003 was no exception—a situation made even more difficult by personnel turnover. After the U.S. ambassador departed in July without a replacement, the deputy chief of mission served as the acting chief for four months, and the presidential special

envoy for Iraq and Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, shuttled in and out. Ultimately named as the new U.S. ambassador, Khalilzad arrived for full-time duties on Thanksgiving Day 2003—but retained his special envoy status and thus had direct and regular access to the president as well as to the Department of State (DOS).[17] As the U.S. and coalition military commander, I reported to the commander of U.S. Central Command, General John P. Abizaid, and through him to the secretary of defense and the president. Our system dictates that our top diplomat and main military commander receive orders from and report to different people, coming together only at the president. Moreover, the cultural differences which separate the departments of State and Defense—and their people—are well known.

Fortunately, chemistry counts, and personalities matter. Ambassador Khalilzad and I both recognized that our personal relationship would set the tone for embassy and military teams across Afghanistan. We established a strong personal bond in Kabul that became a keystone in what would be a seamless approach to the interagency challenges we faced in Afghanistan.[18] (In retrospect, I have viewed this approach as much akin to a "supporting-supported" relationship between the military and the embassy for many tasks involving other than the military elements of power). My guidance to our staff was that as the most powerful organization in the country, we would take a direct interest in *everything*—not just the traditional warfighting piece. As I told an exasperated and overworked staff officer in October 2003: "We own it all!"[19] Our tactics outside the military arena would largely be characterized as "leading from the rear" but were nonetheless very effective. To demonstrate personal commitment to this unified embassy-military approach, I moved into a half-trailer on the embassy compound and established an office there next to the ambassador's. I began each day attending country-team and core security-group meetings with our new ambassador. The message to our staffs was unambiguous: there would be no "white space" between the military and interagency effort in Kabul, and by extension, throughout Afghanistan.

The close personal relationship the ambassador and I established paid us both immense dividends. Through daily meetings of key players in the embassy, we developed a common view of the fight that further cemented the unity of our integrated effort. This shared view significantly shaped our unified interagency approach. It also had a major impact on the direction of our military efforts.[20]

Building teamwork and consensus among the diverse international players in Kabul was more problematic. The simple challenge was getting all the players on the same playing field, playing the same sport, and moving toward the same set of goal posts. (Having everyone in the same jersey was not expected!) We spent significant personal time and military staff effort building close relations with the Afghans, UNAMA, foreign embassies, the media, and even the NGO community. A key element in developing our COIN campaign plan was "shopping it around" in draft form—first to the members of the U.S. Embassy, then to the broader set of international and Afghan players who would be essential in supporting its goals. This unconventional approach sent a message of inclusion to all those committed to Afghanistan's future. At the same time, it significantly refined and improved our planning.

We also seconded five military staff officers to the ambassador packaged as an unusual new group, the Embassy Interagency Planning Group, or EPIG. Led by a brilliant Army military intelligence colonel, this small core of talented planners—the "piglets"—applied structured military staff planning to the diverse requirements Ambassador Khalilzad faced in shaping the interagency response in Afghanistan.[21] With the ambassador's guidance, the EPIG drafted the embassy's mission performance plan, and it developed and tracked metrics for him on all aspects of interagency and military performance. Eventually, we also seconded military officers from our headquarters to many of the embassy's key sections to augment a small, young country team. This served two important purposes: it lent structured planning and organizing support to overworked embassy offices, and it kept our military team well connected to the embassy's efforts across the spectrum. This move, too, contributed to building a unified team with close personal ties, trust, and confidence.

Five Pillars

As figure 1 depicts, our COIN plan for Afghanistan had five pillars:
● Defeat terrorism and deny sanctuary.
● Enable the Afghan security structure.

- Sustain area ownership.
- Enable reconstruction and good governance.
- Engage regional states.

Linking these pillars together was information operations (IO)—winning the war of ideas.

The keys to delivering on our COIN strategy were to implement and integrate the actions called for by these pillars, and to have every platoon, squad, and team in Afghanistan clearly understand their intent. We had departed notably from previous, more constrained approaches by naming the Afghan people as our operational center of gravity and by focusing on unity of purpose across diverse stakeholders. The five pillars reflected our reassessment of how to apply even long-standing military capabilities in new directions.

Defeat terrorism and deny sanctuary. As we switched our focus from the enemy to the people, we did not neglect the operational tenet of maintaining pressure on the enemy. Selected special operations forces (SOF) continued their full-time hunt for Al-Qaeda's senior leaders. The blood debt of 9/11 was nowhere more keenly felt every day than in Afghanistan. No Soldier, Sailor, Airman, or Marine serving there ever needed an explanation for his or her presence—they "got it." Dedicated units worked the Al-Qaeda fight on a 24-hour basis and continued to do so into 2004 and 2005.

In some ways, however, attacking enemy cells became a supporting effort: our primary objective was maintaining popular support. Thus, respect for the Afghan people's customs, religion, tribal ways, and growing feelings of sovereignty became an inherent aspect of all military operations. As well, the "three-block war" construct became the norm for our conventional forces.[22] Any given tactical mission would likely include some mixture of kinetics (e.g., fighting insurgents), peacekeeping (e.g., negotiating between rival clans), and humanitarian relief (e.g., digging wells or assessing local needs). The 2001-2003 notion of enemy-centric counterterrorist operations now became nested in a wholly different context, that of "war amongst the people," in the words of British General Sir Rupert Smith.[23]

Our forces in the field once again demonstrated their remarkable ability to adjust to changing situations with only general guidance—and deliver results. When I asked a superb battalion commander

how, in the absence of doctrine, he was able to shift his leaders toward a largely new COIN approach in the middle of their combat tour, he laughed and said: "Easy, sir—Books-A-Million.Com!"[24] Reading classic counterinsurgency texts in the field became a substitute for official doctrine. The realization grew that "First, do no harm" must be a central consideration, and that Afghan security forces must play a visible role in coalition military operations. Even local elders were enlisted, for we knew that intelligence could often be manipulated to settle old scores and discredit our efforts.

Our growing recognition of the need to respect the population eventually led us to develop the "Fifteen Points," a coordinated set of guidelines (see sidebar) that we proposed to President Karzai in response to his growing concerns about the impact of coalition military operations. Together, we publicized these efforts in order to assure the Afghans that we recognized and respected the sovereignty of their country. This had the intended effect. It extended the freedom of action granted to coalition forces for perhaps years, allowing us to spend the "bag of capital"—Afghan tolerance—that much more slowly.[25]

Enable the Afghan security structure. Under this pillar, we extended and accelerated the training of the Afghan National Army, and ultimately turned our scrutiny to the police as well. The development of the ANA and the Afghan Ministry of Defense (MOD) were significant success stories in the two years after the fall of the Taliban. Despite intense tribal rivalries, the ANA and MOD were re-created with an ethnically balanced, merit-based leader selection process that, by late 2003, had established both as models among the most-reformed bodies of the Afghan Government.

The ANA training effort produced ethnically balanced, well-trained formations down to platoon level. The strikingly positive reaction these units evoked when they entered villages alongside their embedded U.S. trainers stood in stark contrast to the reactions elicited by the repressive tribal militias then still common in Afghanistan. In fact, villagers often assumed that ANA units were foreign forces until their members began to speak in local dialects. Their professionalism, discipline, and combat effectiveness stood out; they became sources of national pride. The Office of Military

THE FIFTEEN POINTS

1. No searches of national government property are conducted without COMCFC-AFG approval.
2. Units must coordinate to have a government official present during the search of the property of another government official.
3. All units must coordinate for local police or other government officials when conducting searches unless there is a compelling and time sensitive reason. Approval authority for this is the regional commander.
4. All material/documents taken in a search will be returned, unless the person is detained, in which case the property becomes evidence.
5. Soldiers participating in searches will be briefed on local customs.
6. When possible soldiers will ask locals to open locked doors versus forcing entry.
7. Units must avoid cuffing/binding hands unless necessary for security.
8. During low risk operations, a local person will be asked to enter a structure first to explain what is happening.
9. Require Regional Commander approval for conducting night searches.
10. Units will infuse reconstruction funds into areas where people were detained and subsequently released.
11. Inform people that the International Committee of the Red Cross has information on detainees.
12. Establish a Joint Afghan led board in the Ministry of Interior to provide information on detainees and coordinate releases.
13. Work with national government to identify ineffective or corrupt local officials.
14. Monthly Joint review to identify which units are receiving the most complaints.
15. Assign an Afghan liaison to each of our units.

Cooperation-Afghanistan (OMC-A), initially led by Major General (now Lieutenant General) Karl Eikenberry, produced a remarkable training and combat organizational structure from a base of near-zero in less than a year's time. From 2003 to 2005, no ANA formations were defeated or broke in combat engagements. Moreover, ANA units showed notable discipline during intense civil-disturbance operations—operations for which they had not been specifically trained.[26]

The police forces in Afghanistan during this period were more problematic. Initially under-resourced and hampered by a training model that focused on the individual policeman (unlike the ANA, which adopted a "train as units" model), the police program faltered until interagency realignments in mid-2005 permitted OMC-A to assume joint oversight (with DOS) of the police. Lobbied for by both the military and the embassy from Kabul, this significant change allowed the coalition to put lessons learned in ANA training to good effect in police training. It also enabled the coalition to realize economies of scale by combining the two forces' training oversight. With the police widely acknowledged to be the "first line of defense" in a COIN campaign, it remains unfortunate that the fusion of police and ANA training oversight came so late.

Sustain area ownership. In my view, this pillar codified the most important, although least visible, change on the ground. *Area ownership* is an extension of unity of command. Under the previous "raid strategy," units owned no battlespace save the ground they were on during a two- or three-week operation. Long-term, battlespace was "owned" only at the CJTF-180 level in Bagram; no subordinate unit had long-term responsibility for the outcomes in any specified area. With area ownership, we dedicated key contested areas of Afghanistan (i.e., the south and east) to each maneuver brigade and battalion. This seemingly simple concept had profound implications. Now, rather than pass through an area intent on simply routing out an enemy based on intelligence derived in a faraway operating base, units operated in their own distinct territory for up to 12 months.

Our approach consciously mirrored New York City's very successful policy in the 1990s of holding police captains responsible for reducing crime in their precincts. Like New York's captains, our commanders now "owned" their areas and were responsible for results. Area ownership meant that for the first time in the war, unit commanders had a defined area, clear sets of challenges, and direct responsibility for long-term outcomes.

Of course, they also had the authority to effect those outcomes, along with Commanders Emergency Response Program funding to address pressing civil needs with a minimum of bureaucracy. Commanders could become experts in their areas, build personal relations with tribal elders and key government officials, convince the population that they were there to stay—and then see the results.[27] The areas were unavoidably large—one battalion had an area the size of Vermont, another the size of Rhode Island—but those areas were *theirs!* Again, this is classic counterinsurgency, although it was new in Afghanistan.

Enable reconstruction and good governance. Extending the reach of the central government was fundamental to helping Afghanistan become a nation that embraced the rule of law and entrusted its elected government with a monopoly on violence. As Said Jawad, Afghan Ambassador to the U.S., often notes, "Afghanistan is a strong nation, but a weak state." Afghanistan, over its long history, has stayed together as a country despite many opportunities for powerful interests to fracture the nation into separate tribal parts. At the same time, the power of the nation's legitimate institutions grows weaker with every kilometer of distance from Kabul. Effective local government remains elusive, and traditional tribal and clan cultures hold powerful sway even today throughout much of the countryside—and will likely do so for generations. The primary military instrument designed to address this challenge was the provincial reconstruction team.

Conceived in 2002 by a British officer, PRTs were 80- to 100-person organizations normally posted to provincial capitals. Led by a colonel or lieutenant colonel, they typically comprised a security force, medical and logistics components, a civil affairs team, a command and control element, and senior representatives from the Afghan Ministry of Interior, U.S. DOS, USAID, and in certain areas, the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The mission of the PRTs included security and reconstruction, in fine balance. A PRT's very presence in an area served as a catalyst for both, and it signified the international and Afghan commitment to bettering the lives of the people through improved government support. A multinational PRT executive steering committee in Kabul, co-chaired by the Afghan Minister of Interior and U.S./coalition commander, coordinated the PRT effort.[28]

PRTs became a powerful offensive weapon in our strategic arsenal as we crafted our plans for 2004 in Afghanistan. The four existing PRTs, as mentioned earlier, were deployed in largely quiet areas (Gardez, Konduz, Mazar-e-Sharif, Bamian) with the next four being developed at a very deliberate pace. We soon accelerated the latter by largely disassembling the combined and joint civil-military operations task force headquarters in Bagram and sending its well-resourced pool of civil affairs experts to form new PRTs in the field. The immediate goal became eight new PRTs in the south and east of Afghanistan, so that when the snows melted in the spring of 2004, we would have newly deployed PRTs confronting the Taliban across the most contested areas. (figure 3)

This bold move sent an incontrovertible message about the progress of the security and reconstruction effort into the most dangerous areas of Afghanistan. It was a calculated risk. PRTs had little ability to defend themselves, but the enemy well understood that 20 minutes after a distress call, any PRT in southern Afghanistan could have combat aircraft with bombs overhead and a rapid reaction force ready to arrive soon thereafter. The 2001 offensive that toppled the Taliban had produced a healthy respect for American airpower that allowed us, among other things, to conduct small patrols far from our bases in relative security. PRTs similarly benefitted from air support, and leveraged it regularly.

Engage regional states. This task fell largely into my in-box, but senior leaders at our tactical headquarters in Bagram ably supported me.[29] Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan's (CFC-A) combined joint operations area for USCENTCOM included all of Afghanistan, all of Pakistan less Jammu and Kashmir, and the southern portions of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Our forces conducted combat operations only in Afghanistan, but my charter gave me authority to travel and interact regularly with the senior security leaders of the other three countries—with particular emphasis on Pakistan.

This Pakistani component of engagement was necessary to address border-security issues between Afghanistan and Pakistan (the Taliban operated in both) and to assist the Pakistanis in their own efforts to disrupt and defeat so-called "miscreants" in their tribal areas adjacent to Afghanistan. Quarterly
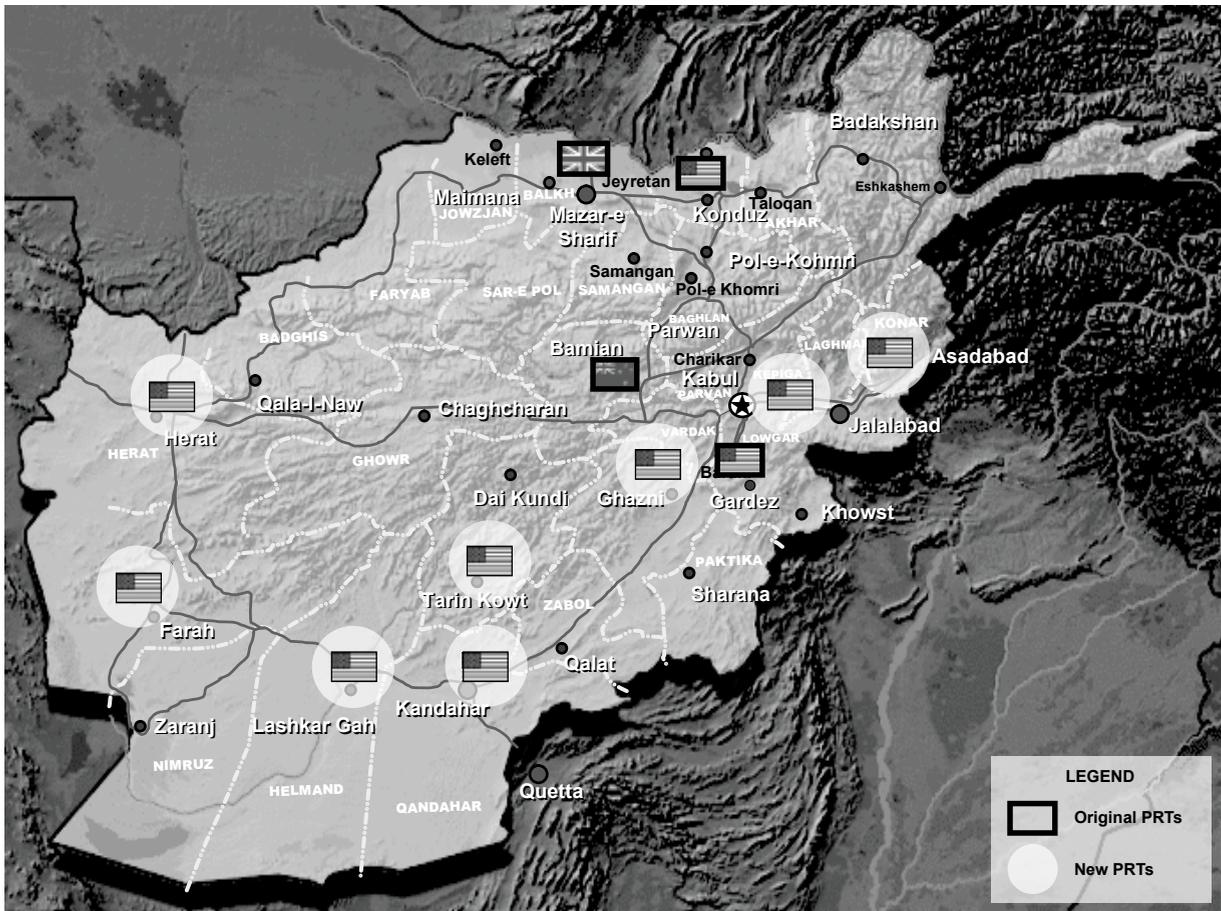
Figure 3. Provincial Reconstruction Teams, 2004.

tripartite conferences chaired at my level (and supported by the U.S. embassies in Kabul and Islamabad) brought together Afghanistan's and Pakistan's senior security leaders to address security issues of mutual concern. CJTF-180 (and later CJTF-76) also hosted monthly tactical border-security meetings along the ill-defined Pakistan-Afghanistan border to reduce local tensions; exchange radios, communications frequencies, and procedures; and build cross-border relations at the local level. Frequent trips to Islamabad rounded out our effort and kept me closely engaged with senior Pakistani military leaders.

All this engagement paid significant dividends when the inevitable exchange of fire across the border occurred between U.S. or Afghan and Pakistani forces. The close military ties that grew from building relationships also helped encourage Pakistani action against the enemy on Pakistan's side of the border. In mid-2004, the Pakistani Army conducted major operations in the Feder-

ally Administered Tribal Area for the first time in Pakistan's history. The effort inflicted hundreds of casualties on the enemy and noticeably disrupted Taliban and Al-Qaeda operations on both sides of the border.[30]

Crosscutting vector: information operations (IO). Winning the war of ideas and communicating effectively in a wholly foreign culture was among the most vexing tasks in our COIN strategy. We recognized early on that winning the war of ideas might decide the outcome of the conflict. How would the Afghan people perceive our efforts? Would they retain hope for their future? In the end, would they have more faith in the prospects of their own elected government and their embryonic political process, or would they turn back in despair to the certainty of total control represented by the Taliban?

On balance, it became apparent to me that international forces would always remain at a permanent disadvantage in perceptions, and that the IO effort had to be first and foremost an Afghan one. Our

> *Winning the war of ideas and communicating effectively in a wholly foreign culture was among the most vexing tasks in our COIN strategy.*

challenge was to do everything we could to be truthful, to get the facts out, to let success speak for itself, and to create the unshakeable story of good outcomes—all uncompromised by "spin." Results ultimately speak for themselves. Without demonstrably positive results, information operations can be perceived as spewing empty words that corrode credibility and legitimacy.

Evaluating Results of COIN, 2003-2005

In retrospect, the late 2003 shift in strategy from an enemy-centric counterterrorist strategy to a more comprehensive, population-centered COIN approach marked a turning point in the U.S. mission. While dedicated forces continued unabated the hunt for Al-Qaeda leaders and remnants, the overall direction of the U.S.-coalition effort shifted toward a more classic COIN approach (albeit with a very light footprint) that would have been familiar to Louis Lyautey, Sir Gerald Templer, or Creighton Abrams.

Results over the 2003-2005 period were positive and dramatic. Meeting in a national loya jirga, Afghans drew up and approved the most moderate constitution then extant in the Islamic world. Throughout the spring and summer of 2004, 10.5 million Afghans—twice as many as had been expected to do so—registered to vote in the first-ever Afghan presidential elections. In the face of significant insurgent threats, intimidation, and violence, 8.5 million Afghans actually voted that fall, electing Hamid Karzai as president with 55 percent of the vote from among 18 candidates. By year's end, a respected cabinet was in place and a peaceful inauguration completed. The year 2005 built on this success with a nationwide effort again turning out millions of voters to elect members of the *wolesi jirga*, or lower house of parliament. The winners took their seats by year's end.

All in all, as 2005 came to a close, we had achieved significant progress toward accomplishing the objectives of the 2001 Bonn conference and the follow-on 2004 Berlin conference, but most importantly, we had built a solid basis of hope among the Afghan people for a better future. Without hope among the population, any COIN effort is ultimately doomed to failure.

Afghanistan since 2005

Much has changed in Afghanistan since 2005 ended so promisingly. The Taliban and Al-Qaeda have gathered strength, changed tactics, and significantly increased both their capabilities and their attacks. As one measure, there were 139 suicide attacks in 2006, as compared to 17 in 2005, 5 in 2004, and 2 in 2003. In the first six months of 2007, there were over 80 suicide attacks.[31] Across the border in Pakistan, further offensive operations against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban have been largely suspended since the aggressive Pakistani military efforts in 2004 disrupted much of the terrorist base structure in tribal areas of Waziristan.[32] Consequently, a large potential sanctuary for the Taliban and Al-Qaeda has gone largely unmolested for nearly three years.

On the American side of the ledger, the U.S. publicly announced in mid-2005 that NATO was assuming full responsibility for military operations throughout Afghanistan. By the end of that year, the U.S. declared that it was withdrawing 2,500 combat troops.[33] Unsurprisingly, this was widely viewed in the region as the first signal that the United States was "moving for the exits," thus reinforcing long-held doubts about the prospects of sustained American commitment.[34] In my judgment, these public moves have served more than any other U.S. actions since 2001 to alter the calculus of both our friends and adversaries across the region—and not in our favor.

> *All in all, as 2005 came to a close, …we had built a solid basis of hope among the Afghan people for a better future. Without hope among the population, any COIN effort is ultimately doomed to failure.*

As promised, by late 2006 NATO had assumed command of the military effort in Afghanistan, commanding over 26,000 troops (including 12,000 from the U.S.). An additional 10,000 Americans served under U.S. national control, many in logistics units and SOF. Twenty-six NATO PRTs are now deployed across Afghanistan, but they vary widely in size, composition, and mission (according to the contributor)—and now report through a different chain of command than do NATO's maneuver units in the same battlespace. The American-led three-star CFC-A headquarters has been inactivated, and the senior U.S. military commander is a two-star general once again located at Bagram—but in tactical command of only one-quarter of the country, Regional Command East. Headquarters, ISAF, has tactical responsibility for all of Afghanistan—and is assisted by a staff including 14 NATO generals.[35] Operational responsibility for Afghanistan resides in Brunssum, the Netherlands—over 3,000 miles distant. An American four-star general commands ISAF, but he officially reports only through NATO channels, not U.S. Both the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, and the Commander of U.S. Central Command own the Afghan theater and its battlespace—and direct forces in Afghanistan who report separately up their two reporting chains.[36] OMC-A has evolved into Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan and remains located in Kabul. No senior U.S. military commander lives and works at the American Embassy. U.S. Embassy Kabul is in its final stages of a "normalization," designed to make it function and look like every other U.S. embassy in the world. It remains, of course, in a combat zone.

Continual turnover of U.S. senior leaders has made continuity of effort a recurrent challenge in this very complex COIN fight. Since 2001, the U.S. endeavor in Afghanistan has seen five different chiefs of mission and six different military commanders—not counting those who served less than 60 days.[37] Since mid-2005, the comprehensive U.S.-led COIN strategy described above has been significantly altered by subsequent military and civilian leaders who held differing views. With the advent of NATO military leadership, there is today no single comprehensive strategy to guide the U.S., NATO, or international effort. Unity of purpose—both interagency and international—has

suffered; unity of command is more fragmented; area ownership has receded; and tactics in some areas have seemingly reverted to earlier practices such as the aggressive use of airpower.

The "bag of capital" representing the tolerance of the Afghan people for foreign forces appears to be diminishing.[38] NATO's ISAF has assumed a narrow focus on the "20-percent military" dimension of COIN. It views the remaining "80-percent non-military" component of successful COIN operations as falling outside the purview of what is, after all, a "military alliance."[39] Both NATO and coalition tactics, too, seem to convey the belief that the center of gravity is no longer the Afghan population and their security, but the enemy. In many ways, these changes take us "back to the future" of 2002 and early 2003—and they in all likelihood do not augur well for the future of our policy goals in Afghanistan.

The Afghan people, whose aspirations rose to unprecedented heights in the exhilarating days of 2004 and 2005, have experienced a series of setbacks and disappointments. Besides facing threats from a more dangerous Taliban, President Karzai is under growing pressure from powerful interests inside his own administration. Corruption, crime, poverty, and a burgeoning narcotics trade threaten to undermine public confidence in the new democratic government. NATO, the designated heir to an originally popular international military effort, is threatened by the prospects of mounting disaffection among the Afghan people. This threat is perhaps only exceeded by political risk at home in Europe, owing to the prospect of dramatically increased NATO casualties as the lethality perfected in Iraq migrates east with jihadist fighters freed to fight other battles in Afghanistan.

Looking Ahead— Tomorrow and the Day After

At the end of the day, what is most important to the United States and to our friends in this region is that success or failure in Afghanistan will dramatically shape the future of a strategically important region for decades to come. Afghanistan's popular image is that of a backward country once best known as a "terrorist-supported state," but it remains at the center of a global energy and trade crossroads—one which is only growing in significance. It is also situated in an exceptionally important neighborhood:

to the east lies Pakistan, the second largest Islamic nation in the world, and likely armed with dozens of nuclear weapons; to the northeast is China, with growing regional energy and security interests; across the north, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, three former states of the Soviet Union, are struggling against internal forces of instability while confronting powerful neighbors; and to the west is Iran, whose looming nuclear program and support for terrorism in the region is cause for grave concern. This neighborhood defines strategic interest for the U.S. and the West—and within it, Afghanistan remains a friendly state anxious to increase its connections to the West and especially to the U.S. At this juncture of history, the U.S. and its alliance partners in NATO can ill afford to walk away from this region with any other outcome save long-term success in Afghanistan. *MR*

NOTES

1. Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Reestablishment of Permanent Government Institutions (Bonn: December, 2001), henceforth referred to as the Bonn Process. This UN-supported response assigned lead nations to oversee varied security-sector reform efforts in Afghanistan: police—Germany; military—U.S.; justice-Italy; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration—Japan; counter-narcotics—United Kingdom.

2. Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF)-180 (now comprising Headquarters, 10th Mountain Division) retained its name upon the departure of XVIII Airborne Corps until March 2004, when it became CJTF-76. Its focus became tactical and low-end operational as Combined forces Command-Afghanistan, the senior coalition headquarters in Kabul, assumed the role of high-end operational and theater (i.e., regional) strategic levels. NATO's ISAF in October 2003 consisted of approximately 5500 troops located exclusively within the city of Kabul.

3. Author's conversation with chief, Office of Military Cooperation, September 2003.

4. Conversations with senior U.S. commanders, 2003; see also Nicholas D. Kristoff, "The Wrong Lessons of the Somalia Debacle," *New York Times* (5 Feb 2002).

5. See *The CIA World Factbook* online entries for Afghanistan and Iraq, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html>.

6. Author's first visit to Afghanistan, pre-deployment, September 2003.

7. Author's conversation with an infantry battalion commander, December 2003.

8. Author's conversation with General John Abizaid, October 2003: " . . . *your mission is 'big Pol' and 'little mil.'"*

9. Conversation with a former senior U.S. commander for Afghanistan, August 2003.

10. This headquarters officially became Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan (CFC-A) in early 2004. Command responsibility was assumed in November 2003.

11. The first augmentation of our staff beyond an original six members came by moving the entire CJTF-180 CJ5 (future plans) section to Kabul under Combined Forces Command. Colonel (now Brigadier) Ian Liles, U.K., was the CJ5 largely responsible for drafting the initial "Security Strategy South and East." By May 2005, CFC-A staff stabilized at just over 400 members.

12. See, for example, *The History of Revolutionary Warfare*, Vols. I-V (West Point, NY: United States Military Academy, 1974). Among other valued texts I read during my nineteen months of command were John Nagl's *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (University of Chicago Press: 2005) and Louis Sorley's *A Better War* (Harvest Books, 2007).

13. General Barry McCaffrey, U.S. Army (retired), comment to the author on the depth of consistent understanding of CFC-A COIN strategy during his visits to units across Afghanistan, 2004.

14. "Strategy" here is used as a more commonly understood interagency and international substitute for what would be called in military parlance a "campaign plan." Our complete campaign plan addressing all elements of power eventually became a 400-page document.

15. The footprint of fewer than 20,000 Western forces in Afghanistan in 2003 was light compared with over 100,000 Soviet troops at the height of their ill-fated military involvement. My belief remains that the "light footprint" approach in Afghanistan holds great advantages, despite its many challenges. See Rory Stewart, "Where Less is More," *New York Times*, 23 July 2007.

16. This occurred under CJTF-76, which succeeded CJTF-180 in April 2004.

17. This was a powerful advantage. Direct access and a personal relationship with the president, vice-president, and secretaries of state and defense gave Ambassador Khalilzad and the Afghan enterprise a strong voice at the most senior policy levels in Washington.

18. Christopher Griffen, "A Working Plan: Hope Isn't the Only Strategy for Afghanistan," *Armed Forces Journal* (April 2007).

19. Our entire headquarters staff at this point had fewer than 40 people.

20. Our six-day-a-week Security Core Group meetings brought top U.S. interagency leaders together to "synchronize" outlooks and information almost every morning. Among the attendees were the ambassador, military commander, USAID chief, Afghan Reconstruction Group (ARG) chief, intelligence chief, OMC-A chief, and deputy chief of mission. All left updated with a common view of events in Afghanistan, thus insuring our daily efforts remained well coordinated and mutually supportive.

21. The Embassy Interagency Planning Group (EPIG) was led by Colonel John Ritchie, USA.

22. General Charles Krulak, Commandant, USMC, created the three-block-war construct.

23. General Sir Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (Alfred A. Knopf,2006), 5.

24. Discussion at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Shkin with LTC Mike Howard, USA, Commander, 1-87 Infantry, 10th Mountain Division, winter 2003-4.

25. Personal observation. The reaction of President Karzai, his cabinet, and outward reactions of the Afghan people to this effort were very positive.

26. Herat riots, August 2004; preparations for civil disturbances in Kabul, August 2004.

27. Paraphrasing LTC David Paschal, Commander, 2-87 Infantry, 10th Mountain Division: "The longer I spent in one place, the more people became comfortable with me and were more willing to share information. At first, they were fearful, then they watched with curiosity but then they gained confidence in us and our ability to provide security and services. With ownership we were able to build a level of trust." Outbrief to Headquarters, CFC-A, 5 May 2004.

28. The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Executive Steering Committee met monthly and comprised senior representatives of all nations contributing PRTs or considering such a contribution. It was typically attended by the UN senior representative of the secretary general and co-chaired by the Afghan minister of interior (who oversaw PRTs in the Afghan governmental structure) and the senior U.S. (and later NATO) military commanders.

29. After the departure of Headquarters, XVIII Airborne Corps, in the spring of 2003, CJTF-180 was formed around Headquarters, 10th Mountain Division; later, CJTF-76 formed around Headquarters, 25th Infantry Division (Light), and subsequently, Headquarters, Southern European Task Force (SETAF).

30. Personal observations and discussions with senior Pakistani military officers 2004.

31. Figures on 2003-2006 suicide attacks are from former Afghan Minister of Interior Ali Jalali.

32. Situation as of mid-July 2007. The Pakistani military response in the FATA to the outburst of nationwide terrorist attacks following the government's 10 July assault on the Lal Masjid ("Red Mosque") in Islamabad had yet to fully develop as of this writing.

33. As reported by the Associated Press and AFX News Limited. See *USA Today,* "NATO to take over Afghan security in 2006" 4 August 2005; and Forbes.com, "U.S. to reduce troop numbers in Afghanistan soon," <www.forbes.com/finance/feeds/afx/2005/12/26/afx2414408.htm>.

34. A remark we commonly heard from Afghans of every stripe was "You Americans are not going to abandon us again, are you?" The Taliban were often noted for saying "the Americans may have all of the wristwatches, but we have all of the time."

35. CFC-A during this era operated with two generals: one U.S. three-star commander and one U.K. two-star deputy commander. U.K deputies were, in succession, Major Generals John Cooper and Peter Gilchrist, both exceptional talents. The CFC-A staff principals were entirely composed of colonels or Navy captains; CFC chiefs of staff were, in succession, COL Tom Snukis, USA, and COL Dave Lamm, USA, whose efforts were nothing short of heroic.

36. For example, forces under the "Operation Enduring Freedom mandate" (e.g., U.S. Special Forces) in Afghanistan report through a U.S.-only chain to Admiral Fallon, Commander, U.S. Central Command, in Tampa; forces under the "NATO mandate" (e.g., U.S. infantry battalions) report through Headquarters, ISAF, in Kabul (tactical level), to Commander, Joint Forces Command, Brunsuum, the Netherlands (operational level) to the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, General Craddock, in Mons (strategic level).

37. Ambassador Finn, Deputy Chief of Mission David Sedney, Ambassador Khalilzad, Ambassador Neumann, Ambassador Wood; LTG Mikolashek, LTG (now General) McNeill, LTG Vines, LTG Barno, LTG Eikenberry, and MG Rodriguez.

38. President Karzai press conferences; April 2006 riots in Kabul; protests to civilian casualties.

39. David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Praeger Security International Paperback, August 2006). According to Galula, successful counterinsurgency is 20 percent military effort, 80 percent non-military.

Combating a Modern Insurgency: Combined Task Force Devil in Afghanistan

Colonel (P) Patrick Donahue, U.S. Army, and Lieutenant Colonel Michael Fenzel, U.S. Army

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 . . . Focus on the population, further your game plan, and fight the enemy only when he gets in the way. This gains and keeps the initiative.

—Lieutenant Colonel David Kilcullen, Australian Army[1]

Colonel (P) Patrick Donahue, U.S. Army, is the executive officer to the U.S. Army Vice Chief of Staff. He holds a B.S. from the U.S. Military Academy and studied at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, and Harvard University as an Olmsted Scholar, earning an MPA. He also holds an M.S. in national security studies from the Army War College. His deployments include OIF I, OEF III (2003), OIF III (2004), and OEF VI (2005-06). COL Donahue commanded CTF Devil through OEF VI.

Lieutenant Colonel Mike Fenzel, U.S. Army, is the commander of Task Force Eagle (1-503d Airborne), now deployed to Eastern Paktika province, in Afghanistan, as part of Combined Task Force Fury. He holds a B.A. from Johns Hopkins University and two masters degrees in international security and strategic studies from Harvard University and the U.S. Naval War College. His deployments include operations Desert Shield/Storm (1990-91), Joint Endeavor to Bosnia (1995-96), Assured Response to Liberia (1996), OIF I in Iraq (2003-04), and OEF VI (2005-06) and OEF VIII (2007-08) in Afghanistan. He was deputy commander of CTF Devil through OEF VI.

PHOTO: CTF Devil, TF Koa, and an ANA brigade commander meeting with sub-governor, police chief, and elders in Chapadara, Kunar province, 14 November 2005. (U.S. Army, LTC Trevor Bredenkamp)

IN EARLY SUMMER OF 2005, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) was in the midst of its sixth rotation of forces in Afghanistan since late 2001. On 1 June 2005, the 1st Brigade of the 82d Airborne Division became the core of Combined Task Force (CTF) Devil and assumed command of Regional Command East (RC East). Its area of responsibility included 10 provinces and covered a mountainous region roughly the size of North Carolina. Attached to CTF Devil were 8 provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs), 5 maneuver task forces, a forward support battalion, 2 batteries of artillery, and 9 separate companies for a total of over 5,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines. Special Operations Forces, to include a Special Forces battalion, and other government agencies cooperated closely with the task force, while two brigades of the Afghan National Army (ANA) served as primary partners in addressing security within the borders of RC East (see figure 1).

CTF Devil received a classic counterinsurgency (COIN) mission:

● Conduct stability operations to defeat insurgents and separate them from the people.

● Protect the people in RC East and interdict infiltrators out of Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

● Transform the environment by building the Afghans' capacity to secure and govern themselves.

In these operations, CTF Devil fought four different enemies:

● The insurgents themselves—the Taliban, the Hizb-i Islami (Islamic Party) Gulbaddin (led by Gulbaddin Hekmatyar), and Al-Qaeda. Each had differing techniques, tribal affiliations, and goals.

● Afghanistan's own weak-state threats: the corruption, smuggling, drugs, and refugee problems associated with 25 years of near-constant war.

● A challenging climate: rains in the spring brought powerful floods, the summer heat limited aircraft loads, and extreme cold and snow in
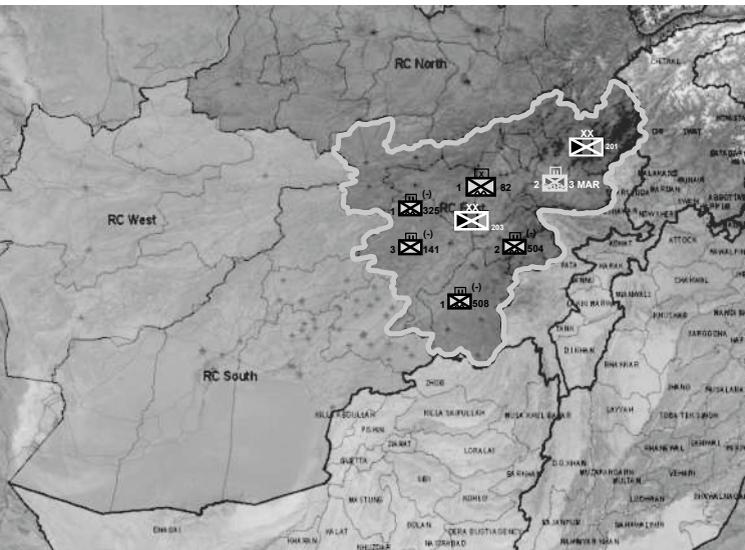
Figure 1. Regional Command East and CTF Devil disposition, August–December 2005

the winter cut off cities and even entire provinces from the rest of the country.

● Very difficult terrain varying from high plains 7,000 feet above sea level, to densely forested mountains over 10,000 feet high (with only camel trail access), to deep valleys with raging rivers.

The AO's strategic significance lay in the 1,500 kilometers of border shared with Pakistan, including the Khyber Pass, the main entry point into Afghanistan for commerce. To manage this sprawling battlespace, CTF Devil executed a pragmatic strategy that balanced kinetic, nonkinetic, and political actions.

Operational Environment in RC East

At the provincial and district levels, the government in Afghanistan was so weak in 2005 as to be nearly nonexistent, especially in the border areas where only tribal authorities were recognized. The people ignored district and governmental boundaries, and a gamut of unofficial actors filled gaps in the power base. Internal councils (shuras) governed the primarily Pashtun tribes, and carefully selected leaders and elders represented them externally. These tribal structures and shuras were de facto governments in areas where no institutional functions existed. They also represented a challenge to the emerging provincial governments because they resisted ceding their traditional authority. Mullahs

gained political clout during CTF Devil's tenure because they increasingly saw politics as their inherent sphere of influence. Surprisingly, they were relatively anti-Taliban and supported a moderate version of Islam. CTF Devil routinely worked with the mullah shuras to dispel rumors, counter extremist propaganda, and address security issues directly.

While the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (IRoA) and coalition forces represented a progressive alternative to Taliban authority, strongmen, warlords, and militia leaders were still influential, particularly in border districts. In certain cases, former warlords had become the local chiefs of the Afghan Border Police or Afghan National Police (ANP) to mask their criminal operations behind official duties.

In theory, the Afghan government is a strongly centralized system, with power mostly flowing from Kabul. In practice, the central government has limited influence in much of the country outside of Kabul. During Operation Enduring Freedom VI, this limited influence was due to a lack of financial and human resources, destroyed institutions and infrastructure, corruption and inefficiency, and the inherent difficulties of governing the fiercely independent people in the border regions.

Task force provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) and maneuver battalion commanders had contact with the provincial governor who served as the coalition's principal interlocutor with the ministries and national government. At the lowest level, a sub-governor appointed by the provincial governor administered each district and maintained close contact with company-level leadership.

The task force determined at the start that reconstruction could only move forward if coalition and Afghan army and police forces maintained an offensive posture; therefore, it made a concerted effort to synchronize capabilities. To keep the initiative, CTF Devil implemented a campaign plan that focused on four goals:

● Building Afghan capacity.
● Extending the reach of the central government.
● Blocking infiltration.
● Ensuring good governance.

A key task involved promoting and protecting the nation's first-ever parliamentary elections. These goals drove many of the CTF's actions during its first six months in country. Measures of effectiveness focused on positive indicators such as changes

in infrastructure and institutional capacity (numbers of businesses opening, police manning their posts, children in school, homes with electricity, etc.) and the degree to which the people supported their local and national government (number of IEDs turned in to the police by civilians, voters registering, former Taliban reconciling, etc.).

During planning in May 2005, the CTF determined its main effort would focus on building Afghan security with three supporting lines of operation: good governance and justice, economic and strategic reconstruction, and security cooperation with Pakistan along the shared border. The task force used this focus to shape its campaign.

Killing or capturing insurgents was important when required, but this was not an essential task. The CTF's decisive operations would focus on the people, the center of gravity. For operations to succeed, coalition forces realized the people needed to believe they were secure. The task force found itself in competition with the Taliban for the will of the people. Though both sides were trying to win over fence sitters who were waiting to see which side would bring them the most benefits, the CTF possessed two very effective means to rally support: a substantial development effort, and alignment with the popular Afghan president, Hamid Karzai. By 2005, these two factors had substantially eroded support for Taliban theocratic ideology in eastern Afghanistan. As a result, the Taliban had to resort to coercion, intimidation, and terrorism.

The preferred manner of engaging Taliban insurgents was not through search-and-attack missions between mountaintops and ridgelines. Instead, the task force asked PRT and maneuver commanders to identify the most effective methods of separating the insurgents from the population. CTF Devil believed it had to give the people quick, tangible reasons to support their government. To obtain this support, perception of Afghan institutional autonomy had to improve. Expansion of U.S. cooperation with the Afghan National Security Forces helped initially.[2] Task force leadership understood that conditions for long-term security had to be set first. Improved security had the potential to set the conditions for a wave of sustainable development that would both improve perceptions of government autonomy and undercut insurgent aspirations.

In pursuing security, U.S.-only operations aimed at eliminating insurgents did not lead to favorable outcomes. CTF leaders quickly discerned that unilateral operations were culturally unacceptable to Afghans, encouraging conditions that would perpetuate the insurgency. For instance, a paratrooper entering an Afghan building for any reason without accompanying Afghan forces brought shame to the owner of the dwelling. In addition, according to the Afghan Pashtunwali code, for every zealot-militant U.S. forces killed, no less than three relatives were honor-bound to avenge his death.

CTF Devil's goal in this regard involved developing Afghan security capacity to a point where ANSFs could conduct and, ultimately, lead clearing operations. Just putting an "Afghan face" on missions (i.e., having token Afghans along on U.S. operations) was not sufficient. There were challenges to overcome first, though. The Afghan National Police knew their communities and the insurgents operating in them, but they feared taking action because they were often outgunned and out-manned. Furthermore, the nascent Afghan legal system was still weak, and police were reluctant to arrest insurgents because corrupt judges often released them quickly. But by working closely with the police, building trust through combined training, and showing the willingness to backup the ANP, the task force emboldened its allies. After CTF Devil established this partnership, the often ill-equipped and poorly trained ANP suddenly began discovering IEDs and willingly moved against insurgent cells in their districts.

Still, U.S.-led kinetic operations were necessary, particularly in Kunar province's Korengal Valley

Afghan National Police in Nuristan, Afghanistan, 30 September 2005.

in the north and the border districts of Lwara and Bermel in Paktika province. In areas like these, the insurgents proved to be well trained, well equipped, and able to operate in groups as large as 100. Their rocket threat against forward operating bases and a resurgence of IED cells in the interior districts presented concerns only U.S. forces were ready to address effectively. In such situations, the CTF tried to function as a shield, the idea being that the Afghan police and army could form behind U.S. forces and, eventually, take over the fight.

During CTF Devil's tenure, transitioning Afghans to the lead proved to be an evolutionary process, not a series of revolutionary events. The task force conducted frequent combined operations with an increasing focus on cooperative security development. It did so from company to brigade level, and it included provincial security forces. In time, these efforts brought Afghan and coalition forces closer and closer together.

Combat Operations

U.S. commanders learned what every maneuver battalion has to understand when fighting a counterinsurgency: protecting the people, motivating them to support their government, and building the host-nation's capacity are all primary objectives. In pursuing these priorities, the CTF's maneuver battalion commanders pioneered efforts to share intelligence with their counterpart ANA brigades and police commanders. The efforts yielded immediate tactical and eventual strategic results.[4] They cultivated the enduring trust and confidence sorely needed to protect and support the people.

While the main effort in the AO was building Afghan security capacity, the task force also conducted many deliberate combat operations that garnered meaningful results. These maneuvers ranged from air assault raids against insurgent leaders along the border with Pakistan to brigade operations in partnership with ANSF in the Afghan interior. In every case, maneuver generated intelligence, and that intelligence drove further operations, allowing the CTF to maintain the initiative and keep the militants and their insurgent leaders on the run.

Principles Guiding CTF Operations

These principles, elaborated below, governed CTF operations:

● *Commit to making every operation a combined operation*. Including the ANSF in coalition operations enabled them to gain experience and improve their skills. They participated in planning and rehearsal processes, and the CTF collocated key leaders to assist them during execution phases. CTF Devil pre-cleared all targets and operations with the provincial governors and ANA brigade commanders. Although "how" and "when" were not revealed, normally the ANA would wholeheartedly endorse the task force's target selection and provide additional Afghan resources to help achieve U.S. objectives. CTF Devil never had an operational security leak from sharing this information with Afghan leaders, although commanders had feared such occurrences.

Combined operations provided the task force with reciprocal benefits. The regular presence of Afghan counterparts enhanced coalition combat power by increasing the number of intelligence collectors, linguists, and cultural experts working together to solve the same problems. As aforementioned, CTF Devil discovered having Afghans search a compound was much more culturally acceptable and effective than doing U.S.-only searches. Not only did the Afghan search avoid the issue of perceived sovereignty violations, but also the Afghans knew where to look, and the professionalism of their searches impressed the people. ANA soldiers or local police officers also conveyed key messages to village elders much more effectively than could U.S. Soldiers using interpreters. U.S. forces thus learned to embrace their roles as advisors in a counterinsurgency.

● *Always seek to mass effects*. CTF Devil did this, for instance, by cross-attaching rifle companies from one battalion to the next to give them the combat power needed for an operation. In massing, the task force worked with governors and ANA brigade commanders to get the most Afghan support possible. CTF Devil could not task the ANA to participate in operations, but it "partnered" with them to identify missions of mutual interest. The combined force positioned itself to mass fires by emplacing artillery, mortars, radars, and observers throughout its battlespace and by creating numerous autonomous fire and counter-fire teams. The teams paired fire direction centers and counter-fire radar with two to four howitzers commanded by an experienced lieutenant. In employing these teams,

CTF Devil fired over 6,800 artillery rounds during its OEF rotation.

Artillery proved useful for defeating the ever-present rocket threat and for handling ambush situations by covering a company movement through a valley where enemy squads occupied dominating ridgelines. The task force also massed electronic warfare assets; information operations; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; Army aviation; and close air support (CAS) to assist operations. When it had troops in contact or when actionable intelligence breakthroughs occurred, the CTF also re-tasked these assets on the fly.[5] Just as importantly, the task force massed joint nonlethal effects, seeking to exploit every possible advantage over the Taliban insurgents.

● *Make an understanding of how local traditions influenced the battlespace and the Afghan people a significant part of operations planning*. Identifying the effects of tribes, ethnicity, religion, and weak-state threats enabled CTF Devil to better understand and respond to what was happening. Local Afghans, security forces, and government leaders contributed to our targeting processes and provided insights needed to gain operational advantages. Understanding how these cultural idiosyncrasies affected the conditions proved invaluable.

For example, an area like Lwara was constantly in dispute for a host of reasons: the Zadran tribal territory extends across the border there, and the insurgent leader Haqqani is a Zadran elder; Lwara is a traditional crossing point from Pakistan's Miram Shah within the federally administered tribal area into Afghanistan, and the border there has been contested for centuries; a trafficable river valley leads from Miram Shah to the nearby Lwara Dashta plains just inside Afghanistan; and the Lwara foothills contain rich deposits of chromite ore, which smugglers move across the border for resale in Pakistan. Such knowledge can be a tremendous help to U.S. planners, but it is hard to gain without involving Afghans in the targeting process.

● *Seek operational interoperability with the Pakistan military forces (PAKMIL)*. Such interoperability was essential when operating along the border. CTF Devil therefore developed relationships with its PAKMIL counterparts by conducting numerous flag meetings at all levels, from company to brigade and higher. The task force sought to have Afghan com-

manders join these meetings too, in order to reduce border friction between the wary neighbors. Eventually, CTF Devil developed reliable communications with PAKMIL battalions and brigades across the border and began to coordinate actions to prevent insurgent forces from using the border region as a sanctuary. For example, when CTF Devil reported an ambush, PAKMIL counterparts maneuvered forces to block the insurgents' egress across the border. Once U.S. and Pakistani leaders acknowledged they were fighting the same enemy, the task force began to share intelligence with the Pakistanis and integrate operations along the border. Cooperation did not come easily; it required a consistent effort to build trust, but it was critical to success. On one occasion, after U.S. forces had fired counter-battery artillery on a target that was close to a PAKMIL ground commander's border checkpoint, the brigade headquarters received an angry phone call from the commander. The task force explained to him that a rocket fired from that location had destroyed a hangar the PAKMIL commander had himself visited just a week earlier. This information was sobering. He was mollified when U.S. officers explained they had certain knowledge of an insurgent rocket's point of origin before they began to return artillery fire.

● *Treat Afghans with respect and display discipline at all times*. U.S. restraint and professionalism contrasted with coarse Taliban cruelty and capriciousness, reinforcing the CTF's legitimacy. Mentoring, training, and supervising Afghan forces,

U.S. Army, LTC Trevor Bredenkamp

Colonel Patrick Donahue and Lieutenant Colonel Michele Bredenkamp confer with a Pakistani brigadier general during a flag tri-partite meeting in Lwara Bazaar, Pakistan, 8 February 2006.

in conjunction with embedded training teams (ETTs), cemented that legitimacy. With the police particularly, values reform represented welcome progress in the eyes of the people; it gained the Afghan government much-needed public support. When people's confidence in their local police grew and they saw ANA soldiers comporting themselves professionally, they began to develop a nationalistic pride in their new security forces and became more willing to turn against the insurgency. As they did so, intelligence reporting from local sources increased, leading to even more successful combined operations.

● *Apply combat power, civil-military expertise, and IO simultaneously—not sequentially*. For example, if CTF Devil were executing a cordon-and-search of a village to locate an IED cell, it did not wait until after completing the mission to explain its rationale. Additionally, if it searched one end of the village, it also conducted a medical civil affairs program on the other end, often treating hundreds of local villagers. This type of operation created goodwill and established excellent new sources of intelligence. Just as combat operations had an Afghan lead, so, too, did these concurrent civil-military operations. The ANA distributed humanitarian relief supplies to refugees, and its medics treated patients. In some cases, CTF Devil asked the provincial governor to broadcast a radio message to explain its mission and ask for people's support. When the task force met with tribal elders to explain the purpose of an operation, it brought Afghan counterparts to explain their roles and their view of the threat. The CTF followed up with a PRT project for those tribes that helped solidify and consolidate the gains our maneuver battalions made. These actions enabled us to maintain good relations with the public and led to much better actionable intelligence and early warning.

Operations in Kunar Province

The most contested region in RC East during OEF VI was the Wahabbiist stronghold in the Korengal River Valley, in the center of Kunar province. All three battalions from the 3d Marine Regiment from Hawaii that rotated through RC East during our tenure had responsibility for this area. In the aftermath of the shoot-down of an MH-47 in this area during Operation Red Wings in July 2005, it became clear that moving tactically in the dangerous high ground surrounding the valley required detailed preparation and logistical planning. Movement through the precipitous hills and across the craggy cliffs had to be slow and deliberate. Sometimes it would take an entire day to traverse a single kilometer of the mountainous terrain.

Securing a landing zone (LZ), for instance, took hours in the mountains. Marines and paratroopers had to secure all terrain that dominated the LZ—not just the LZ's four corners. Similarly, resupply in the mountains had to be painstakingly plotted, then carefully executed using varied means, including containerized parachute delivery systems, guided donkey caravans, hired pick-up trucks, and contracted porters from local villages.

Fully planned and coordinated artillery support was also vital to the success of missions in Korengal. Artillery was so overwhelmingly important that CTF Devil required follow-on battalions to train and certify on relevant artillery-related tasks upon arrival in country. Adjusting fires in the mountains required different approaches from those used at Fort Bragg or Grafenwoer, Germany. CTF Devil rediscovered the art of employing indirect fires for operational advantage in mountainous terrain.

U.S. Army

A 2d Battalion, 504th Infantry paratrooper pulls security near the crash site of an MH-47 in the hills of the Korengal Valley, July 2005.

A combined U.S./Afghan patrol preps for a mission, Khost, Afghanistan, 5 June 2005.

military police platoons teamed with the ANA and routinely conducted sustained five-to-seven day training modules with ANP in the district police headquarters to reinforce training the Afghans had received at their academies.

Training in this team-oriented relationship routinely ended with an Afghan-planned and led combined operation. During these operations, the coalition strengthened trust between it and the ANSF by providing close air support, artillery support, army aviation, MEDEVAC, and infantry reinforcements. For its part, the CTF learned to be more sensitive to cultural concerns, such as evacuating soldiers killed in action ahead of the wounded, which was important to the ANSF for religious reasons. In the process of developing this relationship, coalition forces and ANA soldiers shared experiences, hardships, and operational intelligence with one another. In sum, these team-oriented interactions went far in developing autonomous capacity in the ANSF.

In every engagement its maneuver battalions fought in Kunar province, CTF Devil had to show the Afghans it was worth the risk to support their government. Commanders learned to appreciate the provincial governor's role and the targeting of reconstruction to contested areas as a technique for cementing security gains won in a fight. Although personalities and commitments varied, the coalition found that the Afghan authorities were uniformly dedicated to improving conditions and helping their people achieve a higher standard of living.

Partnered teamwork also engendered greater unity of effort in the AO. CTF Devil conducted frequent combined planning and strategy sessions with Afghan leaders, including targeting meetings with the ANSF and intelligence-fusion meetings with the National Defense Service (the Afghan domestic intelligence agency, similar to the FBI). These efforts all helped build a unified approach to security and reconstruction. They also prevented zealot militants and insurgents from exploiting

Building Afghan Security Capacity and Partnership

In fostering Afghanistan's nascent security apparatus, CTF Devil forged partnerships with U.S. government agencies, international organizations, and the Afghan government. Whereas TF Phoenix's embedded training teams mentored their ANA counterparts, CTF Devil's battalions actually teamed with them. Teaming up meant providing infantry, artillery, engineer, combat service support, and planning opportunities the ETTs could not. After coordinating with Afghan corps and brigade commanders and their U.S. advisors, the task force aligned or "partnered" CTF Devil units with Afghan units and established habitual training and operational relationships. Rifle squads and

A Navy Corpsman with 2/3 Marines (TF Koa) provides medical aid to a wounded ANA soldier during a partnered operation in Pech River Valley, Kunar province, August 2005.

seams between organizations. Most important, as CTF Devil successfully fostered Afghan security planning capacity, its leadership role gradually diminished. Afghan counterparts assumed greater responsibility for guiding these efforts. This shift came about as CTF Devil incrementally empowered indigenous leaders.

Along these lines, the commander of the 1-508th Airborne created the first provincial coordination center (PCC), in Paktika province, to focus the various Afghan security forces on addressing common threats. This PCC experiment proved a great success, and so CTF Devil replicated the effort by establishing PCCs in every province prior to the 2005 National Assembly and parliamentary elections. It resourced the PCCs with teams of talented coalition and ANSF officers and NCOs. Functioning like battalion command posts, the PCCs became a key link between coalition forces, ANSF, and often elusive district sub-governors. During the elections and later during day-to-day operations, the PCCs were a key enabler of intelligence-sharing and joint-security-related problem-solving by ANSF units, the task force, and provincial governors. Initially, CTF Devil led all the efforts and conducted all the shift updates, overcoming intelligence classification issues by describing only the "who" or "what" of the intelligence without disclosing the source. Within a few months the PCCs became nerve centers, and Afghans ran the briefs. CTF Devil then replicated the effort across the AO. Every provincial capital put a PCC into operation to coordinate security for the elections, and they eventually provided a longer-term solution to synchronizing security responses.

Because of the trust built with their ANA allies, U.S. forces continued operations during Ramadan, maintaining support from the ANA throughout the Muslim holy month. Afghan authorities even granted religious exemptions to their soldiers for Ramadan. These dispensations were important because Taliban leaders had already granted exemptions from fasting, and were maintaining a high operational tempo during those holy days. Task force maneuver battalions learned hard lessons about this period early in their tenure, but they figured out what the enemy was doing and why he was doing it. They consistently passed on maneuver-battalion best practices that addressed coping with religious complexities to units in other sectors that were grappling with similar issues.

PRT Threat-based Reconstruction

At our transfer of authority in mid-2005, 25th Infantry Division's Task Force Thunder had established provincial reconstruction teams and initiated reconstruction and development efforts across RC East. In January 2005 Task Force Thunder had shifted the PRTs' focus from emergency support to more sophisticated development and had met Afghan necessities for food, water, and shelter, although these were primitive by first-world standards.

However, CTF Devil had to address other problems:
- An antiquated medical system.
- Limited road networks.
- An insufficient power grid.
- Access to education.
- A judicial system tribal leaders ignored.

In addition, the economy, while improving, languished during the early phases of OEF VI, and high unemployment persisted. Since the Taliban and Al-Qaeda were unable to provide any form of reconstruction, development, or aid to the people, the situation was ripe for improvement. CTF Devil saw an opportunity to use intensified reconstruction operations as a nonlethal mechanism to improve security, governance, and overall economic development. The CTF, however, also realized it had to use this mechanism in a way that did not create unrealistic expectations.

CTF Devil began by re-focusing the efforts of its eight PRTs and five battalions to speed reconstruction, especially of infrastructure and roads—the high-impact and high-visibility projects. Close coordination between task force staff and higher headquarters (CJTF-76) brought increased Commanders Emergency Relief Program (CERP) funding. CTF Devil then tasked each PRT and battalion commander to develop plans with representatives of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and State Department to invigorate "unity" in reconstruction efforts. This focus of reconstruction activity threw the insurgents back on their heels. Taliban forces simply could not compete with a well-designed reconstruction strategy. Because cleric-militants focused on otherworldly authority, they never developed anything tangibly positive to offer the population; they could not counter a community-supported project with real-world benefits.

Instead, the insurgents had to turn to religious propaganda, terrorism, and violence, the only tactics they possessed to realize their strategy of protracting the conflict.

Because of these tactics, seeking projects in contested areas became CTF Devil's first priority. Doing so required developing community support and backing from Kabul for the initiatives. Provincial government legitimacy soared when tangible completed projects trumped insurgent exhortations and attacks. This community-investment approach, discussed below in more detail, became integral to the CTF campaign plan. However, while concentrating CERP projects in contested areas (see the high threat areas on figure 2), CTF Devil had to eschew large, unwieldy projects that had no chance of being completed, or were not sustainable, after the departure of U.S. troops, depletion of CERP funds, or loss of community support.

Ill-conceived, poorly placed, or failed projects would constitute victories for the insurgent IO campaign. When CTF Devil failed to meet public expectations, the people thought the Afghan government and the Americans were incompetent, creating openings for insurgents to wield their influence. For instance, when CTF Devil provided a power-generation capability for Sharana, the capital of Paktika province, without getting buy-in from the mayor, it created an embarrassing situation. After a single tank of U.S.-provided diesel fuel ran dry, the lights went out in Sharana. They eventually came back on, but in the interim the well-meaning PRT created frustration and resentment among the Afghans they set out to assist.

Achieving consistent success meant concentrating on sustainable projects and avoiding embarrassment for the coalition. Thus, CTF Devil avoided going against the grain and focused on contracting projects that took advantage of Afghan talents and the country's natural resources. To illustrate, after learning that Afghans had little experience with using concrete and cement in construction, but were deft at employing stone, a raw material abundant in Afghanistan, the task force contracted to build stone bridges, rock-foundation flood control walls, and cobblestone roads.

CERP Projects
- Civil infrastructure
- Power generation
- Agriculture and water
- Sanitation
- Roads
- Education

Low Threat
Medium Threat
High Threat
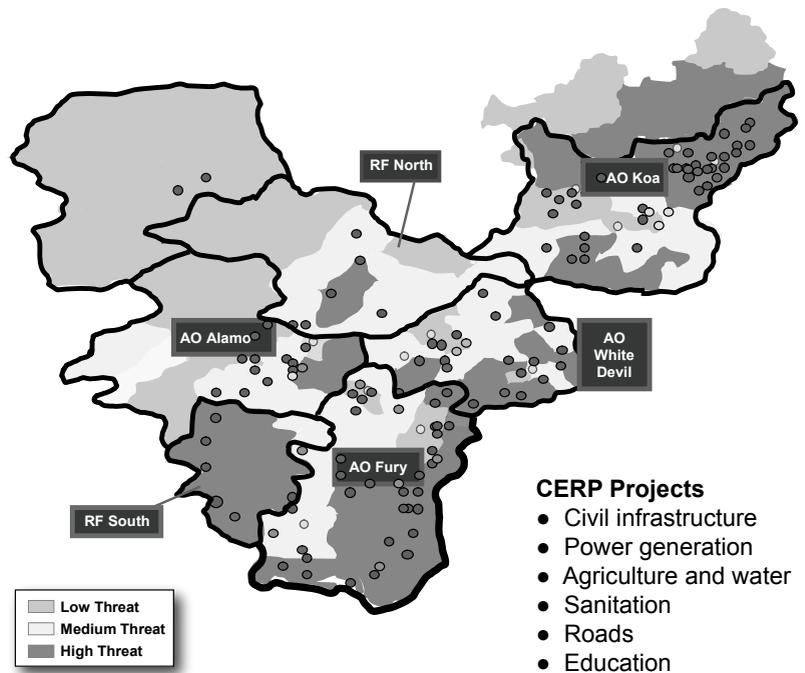
Figure 2. CTF Devil reconstruction projects and threat assessments, January 2006.

As CTF Devil developed its pragmatic approach to reconstruction, it used weekly PRT staff calls to broaden the development discussion. During these meetings, the task force emphasized projects provincial governors and district leaders would fully support so that development efforts would reinforce their ability to govern. Setting out simply to build and improve the environment in areas of perceived need (i.e., the "red" areas on the map in figure 2), was too haphazard. Tribal leaders had to be involved with informal certification. They had to approve all projects to avoid building a project on disputed land, for instance, and to ensure realistic timetables and community relevance. CTF Devil focused initial efforts on projects that units could complete within a reasonable amount of time (three to nine months) so the populace would quickly see results. Using techniques learned from successful non-governmental organizations (NGOs), CTF Devil also sought "sweat equity" from the community in the form of resources or labor. The CTF asked villages and tribes to contribute whatever they could afford. The resulting buy-in generated lasting community support for these projects.

As part of this process, the CTF decided to put a maximum number of Afghans to work. Major

General Jason Kamiya, the CJTF-76 commander, pioneered this approach, calling it "Temporary Work for Afghans." If CTF Devil had a choice between hiring one contractor with four bulldozers, 30 men from India, or a local contractor with 100 Afghans wielding picks and shovels, it chose the latter. Smart Afghan general contractors adopted practical methods to exploit this situation. Not only did they hire Afghans, but also they did so from the local community, which enabled their projects to progress without attacks. Contractors who didn't, especially foreigners, were often attacked and had their work sites destroyed. Their projects were delayed indefinitely or abandoned altogether.

CTF Devil also tasked its maneuver battalions and PRTs to work with provincial governors and IRoA ministry representatives to solicit support in planning and oversight of significant projects. The intent was to encourage Afghans to build their own capacity for development planning. At the same time, the task force sought to incrementally design a longer-range vision. Its overall objective was to make each provincial government more self-sufficient, community-invested, and competent.

As noted, the enemy tried to slow the CTF's new reconstruction effort. Setbacks typically took place in areas where the Taliban still maintained some form of influence, for example, in the Zormat district of Logar province where they attacked a recently constructed police checkpoint, and in the Puli Lam district, where they burned down a school under construction. In response, CTF Devil authorized Afghan contractors to hire local security in high-threat areas. It also sought local project protection by establishing security agreements with tribal leaders, making the latter responsible for protecting projects in their areas. So, in addition to the "sweat equity" mentioned, the populace had to commit to the projects by securing them. Completing these reconstruction endeavors marked real, tangible gains the local population could feel, but progress came only after they made a commitment. Completed projects with community buy-in weakened the Taliban and undermined any pretenses of its legitimacy.

In following through with these developments, CTF Devil also recognized the need to foster relations with international and nonprofit organizations in country. As the United Nations Assistance Mis-

sion to Afghanistan (UNAMA) and development-focused NGOs saw CTF reconstruction successes, they found more ways to communicate with the coalition, and when security improved in different areas, the international community's organizations increased their presence. A mutual willingness to work together began to build. This cooperation was usually informal because the NGOs, fiercely independent anyway, had to preserve the perception that they were impartial. Thus, they were quick to criticize the coalition if it did something they believed adversely affected them. In its cooperation with these organizations, CTF Devil worked to make "unity of effort" more a working reality than a mere concept or discussion point.

Systems Approach to Reconstruction

A well-designed reconstruction effort took more than just selecting projects that villages, districts, or provinces fervently wanted. The coalition had to consider initiatives in a larger context, as a system of complementary projects. CTF Devil initially did not take this approach and, as a result, stand-alone projects in our AO did not substantially improve the economy or security or address compelling community needs. Eventually, CTF Devil moved to a systems approach to reconstruction. It required projects to be well planned and sustainable, and to complement other development efforts. For instance, road networks became favored projects because they often paved the way for a broader system of development.

In one example, CTF Devil created numerous farm-to-market systems in "red" districts and border provinces. Figure 3 illustrates the complexity of a farm-to-market system in Jalalabad that used CERP projects to complement or leverage existing NGO- or USAID-generated projects. This particular system included projects to improve productivity such as USDA classes on low-cost, modern planting techniques. It also included projects to build irrigation channels, flood control walls, and roads connecting district farms with their principal markets. Whether constructing a grain storage facility just off a new road or building a secondary road to a bazaar where the farmer could sell his product more conveniently, the task force aimed to create mutually reinforcing effects.
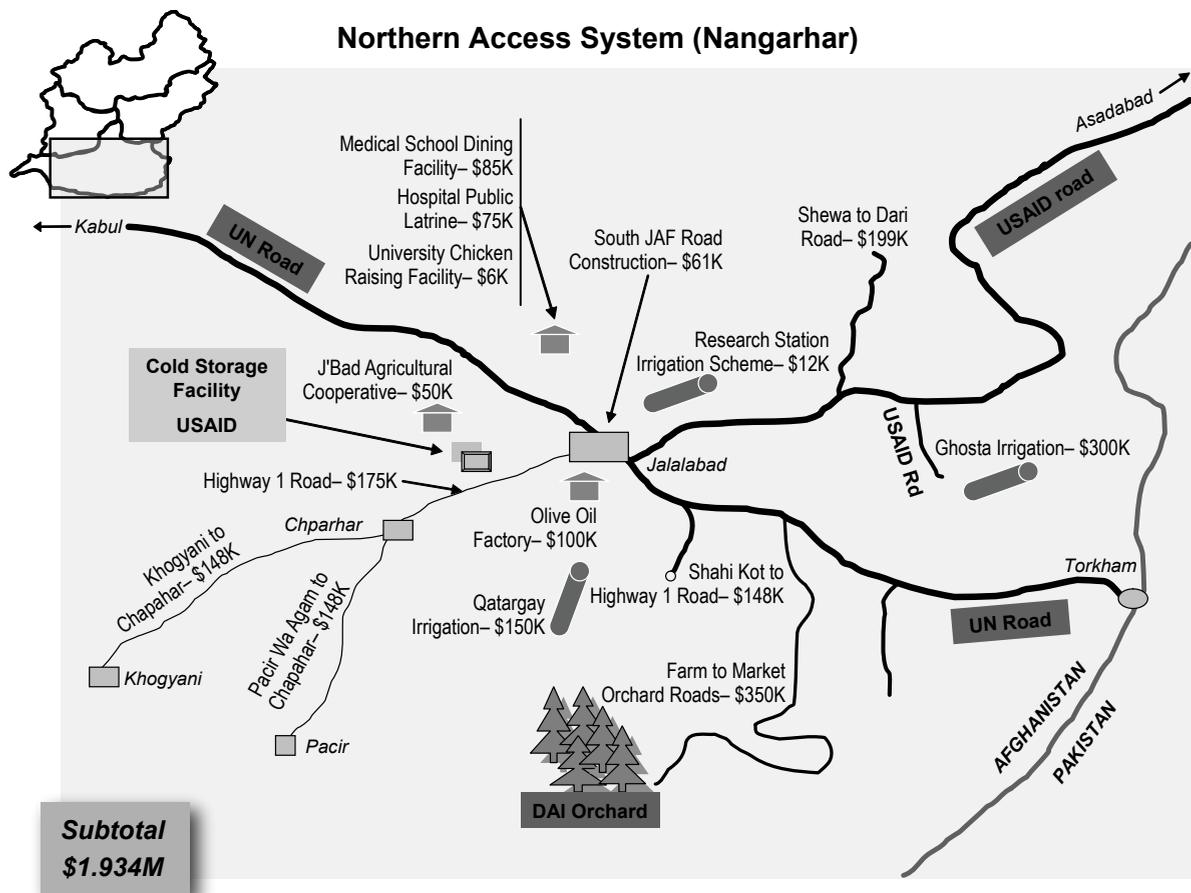
Northern Access System (Nangarhar)

Medical School Dining Facility– $85K
Hospital Public Latrine– $75K
University Chicken Raising Facility– $6K
South JAF Road Construction– $61K
Shewa to Dari Road– $199K
USAID road
Kabul
UN Road
Asadabad
Cold Storage Facility USAID
J'Bad Agricultural Cooperative– $50K
Research Station Irrigation Scheme– $12K
USAID Rd
Ghosta Irrigation– $300K
Highway 1 Road– $175K
Jalalabad
Chparhar
Olive Oil Factory– $100K
Shahi Kot to Highway 1 Road– $148K
Torkham
Khogyani to Chapahar– $148K
Pacir Wa Agam to Chapahar– $148K
Qatargay Irrigation– $150K
UN Road
Khogyani
Farm to Market Orchard Roads– $350K
Pacir
DAI Orchard
AFGHANISTAN
PAKISTAN
Subtotal $1.934M

Figure 3. "Farm to Market System" briefed to CJTF-76 commander, Fall 2005.

CTF Devil sometimes had to win over key persons or populations to this systems approach. It avoided building projects in response to requests from government officials if the endeavors would not add to existing development systems. There were exceptions, but they required the CTF commander's approval, and he granted such exceptions only if the coalition could gain some significant operational advantage as a result.

As CTF Devil executed this intensified, systems-oriented plan, the working relationship with USAID and other agencies began to improve. The task force assessed the effects it delivered and analyzed the issues it faced in areas where traditional development was failing or simply not occurring. It realized that, in some cases, it was better to complement or set the conditions for NGO and international community development rather than try to initiate projects itself. It also found it could work with these organizations directly or indirectly. CTF Devil's USAID representative served as a bridge between coalition forces and other U.S. aid and reconstruc-

tion organizations. Through the intercession of our representative, the task force was able to capitalize on opportunities to reinforce existing initiatives.

For instance, CTF Devil benefited from a UNAMA-brokered agreement, the Zadran Arc Initiative (named for the tribe inhabiting the region), to promote development in areas of discontent in Khowst, Paktiya, and Paktika provinces. It built on the goodwill created by this agreement, started a major road project, and then began building police stations, clinics, and schools. The area had been a safe haven for Jalaluddin Haqqani elements and Taliban forces, but no longer is, thanks to the broadly supported agreement.

In most cases, once the coalition created a more secure environment, non-governmental and international organizations soon followed. The task force encouraged the PRTs to make the most of their presence by seeking the organizations' input to their reconstruction programs. Combined Task Force Devil tasked the PRTs to work with UNAMA and

the NGOs in their sector to start up or encourage the expansion of provincial development councils. The purpose of these development councils was to set development priorities and bring order to otherwise haphazard reconstruction efforts.

Sequencing and synchronization of reconstruction projects became a major priority. Schools, roads, administrative buildings, police checkpoints, mosques, medical clinics, and courthouses built out of sequence with, or without links to, other projects usually had little positive impact and could even be counterproductive. In one case a police checkpoint built far away from an existing road actually became a liability because its isolation made it vulnerable to attack. A few months into this heightened reconstruction effort, CTF Devil tasked the PRTs and maneuver battalions to review the timing of current and future projects, so the task force could spend subsequent reconstruction dollars more wisely.

The CTF Devil staff started this review process by conducting a seminar on the systems approach to development. The staff illustrated what a synchronized approach should look like and how it should have links to other projects in time and location. CTF Devil asked each unit to re-assess, re-evaluate, and refine reconstruction plans to reflect a systems approach. In the final planning step, unit commanders briefed the CTF commander, who approved a project only if it met one or more of four criteria:

● The project was in a red area.

● It linked directly to another system.

● The specific endeavor had buy-in from key government and tribal leaders.

● The project was sustainable.

CTF Devil denied many proposed projects because the PRTs and maneuver commands tended to invest in stand-alone projects, an outgrowth of attempts to placate local and tribal leaders with whom units engaged.

U.S. Interagency Teamwork

A wide array of U.S. agencies converged on Afghanistan after November 2001. Understanding what their roles were and where they operated was important to CTF Devil's becoming an effective interagency team member.

The State Department assigned political officers (POLADs) to the eight U.S. PRTs and to CTF

Headquarters in Khost province. The POLADs had four primary tasks:

● Advising and mentoring Afghan leaders to govern more effectively.

● Acting as reporting officers, tasked with providing information on political, military, economic, and social trends to the U.S. Embassy in Kabul.

● Serving as conduits of information about the border fight in Pakistan to help define U.S. government policies in Afghanistan at the national level.

● Promoting U.S. government policies within the provincial governments.

The POLADS accompanied CTF commanders to meetings with Afghan political and military leaders. They helped commanders prepare for bilateral meetings and carry out reviews after negotiations or engagements were complete.[4] POLADS developed the social, tribal, political, and economic components of the counterinsurgency, allowing commanders to focus more on military concerns. Maintaining an awareness of these nonmilitary components might have otherwise been more elusive.

USAID assigned officers, designated as field program officers, to all the PRTs and to the coalition headquarters staff. These officers—

● Administered USAID projects at the provincial level.

● Advised military officers on development issues.

● Advised IRoA ministers and governors on long-term reconstruction and development strategy.

● Reported to USAID headquarters in Kabul.

● Worked with NGOs and international organizations to find ways to complement their projects with the development efforts of USAID and CTF Devil. In short, they coordinated development strategy at the provincial level.

The USAID officer in charge worked at CTF headquarters and from there managed representatives at the PRTs. Unlike the POLADs, all USAID representatives were contractors, not career employees. Successfully integrating these contractors into PRT operations depended upon a PRT commander's ability to integrate military development efforts with those of the interagency and international community. The USAID representatives taught PRTs how to gain support for projects from tribal and government stakeholders, and encouraged the task force to seek ways to link CERP reconstruction

efforts to USAID and international organization development projects.

Agricultural development in most of RC East proved necessary for long-term economic viability. United States Department of Agriculture officers provided development advice to the IRoA, the CTF, and, to a lesser extent, cooperatives and individual farmers. Although not present in most RC East PRTs, USDA officers worked on the staffs of three key posts (task force headquarters and the Ghazni and Jalalabad PRTs) for much of CTF Devil's tenure. These officers breathed life into USAID's alternative livelihood programs. They provided advice on which crops to substitute for the opium poppy and focused on implementing agricultural programs like micro-credit for farmers. They also helped devise high-impact but simple projects that enhanced the value of crops grown by desperately poor farmers. That said, the relatively limited USDA presence in RC East prevented the task force from making the most of its agricultural development programs.

The UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan in RC East, with hub offices at Gardez and Jalalabad, worked closely with U.S. government political and military officers. UNAMA had a wide mandate, ranging from conflict resolution to human rights monitoring. It played a substantial role in organizing the National Assembly and provincial council elections. Harnessing UNAMA's energy was imperative if CTF Devil was to reach the population effectively. Because UNAMA officers typically had been in Afghanistan for three or more years, had established trust with Afghan officials, and had developed keen insights into the motivations of district and provincial governors, they often served as the continuity in the provinces as military units rotated in and out of the battlespace.

Military CERP and USAID FY 2005 budgets for development in RC East highlighted the importance of interagency teamwork. CTF Devil had $29 million budgeted for development; USAID had 10 times that amount for the same area. Seeing the vast potential for COIN progress if CTF Devil and USAID collaborated, the task force commander directed that development planning involve a concerted effort to bring our two organizations closer together.

From early on, however, CTF Devil encountered staggering gaps in communication, cooperation, and collaboration among representatives of the various agencies. USAID bureaucratic practices also obstructed teamwork and collaboration. Part of the challenge lay in the fact that over 90 percent of in-country USAID representatives were contractors serving under the agency's aegis and their contracts had no explicit provisions for cooperation. The larger problem, however, was the restrictive nature of USAID's development-fund distribution rules. Given USAID's relatively abundant resources, and the direct link between development progress and security, the agency's bureaucratic necessities proved universally frustrating. Nevertheless CTF Devil redoubled efforts, beginning at the brigade headquarters, to forge stronger interagency bonds and increase collaboration with representatives at the PRTs.

These efforts increased interagency integration throughout the command. The CTF overcame philosophical differences and, gradually, set new standards for interagency teamwork. When the CTF's deputy commander began including interagency representatives in PRT meetings and the executive officer started integrating them into the staff estimate process, partnership dynamics improved steadily. As CTF staff emphasized each success in their areas of responsibility, the PRTs and their interagency representatives began to develop into a stronger team. USAID, State Department, and USDA representatives increased their presence and influence in each PRT's area of operation. In the end, these representatives became valued PRT staff members and, along with UNAMA representatives, effective partners within the task force.

Integrating IO

CTF Devil found information operations most effective when Afghans employed them without the appearance of U.S. influence. Information operations messages designed and released solely by U.S. forces often came out too late or were ill suited for the Afghan region or tribe they targeted. Messages were much more effective when Afghan leaders cooperated and spoke directly to the people.[6]

Thus, CTF Devil chose to promote Programme Takhm-e Sohl ("Strengthening the Peace," or PTS), the Afghan government's reconciliation program. Given the success achieved by those governors who actively supported PTS, the task force commander believed that this Afghan-implemented program could become a "war winner." The task force

therefore encouraged local governors to support and manage this initiative. It yielded significant results when insurgents came down from the mountains and left Pakistan to swear allegiance to the Afghan government.[7] One governor, Hakim Taniwal in Paktia province, experienced noteworthy success with this program. He reached out to insurgents and engaged local tribal leaders to ensure no vendettas or revenge killings would ensue after the insurgents returned. Taniwal then brought in the insurgents, ran them through a vetting process in Kabul, and returned them to the provincial seat of Gardez. There he cycled them through a carefully orchestrated, elaborate allegiance ceremony in which tribal elders swore responsibility for the reconciled insurgents' future actions. Taniwal broadcast these ceremonies on the radio and kept track of the reconciled fighters to ensure they were not simply using the program to infiltrate the province. These reconciled insurgents typically encouraged other Taliban members to lay down their arms through the PTS program. Taniwal even employed a reconciled member of the Taliban as the director for his provincial support office of reconciliation.

Another governor, Shah Mahmood Safi in Lagman province, convinced tribal leaders to declare insurgents outside the protection of the Pashtun tradition of sanctuary, thus denying them a base from which to operate and forcing many to become part of the legitimate process. Still another governor, Assadullah Wafa in Kunar province, used PTS with IO reinforcement, often calling provincial shuras to gain the support of key tribal leaders. To make a case for peace, he regularly sent emissaries from the shuras to engage tribes that supported the Taliban and HiG (a fundamentalist faction of the mujahedeen) in the Korengal and Matin valleys. He also used radio addresses to tell the people of Kunar that specific tribes were "rebelling against the government" and that he was considering "turning loose" the coalition to defeat them if they did not reconcile.

Each provincial governor only needed a simple prod and minimal support to make his IO program work for PTS. Provinces where governors offered only token support to PTS did not yield results no matter how hard the task force worked. As a lesson learned, a successful reconciliation program like PTS should be the host nation's program, run by a regional or provincial authority with national oversight.

Of course, the PTS program came with some risks. In addition to the possibility of revenge killings, infiltrators might have used the PTS program as a shield. Experience suggested, however, that the power of one reconciled insurgent on the radio had the potential to effect more progress and influence more people than an infantry battalion on the attack.[8]

Measuring Success and the Way Ahead

While "metrics" of success in COIN are difficult to identify and even more challenging to track, they are nonetheless important. They serve as indicators to identify and monitor progress effectively, and they can suggest the need to modify plans. CTF Devil tracked negative indicators such as numbers of IED and rocket attacks, but it did not overemphasize them. The task force focused more on indicators of success. For instance, CTF Devil carefully cataloged when NGOs returned to a province. Their return implied security had reached the point where they felt safe enough to operate. When Afghan development ministries became involved in quality control for reconstruction projects, the CTF staff interpreted this as an indicator of growth in Afghan autonomous capacity. Similarly, unilateral operations by the Afghan army, from company to brigade level, suggested progress in military self-sufficiency. Another positive area was the number of IEDs found, reported, and turned in by Afghans. The coalition also noted that despite concerted efforts by the Taliban to disrupt national and provincial elections, over 50 percent of registered voters voted anyway.

The combined efforts of CTF Devil units, U.S. interagency representatives, Afghan government leaders, and international and non-governmental organizations were the driving force in achieving significant progress during OEF VI. Overall, the economy expanded, the government increased its reach, a successful election occurred, and the Taliban did not make appreciable gains in eastern Afghanistan.

As aforementioned, the Afghan people were and are the center of gravity in the COIN fight in eastern Afghanistan. Where the people see a tangible reason to take risk and side with their government, the Taliban will lose. The CTF's job was to help the Afghan government enhance security and win the people's trust. As in most countries, Afghans will

Khost Governor Pathan greets the Sabari district sub-governor during preparations for Afghan provincial council elections, 6 June 2005.

vote their pocketbooks, and if they do not perceive tangible economic benefits implying a hopeful future, they may throw out the Karzai government and side with the fundamentalists.

Education metrics will be telling as well. Democracy is unlikely to flourish in the long term if Afghanistan does not advance beyond its current, woefully low level of education, one that primarily serves religious dogma. Opportunities for a liberal arts education will have to be made available to help give the people the intellectual wherewithal to resist the Taliban's otherworldly propaganda and scare tactics. Countering the Taliban with logic and reason may seem too obvious to suggest, but it truly is the answer for encouraging a more moderate religious influence.

Numerous problems remain, including endemic corruption, unhealthy rivalries between tribes, poor infrastructure, a growing drug trade, instability in Pakistan and attendant cross-border attacks, low government revenues, a weak economy, and, as noted, a dark-ages educational framework. Decades of work remain to rebuild Afghanistan. Strong personal relationships and a focus on building Afghan security capacity are the keys to achieving unity of

effort and, by extension, longer-term success in the Afghan COIN effort.

An important take-away from CTF Devil's year-long struggle to achieve and maintain unity of effort is that *where the military endeavor is concerned, there can only be one chief within a regional command.* U.S. forces should always place reconstruction and kinetic operations under the direction of one commander to prevent a constant shifting of priorities. This was the case for CTF Devil during OEF VI. With eight PRTs and five maneuver battalions all under the operational control of CTF Devil, the span of control at the brigade level was larger than some division-sized organizations, but it worked.

Experience has been the best source of practical knowledge in this regard. CTF Devil benefited greatly from lessons passed on to us by our predecessors from CTF Thunder in OEF V. In OEF VII, CTF Spartan built on the successes CTF Devil achieved but refined their plans based on changing threats and challenges. Such is the nature of coalition-forces progress in Afghanistan, where each successive CTF stands on the shoulders of those that came before. Each task force, with its varied commands (Airborne, Marine Corps, Army

2d Battalion, 504th Infantry paratroopers leaving a landing zone, Patika province, Afghanistan, 25 May 2005.

National Guard, and PRTs), in cooperation with the myriad of U.S. and international aid agencies, develops experience and perspective that successive OEF iterations draw upon. Each of these contributions to evolving the COIN fight has helped to place us on the road to winning. *MR*

NOTES

1. LTC David Kilcullen, Australian Army, *Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-Level Counterinsurgency,* Joint Information Operations Center (IO Sphere Publication), 35.

2. 1st Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, had been deployed to Afghanistan as part of OEF III (2003-2004) under the same brigade commander as OEF VI. In OEF III, it routinely conducted coalition-only operations, mainly with attached Italian, Romanian, and French forces.

3. LtCol Jim Donnellan's 2/3 Marines worked in the northern sector of RC East; LTC Tom Donovan's 2-504th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR) and LTC Tim McGuire's 1-508 PIR in the CTF's central sector; and LTC Orlando Salinas' 3-141 IN (TXARNG) and LTC Dave Anders 1-325 Airborne Infantry Regiment in the west.

4. LtCol Pete Donnelly, a veteran of Operation Anaconda from OEF I, commanded the 13th Air Support Operations Squadron, and deployed with the CTF. He was instrumental in forming an exceptional joint team for combat operations by certifying joint tactical air controllers (JTACs), training units without JTACs (such as PRTs) to call in close air support, personally calling in airstrikes, and finding the best way for the Air Force to mass effects on the ground. Support from USAF A-10s, B-1Bs, B-52s, HH-60s and USN EA6Bs as well as intelligence platforms such as U2s, JSTARS, and Predator-Bs, was phenomenal.

5. Political officers like Rob Kemp, Liam Walsley, Harold Ingram, and numerous other brave Americans often accompanied commanders on patrol and air assaults to get a first-hand read of the battlefield.

6. Combined operations proved especially effective at producing IO messages and engagements that showed the Afghan people the strength and reach of their government in ways that fit culturally. Often the U.S.-produced products failed because the writers in Bagram did not understand the cultural context.

7. Twenty-four additional Taliban leaders were pending acceptance into the Afghan-run program at CTF Devil's transfer of authority.

8. One incident during CTF Devil's tenure perfectly illustrates the power of Afghan-delivered IO. In November 2005 (during Ramadan), a backpack bomb exploded inside Tani Mosque in Khost province, killing a popular pro-government imam and three other civilians. The imam's killing sent shock waves throughout the country, but produced the opposite effect from the one the Taliban sought. President Karzai condemned the attack and called for a full investigation of the murder. Initially, the provincial governor, Merajudin Pathan, insisted he would not attend the funeral because he was not a family member, but with some prompting from the PRT commander in Khost (LTC Chuck Miller), the governor changed his mind and handled the situation very differently: in addition to attending the funeral, he went to the hospital to visit those injured in the bombing, closed schools to ensure the community was fully mobilized, called for mass demonstrations in the streets, invited the press to follow him around the entire day, and held a 20-minute press interview with *Al Jazeera*. The city of Khost united in anger against the Taliban. With just minimal support, the governor took charge of the situation, organized thousands of people to march through the streets and condemn the Taliban, and set a classic leadership example for other Afghan governors to follow.

HUMINT-CENTRIC OPERATIONS:
Developing Actionable Intelligence in the Urban Counterinsurgency Environment

Colonel Ralph O. Baker, U.S. Army

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A FEW WEEKS AFTER assuming command of the 2d Brigade Combat Team (2BCT), 1st Armored Division, I found myself sitting in a tactical command center in downtown Baghdad conducting a brigade cordon-and-search. The reports flooding in from my battalion commanders were virtually all the same:

"STRIKER 6, this is REGULAR 6. Objectives 27, 28, 29 secure and cleared. Nothing significant to report. Over."

We spent nearly ten hours searching for insurgents and weapons in hundreds of dwellings throughout our objective area, a bad neighborhood off Haifa Street that was a hub of insurgent activity—and for what? Ultimately, we captured a dozen weapons and a handful of suspects.

Much more worrisome to me than the meager results of our operation was the ill will and anger we had created among the Iraqi citizens who were the unwelcome recipients of our dead-of-night operations. I had been on enough such sweeps already to picture the scene clearly: mothers crying, children screaming, husbands humiliated. No matter how professionally you executed such searches, the net result was inevitably ugly.

That profoundly disappointing experience led me to a blunt realization: our dependency on conventional intelligence collection methods and our failure to understand the negative perceptions our actions were generating among Iraqi citizens threatened to doom our mission. If we did not change our methods, and change them quickly, we were not going to be successful in the urban counterinsurgency (COIN) environment in which we found ourselves. As a result of that realization, I made two decisions in the ensuing days that affected the way our combat team would operate for the remainder of our deployment. First, we would reform the way we conducted intelligence operations, and second, we would make information operations (IO) a pillar of our daily operational framework.

My purpose in writing this article is to share with the reader insights and lessons learned from the reform of our intelligence operations; specifically, what we learned by conducting human intelligence (HUMINT)-centric operations in a heavy BCT in Iraq. To that end, I want to briefly describe the initial state of my BCT and our area of operations (AO), identify the major intelligence challenges that we faced, and offer solutions and techniques we adapted or developed in order to overcome our challenges.

Background

Second BCT deployed to Iraq in May 2003. We were a conventional heavy BCT, task-organized with 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. The BCT's train-up prior to deployment had focused on conventional, mid- to high-intensity combat, and our battalion and brigade headquarters and staff processes were still optimized to fight a conventional threat.

Our AO included two districts in Baghdad—Karkh and Karada. Within these two districts lived somewhere between 700,000 and a million citizens, among them Sunnis, Shi'as, and the city's largest population of Christians. Our AO also included the heavily fortified Green Zone and several neighborhoods with large populations of retired Iraqi generals, plus numerous ethnic, sectarian and political entities (either preexisting or emerging, such as the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution, the Islamic Dawa Party, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan).

With the exception of our counterintelligence warrant officer and a few other officers who had some previous exposure to HUMINT operations, we neither understood nor anticipated the inadequacy of our conventionally designed intelligence collection and analysis system. More importantly, almost no one understood the dominant role that HUMINT operations would play in developing actionable intelligence on a burgeoning insurgency.

The intelligence system we brought to Iraq was designed to identify conventional enemy formations, and our intelligence personnel were trained to conduct predictive analysis about an enemy based upon our knowledge of his equipment and doctrine. Exactly none of these conditions existed after Saddam's army was defeated.

> *…we neither understood nor anticipated the inadequacy of our conventionally designed intelligence collection and analysis system.*

Instead, we found ourselves in the midst of an insurgency, confronted by an elusive enemy force that wore no uniform and blended seamlessly into the local population. Conventional intelligence collection systems just don't work in this type of environment; our imagery operations, electronic reconnaissance, and standard combat patrols and surveillance operations were simply ineffective. After faithfully applying these conventional ISR (intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) methods and assets to our combat operations, we netted almost no actionable intelligence.

Challenges

Realizing that we were fighting a growing insurgency and that the current conventional organization and training of our battalion and brigade intelligence sections were inadequate to address our needs, I decided to transition our conventional BCT intelligence system into a HUMINT-centric system.

Not unexpectedly, a change of this magnitude for a unit engaged in combat against a growing insurgency presented many challenges. After considering the circumstances we faced in our AO and our leadership's lack of experience and familiarity with COIN operations, I found that our challenges could be grouped into three general categories: leadership, organization, and training.

Leadership

When people are confronted with substantive change that runs counter to their doctrine and training, it's natural for them to be uncomfortable and therefore hesitant to embrace that change. I assumed this would be the case from the beginning; thus, I set about implementing mechanisms to ensure that compliance with our intelligence changes was rapid and "as directed." From the beginning, I felt it was necessary to convince my commanders and staffs that transitioning to a HUMINT-based approach to intelligence was my absolute highest priority.

As a commander, you must set the conditions to ensure that your subordinates make HUMINT operations a priority and that they synchronize such operations with your headquarters. You must start out by providing a sound concept your subordinates can understand and follow: visualize the plan, describe it to your people, and then direct them in execution. After close consultation with my

x

S2 ✳

| S2 |
| Ops | Plans |

B | MI | 501

| HQ | Ops | SIGINT |
| GSR | HUMINT | ACT |
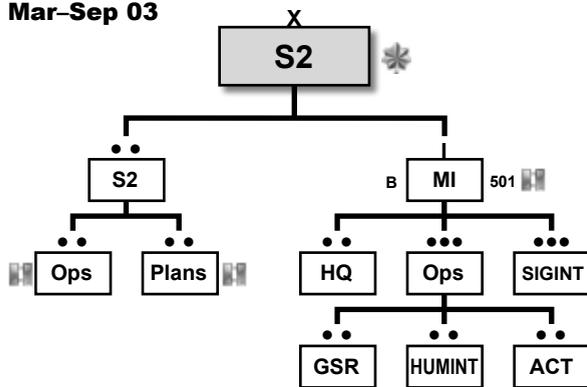
44 Soldiers
2 CAT-III Interpreters (used by HUMINT)
Traditional MI MOSs
Doctrinal DS MICO Operations

Sep 03–Jul 04

x

S2 ✳

| Plans | S2X | Ops x2 | P/B |

(Note: Passes and
Badges Section.
Executes Installation
Control Procedures)

B | MI | 501

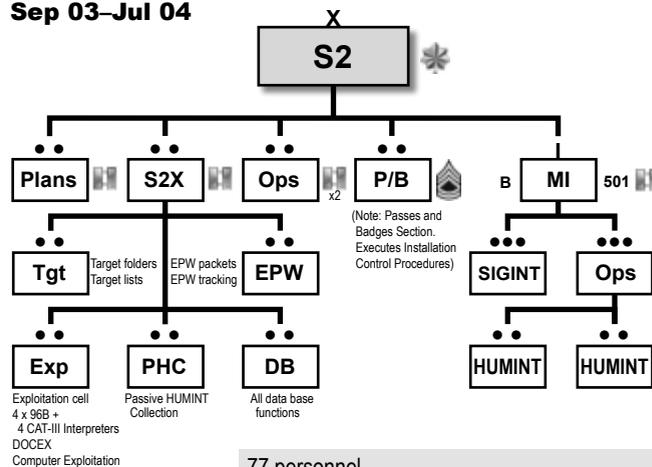| Tgt | Target folders / Target lists | EPW packets / EPW tracking | EPW |
| SIGINT | Ops |

| Exp | PHC | DB |
| HUMINT | HUMINT |

Exploitation cell
4 x 96B +
 4 CAT-III Interpreters
DOCEX
Computer Exploitation

Passive HUMINT
Collection

All data base
functions

77 personnel
7 CAT-III Interpreters
CS, CSS and Cbt Arms MOSs
ACT (With Augmentation) forms basis of S2X
Organization based on required capabilities

2 BCT, 1 AD Intel Organization

staff and other individuals with COIN experience, I presented a vision and draft organization for how I wanted units in the BCT to conduct intelligence operations. Central to our new intelligence system was the development of an extensive network of Iraqi informants. I felt it was absolutely key to identify and develop indigenous sources who had the ability to infiltrate Iraqi society and blend in. Such human sources of intelligence represent a critical capability that no ISR technology, no matter how sophisticated or advanced, can match.

Once we had decided to rely primarily upon informants for our intelligence collection, we modified our analysis process to bring it more in line with police procedures. This meant a heavy reliance on evidentiary-based link diagrams to associate individuals with enemy cells and networks, and some conventional pattern analysis when appropriate. Units were also directed to modify the organizational structures of their intelligence sections to

Once we had decided to rely primarily upon informants…, we modified our analysis process to bring it more in line with police procedures.

accommodate new functional requirements such as intelligence exploitation cells, more robust current operations and plans cells, and additional subject matter experts who could support analysis and exploitation activities.

After we developed a concept and described it to the BCT's leaders, the final (and most leader-intensive) part of our transition was getting those leaders to buy in. I fully expected that many of my subordinate commanders would be very uncomfortable changing their intelligence organizations, collection assets, and analysis processes, particularly in the middle of a war. Throughout their careers, they and their Soldiers had experienced only conventional military intelligence operations. Forcing them to abandon a system they were comfortable with and that they thought adequate required commanders at all levels, starting at brigade, to stay personally involved in all aspects of the transformation.

HUMINT Battle Rhythm

Anticipating that I would likely face some resistance from within my organization, I implemented mechanisms that would allow me to promote compliance, conformity, understanding, and confidence in our new approach to intelligence collection and analysis. Two particularly useful venues that allowed me to stay personally involved in intelligence operations with my subordinate leaders were weekly

reconnaissance and surveillance (R&S) back-briefs and BCT after-action reviews (AARs).

My weekly intelligence battle rhythm consisted of a brigade intelligence targeting meeting on Sunday, followed by a BCT fragmentary order on Tuesday, and then the R&S meeting on Thursday. I personally chaired the latter, with my intelligence officer (S2) and all the BCT's battalion operations officers (S3s) in attendance.

R&S meeting. The R&S meeting was particularly useful for several reasons. First, it allowed me to confirm that the decisions, priorities, and guidance I had provided during my weekly targeting board had been accurately disseminated and interpreted by my subordinate commands. Second, it allowed me to monitor our weekly recruitment and development of informants, who were absolutely central to our HUMINT-based intelligence program. Third, it gave me the opportunity to directly provide or clarify guidance from the weekly brigade intelligence FRAGO to all of the BCT S3s. Fourth, it improved my situational awareness of each of my battalion AOs. Finally, taking the time to personally chair this meeting demonstrated my commitment to making HUMINT-centric operations a top priority in the BCT.

During these meetings, the battalion S3s were required to brief me on a number of mandated topics: the priority of their collection actions, the status of informant recruitment and training, the allocation of intelligence collection assets, and any additional R&S support they required from brigade level or higher. Each battalion used a brigade-standardized matrix to cross-walk their priority intelligence requirements (PIR) with the asset or assets they planned to dedicate against their PIR. Any informant a battalion was using was listed on this matrix along with our organic collection assets.

The gathering of battalion S3s was one of our most important and productive intelligence meetings. It allowed me to assess the development and use of HUMINT assets, to ensure that the battalions' intelligence and collection requirements were nested with the brigade's, and to see how the battalions were progressing in the development and use of informants. It also provided a venue for the battalions to share lessons learned about intelligence targeting and collection.

Weekly BCT AAR. Another meeting that facilitated professional and informative dialog and gave me an opportunity to provide guidance to my commanders on intelligence issues was our weekly BCT AAR. It was held on Saturday, with every battalion commander and S2 attending. Each AAR began with the brigade S2 providing a detailed intelligence update of the entire BCT AO, followed by a discussion to ensure that we all shared a common enemy picture. This forum also allowed for the dissemination of intelligence lessons learned and best practices, and it gave me an opportunity to identify challenges and seek solutions from fellow commanders. Once our intelligence portion of the AAR was complete, the battalion S2s departed with the BCT S2 to synchronize BCT intelligence issues. Commanders stayed and we continued our AAR of information and maneuver operations.

Net gain. These two weekly venues, the R&S meeting and the AAR, were essential to reforming our intelligence system and improving our individual and unit performance. They—

● Allowed me and the BCT S2 to routinely emphasize or reinforce key components of our intelligence system.

● Promoted a learning environment within a chaotic and fast-paced operational environment.

● Allowed the immediate sharing of lessons (good and bad) among key battalion leaders.

● Provided me with immediate feedback on how well we were adapting to our new system.

● Fostered a better understanding of, and leader buy-in to, our new method of intelligence operations.

Eventually, once leaders at all levels understood the new system of intelligence collection and analysis better, had gained experience with it, and had bought into it, I was able to back off and be less directive. My subordinate leaders were then free to adapt and modify their intelligence operations to best fit the needs of their AOs.

Organization and Team Building

It was relatively easy to visualize, describe, and modify the organizational structure and the processes that we adopted to transform our intelligence operations. The greater challenge was manning our new model and training our Soldiers and leaders to conduct HUMINT operations.

As you would expect of a learning institution, our Army is changing its organizational structures and doctrine to address many of the intelligence

shortcomings that units experienced early on in Iraq. In fact, the intelligence section of today's BCT now includes an exploitation cell—a capability (and personnel) we didn't have just two years ago. In addition to these organizational and doctrinal improvements, BCTs now have more experienced leaders who understand the need to collect HUMINT in the current operating environment.

That said, manning is one of the challenges units encounter when they try to adapt their intelligence sections to HUMINT operations. HUMINT-centric operations are very manpower intensive—the amount of information that must be collected, analyzed, and synthesized to produce actionable intelligence can be overwhelming. Personnel needed for activities such as document and technical exploitation, interrogations, informant meetings, and plans and current operations present additional manpower challenges. As a result, commanders will find themselves undermanned when they have to staff their transformed intelligence activities according to the typical authorization for a conventional intelligence section. The number of authorized billets and Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs) is simply inadequate to conduct and sustain HUMINT-centric operations. To develop an effective brigade intelligence team, you will have to find additional personnel to man it.

One way to address this shortcoming is to screen and select non-intelligence-MOS Soldiers from your BCT who have the required skills: intellectual capacity, technical expertise, and a natural proclivity to contribute to your intelligence effort. We never hesitated to take Soldiers out of other sections or units to resource our intelligence sections. We had more than enough combat power in our organizations to overmatch the enemy in Iraq; what we didn't have was the depth and knowledge in our intelligence sections to find the enemy in the first place. To fix that, we integrated infantry and armor Soldiers, cooks, communications specialists, and mechanics into our brigade and battalion intelligence sections. Commanders might also look closely at any National Guard and Reserve units attached to them during deployment. Many of the Soldiers in these units already have unique skill sets (e.g., law enforcement, finance, computers and telecommunications) that make them excellent choices to serve as intelligence augmentees.

Having to build and train our intelligence team during combat was hardly ideal. Fortunately, units today have the opportunity to reorganize and train their intelligence sections and systems at home station prior to deployment. When we redeployed to our home station, we endured the typical personnel chaos (Soldiers changing station and leaving the service) that occurs in the wake of a long deployment. After the majority of our personnel turnover was over, we immediately set about building and training our intelligence sections in anticipation of the brigade's next deployment.

Working closely with the Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC) and 1st Armored Division Headquarters, we developed a HUMINT-centric pre-rotational training program to facilitate the early and progressive training of our new intelligence teams. The chief of the division's All-source Collection Element (ACE) and CMTC's scenario writers and leaders developed a detailed enemy situation and database that replicated an insurgent-terrorist activity, one that could fully exercise the BCT's intelligence units. The intelligence flow began six months prior to commencement of our maneuver training exercise, as our intelligence sections at home received a steady stream of notional intelligence reports, interrogation debriefings, and programmed meetings with HUMINT sources. Using the torrent of information generated by the division ACE and CMTC, our intelligence sections were able to sustain the intelligence processes and techniques that we had developed while previously deployed to Iraq.

With that pre-rotational data and information provided in advance, our intelligence teams were required to conduct analysis, build link diagrams and target folders, and produce other intelligence products that passed along the hard lessons learned during our first deployment. We also continued to

…manning is one of the challenges units encounter when they try to adapt their intelligence sections to HUMINT operations.

run our weekly intelligence battle rhythm just like we had in Iraq. My staff would provide me with current intelligence updates, recommend changes or additions to our PIR, conduct current analysis of insurgent organizations in our AO, and suggest intelligence targeting priorities.

These pre-rotational intelligence activities supported three important goals: first, they allowed us to train our newly staffed intelligence teams throughout the BCT based upon lessons we had learned and processes we had developed in Iraq. Second, they enabled us to maximize our training experience when we finally deployed for our rotation—instead of spending valuable time learning undergraduate lessons at an expensive postgraduate training event, we were able to hit the ground running based upon actionable intelligence our sections had developed over the previous six months. Finally, and most importantly, they developed the confidence of the new Soldiers and leaders in our intelligence sections.

Informants

As I stated earlier, leveraging informants as our principal intelligence-collection asset constituted a significant shift from the way most of us had ever operated. The theory and logic behind using local sources to obtain information and intelligence is easy to grasp; however, the practical aspects of developing these nonstandard collection assets are less obvious.

In general, we had two challenges with informants: finding them and training them. Initially we relied upon informants who routinely provided unsolicited information to our units. We would track the accuracy and consistency of the information they gave us and, after they established a credible and reliable track record, we would begin to reward them for useful information. Later on, as our knowledge of our AO improved and, more importantly, our understanding of the culture and the nuances of local demographics increased, we became more savvy and cultivated informants from different ethnic, sectarian, political, tribal, and other groups within our AO. Eventually, the brigade's intelligence sections developed a rapport with three to five informants who consistently provided reliable information we could develop into actionable intelligence.

MISSION SUMMARY
- Bde Opn with one Bn & Bde Recon Team.
- 36 Targets in 18 Objective houses.
- HUMINT ID'ed cell, personnel, homes and potential contraband to be found.
- Opn resulted in the capture of a principal financier of foreign fighter activity in Iraq, 4 cell leaders, 7 weapons suppliers, 2 financiers, and 8 insurgent operators.

Al Rasheed Hotel Rocket Attack
- 8 October 2003: Al Rasheed Hotel in "Green Zone" attacked by rockets.
- 9 October–1 November: 2BCT informant network collected information on insurgent cell responsible for attack.
- Early November, 2BCT conducts Operation ELTON to kill/capture insurgents responsible for attack.

Operation Elton, November 2003: Elton was 2BCT's first major operation to rely exclusively on intelligence from informants. Targeted houses were pinpointed by GPS devices.

Among our informants were members of political parties, local government officials, prostitutes, police officers, retired Iraqi generals, prominent businessmen, and expatriates. Of course we recognized that there was risk associated with using informants. For example, we were concerned that they might be collecting on us, or that the information they provided might have been designed to settle personal vendettas. Consequently, our BCT S2 and counterintelligence warrant officer developed a vetting program to minimize such risks. All of our informants were screened to validate the quality of their information and to check their motivations for providing it. We also implemented careful measures to ensure that informants were not collecting on U.S. forces or providing information that would put our Soldiers at risk.

Once we determined that a potential informant was reliable and useful, it became necessary to train and equip him so that he could provide more accurate and timely information. We typically provided our informants with Global Positioning System (GPS) devices, digital cameras, and cell phones. The phones not only improved the timeliness of information, but also allowed informants to keep their distance from us, thus minimizing the chance they would be personally compromised. Later on, as Internet cafes began to flourish in the Iraqi economy, we helped our informants establish email accounts and used that medium as another way to communicate with them.

GPS devices were also important, because most informants could not accurately determine or communicate address information that was sufficient to pinpoint target locations. With some basic training, our informants could use their GPSs to identify key locations using the military grid reference system. This increased the accuracy of location marking and measurably enhanced our ability to develop precise, actionable intelligence. Occasionally it was useful to give informants automobiles, too, to facilitate their movement and collection activities inside and outside our AO.

We discovered that identifying and training an informant was a complex and time-consuming process. Finding the right type of individual willing to work with you is both an art and a science. Our counterintelligence-trained Soldiers were instrumental in ensuring that we worked with the most reliable, most

Captured insurgent material. 2BCT learned the hard way that it's not enough merely to seize evidence. Contraband must be properly handled and documented to aid in insurgent prosecution.

consistently accurate informants. Training and equipping our informants were key to their effectiveness and paid great dividends in terms of the volume and accuracy of their information. Because informants were the foundation of our HUMINT system in the brigade, we resourced them accordingly.

Collecting and Exploiting Evidence

Although developing indigenous sources of intelligence was central to the way we operated, we quickly discovered that there was another key component to our HUMINT-driven system: the collection and exploitation of evidence. It is not only frustrating, but also detrimental to your mission success to culminate an operation with the capture of insurgents or terrorists only to be directed to release them because your justification for detaining them can't endure the scrutiny of a military or civilian legal review. We quickly learned after a couple of very avoidable incidents that our ability to successfully prosecute intelligence operations was directly linked to the ability of our Soldiers to collect, preserve, and exploit evidence related to our captured suspects. To remedy that, we initiated a training program to give our Soldiers and leaders the skills they needed to manage evidence.

Leveraging the experience and training of our military police, National Guardsmen with law enforcement skills, and FBI agents in country, we were able to rapidly train our Soldiers on the essential requirements for capturing, securing, associating, safeguarding, and

exploiting evidence. Once they were armed with this training and an effective HUMINT-based intelligence process, our seizure and detention rate for insurgents, terrorists, and other miscreants soared.

Closely linked to the collection and association of evidence to suspects was the exploitation of that evidence. Early in our deployment we were frustrated by the inability of organizations above brigade level to exploit evidence in a timely manner and then provide feedback that we could use.

This was particularly true when it came to captured computer hard drives and cell phones. The standard policy was that these items had to be expedited to division headquarters within 24 hours of capture. This made sense because division was the first echelon above brigade that had the knowledge and expertise to exploit these devices. Unfortunately, for many reasons the turnaround time to receive intelligence from echelons above brigade was typically too slow, or the resultant product too incomplete, to help us.

What we needed was the ability to exploit these items at the BCT level for tactical information, in parallel with the division and corps intelligence shops, which were focused on other priorities. Based upon our previous working relationship with the FBI team in country, we managed to get a copy of a software program the agency was using to exploit hard drives. My BCT communications platoon loaded the software on their computers, received some basic training, and instantly we had the ability to exploit hard drives. We dedicated a couple of linguists to our communications platoon section, integrated this element into our S2X cell, and from then on conducted our own tactical-level technical exploitation of computers. We still had to forward hard drives and cell phones to division within 24 hours of capture, but now we just copied the hard drive, forwarded the complete captured system to division, and exploited the information simultaneously with the division.

This easy technical remedy to our hard-drive exploitation problem consistently provided big payoffs for us. The new capability was useful for documenting evidence to support the detention of an insurgent and for developing follow-up targets. We had the same challenge with cell phones. Unfortunately, we couldn't acquire the technical capability we needed to exploit them as we had with the hard drives. I believe that phone exploitation is yet another trainable skill and capability that we should give our BCT communications platoons.

As with cell phones and hard drives, we were challenged to fully exploit our detainees. Specifically, we had to get them to provide information, and then we had to exploit that information to incarcerate them or to assist us in developing further intelligence to support future counterinsurgency operations. To address this challenge, we developed and adapted two useful tools as we gained experience at tactical-level interrogations. One was a detailed line of questioning that our HUMINT Collection Teams (HCTs) could use when questioning detainees; the other was the "cage infiltrator"—an Iraqi informant who would pose as a detainee in our holding facility to gather valuable intelligence from actual detainees.

Developed by the HCT team leader and the S2, a detailed line of questioning is extremely important for prioritizing the avenues of questioning that your trained and authorized interrogators pursue. It is an especially important tool given the latter's extraordinary workload and the limited amount of time they can dedicate to initial and follow-up interrogation sessions.

As a commander, I found that it was imperative to take a personal interest in the line of questioning our HCTs pursued. For example, it was important to ensure that their line of questioning meshed exactly with the BCT's PIRs and intelligence targeting priorities. I spent a lot of time with my S2 and battalion commanders refining our PIR and specific intelligence requirements (SIR), reviewing and establishing collection priorities, and synchronizing our collection efforts. This entire effort can be derailed if the line of questioning your interrogators pursue isn't nested with your unit's priorities.

To ensure development of the most effective interrogation line of questioning, my S2 required our HCTs to participate in the following five-step process (weekly or mission-specific):

● HCTs receive updated PIR and associated SIR from the unit S2.

● HCTs receive a current intelligence briefing from the NCO in charge of the unit S2X cell.

● Senior HUMINT warrant officer attends the BCT commander's daily intelligence briefings to facilitate his understanding of the latest changes in intelligence priorities.

Suspects detained during a 2BCT raid. Note the computer in the right foreground. Once the brigade acquired the capability to exploit hard-drives, computers became great sources of intelligence and evidence.

● HCTs develop lines of questioning and back-brief the unit S2 and senior HUMINT warrant officer.

● HCTs conduct interrogations.

We found that it was easy for our HCTs to determine the right questions to ask as long as they thoroughly understood our current PIR and SIR (which we continuously updated and refined).

Because detainees figured out very quickly that we treat prisoners humanely, it was not long before many of them refused to provide useful information. During interrogations we would typically hear things like "I'm innocent, I was just sleeping at my cousin's house when you arrested me," or "Saddam bad, Bush good, thank Allah for the USA." If we didn't have substantive evidence to link these detainees to a crime or insurgent activity, their strategy of denial, obsequious behavior, or happenstance alibi was difficult to dispute. One day, my S2 came to me with an idea. At his suggestion, we planted an informant in our holding facility with instructions to listen to the detainees' conversations and then report to us what they discussed. This technique, which we dubbed "cage infiltration," resulted in immediate intelligence.

Subsequently, we redesigned the individual spaces in our holding facility so that we could place our infiltrators in individual detention spaces, between suspected insurgent leaders and their possible followers. The only way these detainees could communicate among themselves was to talk past our infiltrator to their accomplice or cell member. Our interrogation teams would then remove our infiltrator under the guise of a routine interrogation, debrief him, and then return him to the holding area. Armed with the new information, our interrogators could often modify their line of questioning for more effective and productive follow-up interviews.

In a very short time, this technique became our single most effective method for gaining information and intelligence from our detainee population. An additional benefit to using cage infiltrators was that they were interactive. Over time, as they became more experienced and adept at what they were doing, they became quite clever at developing a dialog with their fellow detainees that would draw out additional information useful in incriminating the suspect or in developing future targetable information.

Another twist to this technique was the use of a taxi-driver informant. Despite our best efforts, there were times when we couldn't build a case strong enough to support the long-term detention

of a suspect. When that happened, we would make our apologies for the inconvenience the suspect had endured and offer him a taxi ride back to his residence. It was not unusual for these suspects to brag to the driver or among themselves on their way home how they had deceived the "stupid" Americans. They would incriminate themselves in the process or reveal details that we could use to conduct follow-up COIN operations. Upon returning to our headquarters, the taxi driver was debriefed on the suspect's conversation. Based upon the nature of any new information the informant presented, we decided either to recapture the suspect or to cease pursuing him.

Ensuring that the line of questioning our HCTs pursued was nested with the BCT's intelligence priorities, coupled with some simple deception techniques such as using cage infiltrators in our holding facility, considerably improved the quantity and quality of intelligence that we obtained from our detainees.

Conclusion

Throughout the course of this article I have attempted to identify some of the major intelligence challenges my BCT faced during our first tour in Iraq. I have provided examples of how we met these challenges and adapted to best meet our needs at the time. I've also shared some of our more useful and effective practices in the hope that others may use or modify them to support their needs. I don't pretend that the examples and practices I've offered represent definitive solutions to the countless intelligence challenges units face in Iraq. My intent, rather, was to demonstrate that by direct and constant leadership involvement at all levels, conventional units can effectively organize, train for, and execute HUMINT-centric operations in a COIN environment with great success.

One Final Thought

This article is designed to complement a previous piece I wrote for *Military Review* ("The Decisive Weapon: A Brigade Combat Team Commander's Perspective on Information Operations") in which I described the contribution that IO made to our COIN efforts in Baghdad.[1]

Although HUMINT-centric operations and IO may appear distinctly different in terms of their aims, they are closely linked; in fact, they are mutually supportive. HUMINT-centric operations target the insurgent and the terrorist, but in doing so they produce precise and timely information that allows our Soldiers to locate and attack insurgent forces with surgical precision, minimum violence, and minor collateral damage. A corollary benefit is that our actions result in minimal harm and inconvenience to the local population, helping us to convince them that we have the intent and capacity to improve their security and daily lives by eliminating the insurgent threat.

Likewise, IO synergistically supports our intelligence efforts by convincing the local population that it is in their best interest, personally and nationally, to tolerate and even support our efforts to improve their lives. Through IO, we share with the population the progress that is being achieved politically, economically, and socially, and we ensure that they know about the violence and harm the insurgents are wreaking upon their fellow citizens and their nation.

Similarly, through IO we are able to let the population know that we can separate and protect them from insurgent-terrorist threats when they have the confidence to share targetable information with us. The more adept we become at conducting IO and influencing the population, the more information the population will provide to enable us to target the insurgents and terrorists. It's a win-win dynamic.

Given the environment our forces are operating in today and will continue to confront in the future, HUMINT-centric operations and IO are no longer merely "enablers" or supporting efforts. Quite simply, they are the decisive components of our strategy. Both of these critical operations must be embraced; they must become the twin pillars of the framework from which we operate. No longer can we allow our greater comfort with conventional combat operations to minimize these decisive components of a winning COIN strategy. *MR*

NOTES

1. Ralph O. Baker, "The Decisive Weapon: A Brigade Combat Team Commander's Perspective on Information Operations," *Military Review* 86 (May-June 2006): 33-51.

HUMAN TERRAIN MAPPING: A Critical First Step to Winning the COIN Fight

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PHOTO: CPT Brian Jennings, commander of C Company, 1-15 Infantry talking with the sheik of Vin Jan Village, Iraq, August 2007. (U.S. Army, 1LT Aaron Wilkerson)

ACCORDING TO CURRENT U.S. MILITARY DOCTRINE, the path to victory in a counterinsurgency (COIN) runs through the indigenous population. Experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, where the people are centers of gravity, have driven this doctrine. But before the counterinsurgent can win the people over, he must take the necessary steps to really understand and know them.

The U.S. military clearly was not attuned to this reality at the outset of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Today, however, most Soldiers with multiple tours in theater understand that U.S. forces must consider the population first in everything they do operationally. They have discovered that any attempt to separate the insurgents from the population must be coordinated with effective efforts to win the population's support. Soldiers know that to succeed at the latter, they need to understand the human terrain intimately: only deep understanding can point to the conditions essential for success. Therefore, the important question is no longer "why" or "if" Soldiers operating in COIN environments should seek detailed understanding of the population; "how" they obtain that understanding is the issue at hand. In other words, how can a tactical unit most effectively amass and process the information it needs to decisively influence the population in its area of operations (AO)? Using the practical experience it gained during OIF V, Task Force (TF) Dragon (led by 1-15 Infantry, part of the 3d Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3d Infantry Division) can help answer this question.

An Enemy Within

As many veterans and students of the current wars recognize, insurgents hold the upper hand with their better understanding of local customs and politics, their ability to speak the language, their freedom of movement within society, and their greater comprehension of the population's interests. Moreover, as is always the case in wars of foreign occupation, the insurgent enemy in this war does not wear a uniform and can easily blend with the population.

While preparing for its current combat tour, TF Dragon looked hard at units that were enjoying success in Iraq to figure out how to cope with the difficulties of COIN warfare. Overwhelmingly, the units that seemed to be winning the fight had made significant inroads with local leaders, had found proactive ways to understand and respect local cultural norms, and had addressed specific community needs. Although the task force recognized and understood this lesson early on, when it actually arrived in its area of

operations (AO), Soldiers found that very little of the ethnographic data it needed to conduct effective operations had been collected.

The available information was sparse and spread out across the continuity files of nearly every staff section. It was also old: there had been no consistent coalition presence in the area for nearly two years, and when the staff tried to verify the little information it had received, it often found that key personalities had moved out of the area or local opinions and loyalties had changed. The task force quickly determined that the first step of its COIN fight would be to acquire an understanding of its AO in human terms.

When it deployed to Iraq in mid-2007, TF Dragon inherited a heavily populated (400,000 people) area southeast of Baghdad. The AO was volatile, in part because it straddled a Sunni/Shi'a fault-line. The majority of the Sunnis lived along the Tigris River, the task force's western boundary. Shi'a tribes resided in the north (close to Baghdad) and along the eastern boundary (the Baghdad-Al Kut highway).

The requirement for new ethnographic information on its AO weighed heavily on the task force. Thus, the entire unit began focusing on systematically collecting and collating ethnographic information. Ultimately, TF Dragon worked the collection through a process the staff labeled "human-terrain mapping," or HTM.

Developing the HTM process amounted to creating a tool for understanding social conditions. As it collected and cataloged pertinent information, the task-force staff tailored its plan in order to capture a broad range of details. An important aspect of the process involved putting the data in a medium that all Soldiers could monitor and understand. Once the formatting and baseline information requirements were set, TF Dragon employed the shared situational-awareness enhancing capabilities of the Command Post of the Future (CPOF) computer system. Each company was allocated a CPOF to post the results of its mapping on a common database, a matrix that included information about religious boundaries, key economic structures, mosques, and important personalities such as sheiks.

Over time, the staff mapped the boundaries of each tribe and the demographic makeup of every village, town, and city the enemy could possibly seek refuge in. It went on to add data about personalities who were known to be supporting the insurgents, and the needs and wants of the particular populations. Mapping this political, economic, and sociological information created a common human-terrain picture that enabled more proactive initiatives and faster, much more effective responses to events. For example, as incidents occurred in specific areas, the common map enabled all companies to plot the location of the incident, then identify the proper sheiks to contact for intelligence or answers to critical questions.

Human-terrain mapping thereby allowed TF Dragon to understand the population and demonstrate its commitment to improving local communities. By addressing what the people felt were their priority needs, the task force was better able to cultivate relationships of significant trust with neighborhood leaders. In turn, these relationships led to the construction of an effective biometric database of military-age males. This information resulted in improved actionable intelligence on

Task Force Dragon's area of operations southeast of Baghdad.

Mapping…political, economic, and sociological information created a common human-terrain picture that enabled more proactive initiatives and faster…responses to events.

insurgent activities, greatly improving security.

These positive results validated measures prescribed by Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, for "determining who lives in an area and what they do." In figurative terms, the human-terrain map became an outline of who the players in the current game were. Thus, the task-force commander concluded that developing a human-terrain map was crucial to simultaneously clearing out the enemy and driving a wedge between the insurgents and the population.

Defining Tactical Human-Terrain Mapping

TF Dragon executed its data-collection effort through systematic people-to-people contact. The staff planned decentralized platoon-level patrols, conducted during daylight hours, that sought answers to specific questions about the population. These specific "information requirements" (IR) about each separate village and town included—

● The boundaries of each tribal area (with specific attention to where they adjoined or overlapped).

● Location and contact information for each sheik or village mukhtar and any other important people (government officials, Iraqi Security Forces, etc.).

● Locations of mosques, schools, and markets.

● Identification of the population's daily habits (when they woke up, slept, shopped, etc.).

● Nearest locations and checkpoints of Iraqi Security Forces.

● Economic driving force (i.e., occupation and livelihood).

● Employment and unemployment levels.

● Population flow (i.e., people moving in or out of the AO).

● Anti-coalition presence and activities.

● Access to essential services (fuel, water, emergency care, fire response, etc).

● Particular local population concerns and issues.

To avoid being targeted, companies designed their terrain-mapping patrols to be "systematically unpredictable." In this way, all areas could be covered without telegraphing to the insurgents which areas might be visited next. For example, TF Dragon's Baker Company used the main road in its AO (running between Jisr Diyala and Salman Pak, near Baghdad) as a focal point and began with the villages on the east and west side of the thoroughfare. Each

day patrols changed sides of the road or moved north or south of the villages they had visited previously. After two or three days of patrolling, they took a day off, further disrupting any patterns they may have been inadvertently setting.

Patrols were organized with specific objectives and purposes for each sub-element. The three major tasks were security, IR gathering, and relationship-building. As the composition of most patrols was centered on a mechanized infantry or tank platoon, some augmentation was required. Generally, the company commander was present on patrol to gain a firsthand look at his AO. The company fire support officer (FSO), acting as the company's intelligence officer, accompanied the commander on every patrol. This enabled the staff to build a framework to address the three critical tasks. The commander focused on building relationships with key individuals, his FSO (augmented by part of the platoon) sought answers to IR, and the patrol's platoon leader concentrated on security.

In addition to the three sub-element tasks, everyone within the patrol helped deliver information operations (IO) messages. These messages typically involved the rewards program (money for information about extremist activities), examples of the positive steps being taken by the local government and Iraqi Security Forces, and the benefits of cooperating with the coalition. Whenever possible, the messages took the form of pamphlets or one-page handouts given to local citizens. Prepared handouts and knowledge of current messages were considered TF Dragon's IO basic load. They were the responsibility of every Soldier on patrol.

A typical HTM patrol required a platoon to move tactically and establish a cordon around the area to be mapped. As the perimeter was being set, the commander and FSO moved to the likely center of the town and began to talk with citizens to determine where the local sheik or village leader lived. One of the specific requests the commander would make from the sheik or village elder was permission to enter the men of the village into the biometric data system (using handheld interagency identity detection equipment, HIIDE). Depending on the reaction to this request, the platoon might establish a centralized location and begin the process. If the sheik or elder demurred, the unit would earmark the village for a return visit when

they could continue to press the issue. However, most times the local leaders had no problem with the request; they viewed the biometric census as an opportunity to show their innocence and willingness to cooperate with coalition forces.

While the commander met with these individuals and Soldiers took the census, the FSO and his platoon augmentees would talk with as many of the military-age males as possible to get answers to the IR. Other Soldiers also talked to as many people as possible to pass on the day's IO messages. On average, these patrols took about two to four hours to complete.

Oftentimes, patrols were reinforced with civil-affairs (CA) teams, human-intelligence collection teams (HCTs), psychological operations (PSYOP) teams, or additional medical personnel. These military specialists provided specific areas of expertise to assist the patrols, and the TF used their skills to enhance the perceived importance of the tactical

unit. For example, having a unit medic treat a civilian with an acute problem, especially a child, provided direct evidence of the task force's goodwill and the tangible benefits to be had by cooperating with the coalition. Special-team augmentation also increased the overall number of contacts in the village, furthering the acquisition of IR answers. Additionally, it created opportunities for TF Dragon's "village teams" (elements combining CA, HCT, and PSYOP personnel) to reconnoiter and consider the kinds of effects they might want to produce on future visits.

Special care and planning was taken to ensure that augmentation teams did not interrupt or interfere with the relationship between the company and the population being mapped. TF Dragon emphasized the supremacy of the responsible company commander (the "land-owner") as the primary point of contact for each village's leaders. The task force wanted to preclude any confusion on the part of

U.S. Army, 1LT Matthew Barwick

Captain Rich Thompson, commander of Baker Company, 1-15 Infantry, talking with a local leader and his interpreter in Al Ja'ara, Iraq, August 2007.

the local leadership as to who would make decisions regarding projects or future support. This clarity was especially critical when dealing with CA teams, whom the people often saw as "money guys." Through a deliberate effort, the task force made it clear that these teams supported the company commander, not the other way around.

After every patrol, the responsible platoon prepared a detailed analysis of the mapped area, and links were made to other villages based on sect, tribes, and terrain. The result was a census-like compilation of data collated by the task-force staff (primarily the S2, the effects/IO cell, and the CA officer). This compilation helped the staff develop and refine both its lethal and nonlethal targeting. It also produced a graphical depiction of where potential sectarian fault lines were, allowing the task force to focus its initial security efforts quickly so that all other logical lines of operation could commence early.

Task Force Dragon used this approach repeatedly to develop its human-terrain map. Balanced with other tactical missions, the overall process took about two-and-a-half months. Importantly, information contributing to the overall map was also gathered on offensive missions. During intelligence-driven raids, cordon and searches, and attacks, TF Dragon units used the same IR as on HTM patrols. Also, all military-age males found were entered into the HIIDES biometric data system, which helped the task force piece together a picture of the extremist groups operating in AO Dragon. The S2 simply checked the names of individuals taken into custody against the database built during previous HTM missions, and if someone had been in another unit's AO earlier, he became a suspect; the task force would then investigate why he was moving from area to area. This cross-reference system enabled the S2 to begin to link individuals so identified to a possible extremist cell that lived in one part of AO Dragon, but conducted missions in another. Eventually, it allowed the task force to create a link diagram of possible extremist activities.

HTM—A Necessary Process

Although the value of the map itself was obvious, in retrospect, the physical process of doing the mapping might have been even more beneficial. If the type of information gathered had been available upon arrival (in a database, for example), the task force might have accepted an abstract, and perhaps false, sense of the environment. It would have done so while depriving itself of firsthand knowledge gained from building the map. By way of analogy, having a ready-made database would have been like learning to do math problems on a calculator instead of the hard way, via reasoning. In conducting HTM, the battalion learned how to square ethnographic data the hard way, a method that provided maximum benefit via direct analysis of particulars within the situation at intimate levels. From this perspective, the advantages of having Soldiers do HTM themselves appear numerous. Besides gaining greater knowledge of the AO, some of the more salient benefits follow.

● HTM provided a practical vehicle for gathering human intelligence (HUMINT). Human-terrain mapping facilitated coalition forces getting to know the leadership of the different tribes, villages, towns, and

U.S. Army, 1LT Matthew Barwick

Sergeant Cecil Ray, B Company, 1-15 Infantry, collects biometric data by processing a citizen of the Al Ja'ara area into the HIIDES system, August 2007.

> *Human-terrain mapping facilitated coalition forces getting to know the leadership of the different tribes, villages, towns, and cities…*

cities of a particular AO. After earning the respect and trust of village sheiks and elders through person-to-person contact, Soldiers found the locals more willing to provide intelligence. As units moved through the various villages and towns of AO Dragon, they consistently found local citizens who had been hesitant to call the task-force tips hotline or go to its combat outposts, but were more than willing to provide information if engaged at a personal level.

● As often as possible, the task force tried to integrate its supporting human-intelligence collection teams into HTM patrols, which provided excellent opportunities to make initial intelligence contacts and develop sources. The practice also produced good inside knowledge of local citizens and a ready-made cross-reference capability, improving the task force's ability to determine the reliability and motivation of informants.

● HTM put a human, personal face on contacts with the population, abetting the task force's effort to enlist the population against the insurgents. One company used an interpreter to assist in getting to know the local citizens. Another conducted joint HTM patrols with local Iraqi policemen and concerned citizens. As one company commander put it: "I believe it was vital to the initial impression of the locals in our AO that they saw us out walking amongst them, knocking on doors, shaking hands and asking questions specific to that family [and] tribe. I feel it put a human face on our company and opened the door to many of the initial dialogues that we are [now] currently exploiting with great success."

● HTM was critical to building trusted networks. The number-one tenet of the 3d Infantry Division's COIN handbook states, "It's all about the people." Building a trusted network means creating personal relationships between coalition tactical leaders and the leaders of the population they secure. Once those relationships were built, task-force units

were better able to deliver and assess the effects of IO messages and PSYOP products, better able to determine if local governments were talking to their constituents, and—when necessary—better able to minimize unrest among the population through consequence-management procedures.

● The patrolling required to map the human terrain was vital to the initial tone set by TF Dragon: it put coalition Soldiers in the streets immediately, sending a clear signal to the insurgents and the people about who was in charge. If the enemy tested U.S. force strength, Soldiers were out of their vehicles with gun barrels and eyes set in every direction, prepared to maneuver instantly. Soldiers conducted every HTM patrol as if the enemy was watching and assessing them. Thus, HTM simultaneously brought U.S. forces closer to the locals and deterred enemy contact.

● HTM provided unforeseen opportunities to demonstrate resolve to the population. While getting to know local leaders and meeting with them in their villages, the companies of TF Dragon often conducted hasty raids on weapons traffickers and IED emplacement cells pointed out by villagers. These raids showed the locals that task-force Soldiers were dedicated to making their village more secure. Furthermore, they proved to local leaders that when they gave Soldiers critical intelligence information, those Soldiers would act on it.

● HTM provided ground-level insight into local politics, motivations, and differences—and this served as the start point for reconciling Sunni with Shi'a. Understanding the differences between the two sects' areas was easy; finding a nexus for reconciliation was not. However, once a unit met and befriended leaders in both areas, those leaders had something in common: a partnership with coalition forces. In one particular area, Sunni and Shi'a families lived together with different sheiks leading each sect. Unfortunately, these sheiks were not eager to work with one another to reconcile their differences. To add to the area's problems, Al-Qaeda in Iraq often attacked both groups as a means to keep their foothold. After working numerous HTM patrols in those areas, the local company commander earned the trust of both the Sunni and Shi'a. This enabled him to initiate discussions between the two sheiks based on the common goals of security and economic development.

● Nothing can replace personal reconnaissance in importance. This is a principle that has existed in U.S. Army doctrine for decades. Even though the data entered into biometric databases includes addresses and street names, this information is often difficult to include in map overlays. Furthermore, different people may refer to local areas by different names. Many roads in rural areas are difficult to travel; conducting reconnaissance during HTM operations can assist a unit in figuring this out.

As the U.S. Army continues to examine the human-terrain mapping aspect of counterinsurgency warfare, TF Dragon Soldiers would offer a caveat based on their experience: do not rely solely on a computerized, automated solution to HTM or on the creation of a singular special-staff section to provide human-terrain insight. From what TF Dragon learned, a unit would best benefit from going out and collecting this information initially on its own, or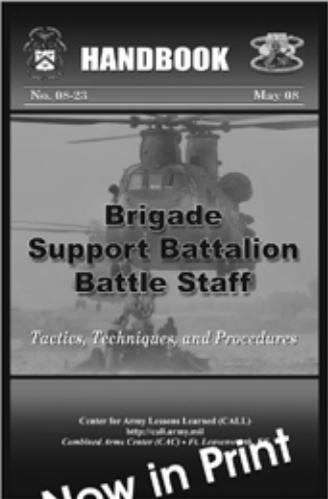, if it inherits such information from a previous unit, by developing a process to continuously reassess that information.

Summary

Counterinsurgency is probably the most difficult form of warfare because it forces military professionals out of their comfort zones and into the complex realm of interacting with human beings, sometimes in very subtle ways. By developing a human-terrain map, a unit can acquire a greater sensitivity to and deeper understanding of its AO, enabling it to leverage the complex human relationships that make COIN succeed or fail. But the goodness of a human-terrain map lies not just in the "having"; the "doing" offers perhaps even greater dividends. Building the necessary human relations with the population you secure is not hard—it just takes time and effort. In short, TF Dragon's experience has shown that making a human-terrain map is time and energy well spent. *MR*

Paper and COIN:
Exploiting the Enemy's Documents

Major Vernie Liebl, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired

Major Vernie Liebl, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired, is currently trying his hand at writing while staying home with his family. He served in the Marine Corps as an intelligence officer and deployed to Afghanistan in 2003, 2004, and 2005. MAJ Liebl also saw duty in Iraq and the Persian Gulf in 2003, the Horn of Africa/Yemen in 2004 and 2005, and Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in 1990/1991. He holds an M.A. in national strategic security studies from the U.S. Naval War College, an M.S. in Islamic history from the University of Utah, and a B.S. in political science from the University of Oregon. His last position was as chief, Afghanistan Insurgency and Strategic Issues Section, Defense Intelligence Agency.

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PHOTO: Documents and items of interest are piled together after sensitive site exploitation prior to processing, Baghdad, July 2003.

(All photos courtesy of the author)

MOST MILITARY MEMBERS, especially those with operational combat experience, understand that intelligence drives operations. Unfortunately, getting good, actionable intelligence is almost always a formidable challenge, a truth borne out in our recent experience in Iraq and Afghanistan. In these two conflicts, most of the collection methods we have used—technical means such as imagery exploitation and signals intercepts—depended on the adversary being somewhat cooperative (although that adversary might not recognize it as such). For example, if signals intelligence is to work well, the enemy must employ some type of emitting or broadcasting equipment in sufficient numbers and times for meaningful intercept and analysis to be done. Likewise with imagery: the enemy must, even if he employs sophisticated camouflage, present himself at some point as a somehow identifiable member of his side. In an insurgency, however, where the enemy imitates the seemingly innocuous traveler or nomad and restricts his communications to word of mouth or passing of notes, identifying him and collecting intelligence about him become much more difficult. In such instances, human intelligence (HUMINT) may be the only effective method of gaining needed information.

Discussion about how to do HUMINT has mainly focused on extracting information from individuals by interrogation or debriefing (the former implying hostile extractions from prisoners, the latter suggesting neutral or friendly extractions from friendly forces, civilians, etc). In such cases, much of the value of the information derived depends upon the training, knowledge, ability, and stamina of the person conducting the interrogation, as well as the cooperativeness of the person being questioned.

Human intelligence can also be collected through personal tactical observation (static) or combat patrolling, with observations and reports being submitted during or after the duty period or patrol. Again, however, we need the enemy's cooperation: he must come out of hiding and do something that we can observe.

There is one type of HUMINT, however, that does not require the enemy's cooperation. That method is media exploitation, also referred to as document exploitation, or DOCEX.

Unfortunately, despite the real potential of obtaining intelligence information simply by reading the enemy's paperwork, coalition forces all too often have ignored this means of collection. Sometimes they have simply overlooked exploitable information; other times, they have actively destroyed it before it could be examined. The following example is illustrative of such lamentable practices.

> *…one type of HUMINT… does not require the enemy's cooperation. That method is …document exploitation, or DOCEX.*

On 10 November 2003, U.S. forces conducted a raid into the mountains of Nuristan in Afghanistan. Their target was a small cluster of buildings, reportedly a Taliban administrative center, perched on the side of a mountain just south of the small town of Aranas. Information about the objective came from the highest levels, which meant it was not to be questioned, just acted on.

First the buildings were attacked by air, then they were assaulted and occupied by troops from the 10th Mountain Division (after a 2,000-foot uphill attack). Unusually, the raiding force included a follow-on multi-agency intelligence team. Its mission was to identify enemy casualties (by gathering DNA samples) and examine any documents or equipment that might be about.

Although the assault was vigorous, the results were disappointing: only three prisoners of questionable value were detained, and no Taliban casualties were confirmed. Moreover, the site didn't seem to be the Taliban ops center higher level intelligence had claimed it was; in fact, it was hard to determine just what it was.

U.S. intelligence personnel, with captured Taliban member (far left in bed of truck), confiscated documents, and computer hard drives, await helo extract from Gardez, Afghanistan.

Much of the difficulty in determining the site's nature was caused by the assault force's lack of attention to media on the objective. Between the Soldiers' occupation of the buildings and the intelligence team's arrival, there was a delay of several hours. In that time, at least a third of the media, mainly loose papers and books, was blown away by high winds or burned by the troops to keep warm. (It was November and the site was in the foothills of the Hindu Kush, more than 6,000 feet high.) In fact, none of the troops picked up any of the media except to use it as kindling. To add to the problem, once the intelligence team arrived, its media collection effort was hampered by the presence of several unexploded 500-lb. bombs and the unstable nature of the ruined buildings. Animal and human waste on some of the loose papers—a not uncommon situation on such a secluded objective—also complicated the team's exploitation effort.

The site's apparent misidentification wasn't the only deficiency in the imagery-derived intelligence sent to the Soldiers by higher. During its search for documents, the intelligence team discovered several discrepancies between the picture intel had painted of the complex and the actual complex. Extremely effective (and simple) camouflage and placement in the shadows of overhanging rock ledges had concealed some structures, while supposed buildings or potential bunkers turned out to be terraced farm fields or large rocks.

The eventual exploitation of the media remaining on the site was illuminating, although disheartening. Analysis indicated that the location was not a Taliban operations center, but a madrassa—an Islamic school. The largest area in which documents were eventually found was identified as the living quarters of the head of the madrassa. The materials turned out to be documents pertaining to education, including school rosters and a couple dozen *Qurans*. Several of the *Qurans* indicated that the flavor of Islam taught was Deobandi with influences from Saudi Arabian Wahhabist organizations and the Pakistani Ahl-e Hadithi (Lashkar-e Tayyiba), but there was no evidence of a military presence other than some Chinese-style (Mao) green uniforms, whose sizes indicated that they were to be worn by young boys roughly three feet tall. Whatever other clues may have existed linking the madrassa to the Taliban had literally disappeared in the wind or gone up in smoke.

The "ops center" mission points to obvious problems in a coalition process that favors technological over human intelligence collection and ignores DOCEX. By way of contrast, consider the potential nuggets of information that can be gathered simply by searching clothing.

On 19 January 2004, U.S. Special Forces (SF) killed a sniper in the Bermal Valley, Paktika Province, Afghanistan. Recovered from the sniper's body were 24 pieces of paper. Unable to interpret the papers themselves, the SF unit's intelligence section requested immediate assistance, believing that any information recovered might be time sensitive. When examined by analysts with advanced linguistic and cultural skills, the bits and pieces of media indicated that the sniper had been a Taliban religious recruit from a madrassa most likely located in North Waziristan, Pakistan. He could be identified as Taliban (and not Al-Qaeda) by the presence of a religious amulet, a taweez, that indicates Sufi influence. (Al-Qaeda views Sufism as heretical.)

The bits of paper also disclosed phone numbers and instructions, in both Urdu and Pushtu, to contact certain persons in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Analysis uncovered a network that spanned from Pakistani areas within and east of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas [FATA] to locations in the Bermal Valley. Some of the phone numbers were traced to a number of front agencies in Pakistan working in the towns of Wana, Bannu, and Tank, and the city of Karachi. Other numbers were traced to the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa, indicating the depth of support from abroad, likely Salafist at the least, Al-Qaeda at the worst, for one lone Taliban.

In another example, DOCEX was the key to exposing an enemy support network and its supply locations. On 27 December 2003, U.S. forces from the 1st Battalion, 501st Brigade, killed several insurgents in a firefight near Khost. From these individuals, the Soldiers collected 10 documents, 1 film negative, a small amount of cash, and three types of medicinal capsules. The material, which included taweez and several night letters in Pushtu from the "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan" (the Taliban), revealed definitively that the insurgents were Taliban. It also indicated they were coming in from Pakistan, specifically from Miram Shah,

A room searched by Soldiers, with household items strewn around. Such treatment makes it more difficult to find documents and other items of interest.

and were probably headed for Ghazni to conduct propaganda missions (distribute the night letters) and possibly an assassination or an attack, referred to in the documents as a "wedding."

The capsules the insurgents carried also yielded intelligence. They contained the kind of over-the-counter medications (aspirin, antacids, and topical analgesics) that a foot soldier commonly uses in the field, and they had been manufactured in Pakistan or China. Along with the insurgent's "battle-rattle" and assorted personal items such as mirrors and combs, the capsules indicated that a particular Pakistani market supplied the Taliban, with specific foreign industrial concerns possibly benefiting directly from or contributing directly to the Taliban effort in Afghanistan.

In still another example, the translation in November 2003 of a night letter obtained by a British patrol in Faryab Province (a northwestern Afghan province populated primarily by Uzbeks with some Turkmen and scatterings of Pushtuns and Arabs) caused quite a stir within the U.S. intelligence community and the staff of Combined Joint Task Force-180. The letter itself contained nothing unusual, as it repeated rather conventional Taliban themes calling for jihad against the government and the Americans and warning against sending children, especially girls, to school. However, where the letter had been found provided proof of the Taliban's effort to reestablish itself in Afghanistan beyond the Pakistani border region and the traditional Taliban

stronghold in south-central Afghanistan. Prior to the document's discovery, the largely Uzbek areas of northern Afghanistan had been considered relatively free of Taliban influence.

Interestingly, the letter had been handed over to the British patrol by Uzbek villagers. The Uzbeks distrusted the Pushtun villagers "down the way" who were sending out the letters. These Pushtuns were one of the numerous small pockets of Pushtuns who had been forcibly relocated into northern Afghanistan in the late 19th century in a Pushtunization effort by the government of Amir Abdur Rahman. This, too, was intelligence that had operational and perhaps strategic implications.

Captured media can be very complex and yield surprising information, such as some documents taken in Bamiyan Province in January 2004. Bamiyan was considered quiet and peaceful by the Karzai government, so almost no coalition forces, Afghan National Police, or Army forces had been assigned there. Its inhabitants, the Hazara (ethnically Mongoloid Shi'ites) favored the Karzai government and were inhospitable to the Taliban—a reasonable attitude considering the genocidal treatment meted out to them by Pushtun Sunni Taliban forces.

Exploitation of the documents taken in Bamiyan revealed that the Iranian Embassy in Kabul and the Iranian Consulate in Herat had trained and financed some of the Hazara to combat the Taliban. Ironically, the documents were Taliban investigative reports, taken from Taliban operatives. The documents also discussed Iranian efforts to penetrate the Taliban and the Karzai government, alluded to connections between Burhanuddin Rabbani's Jamiat Islami organization and Iranian-sponsored militant Shi'a organizations, and named some of the commercial covers or ventures used by the Iranians and their Hazara associates in Bamiyan, Takhar, and Herat Provinces.

Just how much information can be gained through DOCEX is apparent in one more example: the delivery of two letters by a foreign visitor to the commander of Forward Operating Base Kandahar in early 2004. The letters, in Urdu, were extremely informative.

Analysis showed the letters had been designed for a Pakistani audience, specifically for people attending mosques and madrassas. Meant to introduce the Taliban and to elicit aid and support from the Pakistanis, they lauded the Taliban as defend-

ers of the faithful and the poor while depicting Americans, Jews, Indians, and UN personnel in the same light as communists and warlords. They called for Jihad and a return to Taliban rule that would reinstate Sharia (Islamic law), the perfection of Islamic rule, in Afghanistan. Sharia would solve all of Afghanistan's problems, just as it had before the American invasion. A list followed detailing casualties inflicted by the Soviets in the 1980s, the number of Soviets driven out in the late 1980s, and the number of deaths the populace suffered during the warlord era.

Clearly affiliating Osama bin Laden with the Taliban, the letters worked by invoking Pushtun cultural norms: sanctuary/hospitality (for Osama), honor (which demanded that Osama be defended), and antipathy for Hindus and Persians (Shi'a heretics). They also sounded several staple themes, such as the 1998 Clinton-era cruise missile attacks and calls for an Islamic revival (establishment of a Dar al-Islam) and resurrection of the Caliphate.

In addition to such propaganda, the letters contained an appeal for donations and a prioritized list of the Taliban's needs. Leading the list was cash, followed by warm clothing, food, and medical supplies. Notably, last on the list was support for the families of the dead, something usually omitted as it is assumed to occur automatically. This could have been interpreted in several ways: that Taliban casualties were heavier than had been anticipated and thus funds were inadequate; that there was less support for the Taliban than coalition intelligence assumed, and therefore families were not garnering the levels of sympathy and support expected; or that more Afghan refugee families had fled to Pakistan than was estimated, swamping the already overstressed and inadequate Pakistani refugee support services. The last supposition would account for the inclusion of educational material on the list (to restock madrassas and possibly to meet an expected influx of new, illiterate recruits to Taliban-controlled or sympathetic madrassas). The appeal for aid ended by asking the hearer to send money to a specific bank account care of the Taliban Islamic Movement Central Office (HQ), Karachi. The writers even promised to supply a receipt.

Apparently, these two letters had been circulated widely within Pakistani mosques (most likely by the Taliban-associated Jamiat-e Islamic Ulema,

or Assembly of Islamic Clergy, a Pakistani-based Deobandist religious organization). As such, they pointed to the possible presence within Pakistan of a widespread and apparently effective Taliban logistical structure.

All of the above examples show that DOCEX can produce actionable intelligence and help commanders develop the situational awareness they must have in an insurgency environment. While the vignettes have been drawn from Afghanistan, the observations regarding DOCEX apply equally to Iraq or elsewhere. For example, information collected from various items of medical equipment at Asmara hospitals in Eritrea in 2005 indicated the extensive and unexpected presence of Cuban medical personnel.

It goes almost without saying that not all recorded media is paper; in fact, much of it is now computer hard drives, CD/DVDs, tape cassettes, and old tape recordings. The challenge sometimes is not to assess the information, but to find the correct equipment to view it. In Baghdad, one entire Iraq Survey Group mission was conducted merely to find an obsolete machine of Russian manufacture that could play what turned out to be an old Czechoslovakian Army chemical training video.

As we continue to fight the long war, such painstaking media collection and exploitation must become an integral part of all our combat efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and wherever else U.S. forces are deployed. Even within the HUMINT field of which it is a part, DOCEX is frequently an afterthought; it is underfunded and understaffed.

> *DOCEX can produce actionable intelligence and help commanders develop the situational awareness they must have in an insurgency environment.*

Documents, electronic equipment, and computers processed and prepared for shipment to the Qatar facility, July 2003.

Despite the truly heroic efforts of a few within the intelligence community, media collection is rarely emphasized. This writer personally witnessed U.S. Soldiers traipsing through papers blowing around destroyed sites, never once deigning to pick up the material (Kandahar and Nuristan provinces). When confronted, the Soldiers said that investigating such stuff was not part of the package of Soldier skills they had been taught at basic training, nor had it been addressed prior to deployment. This lack of DOCEX awareness is sometimes corrected by aggressive, situationally aware commanders. The Marines and Special Operations Forces appear to be trained up, but our forces need to be universally cognizant of the importance of document recovery and exploitation.

With any kind of intelligence in any kind of war, it is rare to get the golden nugget of information that will win a battle. Clearly, however, much useful intelligence information may be out there blowing about the battlespace, waiting only to be picked up and sent to analysts who can make it talk. If we are to succeed in Afghanistan and Iraq, we need to start picking up the seemingly inconsequential media we find on battlefields. We absolutely must begin taking document exploitation seriously. *MR*

EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN
Task Force Phantom in the Iraq War

**Lieutenant Colonel
Robert P. Whalen Jr.,
U.S. Army**

Sometimes Army doctrine actually works when given the chance.

IT IS NO SMALL IRONY that a military intelligence (MI) brigade came to the above conclusion about infantry operations during more than 20 months of combat in 2003 and 2005. With Iraq as the laboratory and an XVIII Airborne Corps infantry long-range surveillance (LRS) company as the test animal, the Army has now produced a substantial body of evidence to show that cold war LRS doctrine is remarkably pertinent to 21st-century counterinsurgency warfare. This is a development that should not pass unnoticed by the Army's infantry and intelligence communities, and especially by the architects of the new battlefield surveillance brigade, which is designed to inherit much of the Army's responsibility for ground surveillance in combat over the next five years.

The Kindness of Strangers

Company F, 51st Infantry, returned to Iraq in late 2004 for its second tour of duty in two years. The Fort Bragg-based infantry unit—assigned, despite its provenance, to XVIII Airborne Corps' 525th MI Brigade—found itself once again in the country's northern provinces, where it had spent most of 2003. But this was the only similarity: nothing else about the return engagement was the same.

Like other corps-level LRS units, Fox Company was designed to be bigger, more mobile, and capable of operating over larger areas than the typical infantry rifle company. The Army had invented the LRS concept in the 1980s at the height of NATO's standoff with the Warsaw Pact in Europe. According to both infantry and MI doctrine, a corps-level LRS company was designed to send 18 six-man teams up to 150 kilometers behind enemy lines to observe operational- and strategic-level objectives, then guide fires on those targets. (At division level, an LRS detachment of six teams had a similar mission on a narrower, less distant strip of enemy terrain.)

To accomplish this demanding mission—almost the stuff of Hollywood thrillers—the Army had richly endowed its corps LRS companies with NCO and officer leaders trained at the Ranger, Pathfinder, and Military Free Fall courses; long-range, high-speed communications equipment and a platoon of signal troops to operate them; dozens of light vehicles and trucks; and state-of-the-art optics, individual weapons, and laser target designators. Despite this embarrassment of riches, many LRS companies struggled in the 1980s and 1990s to play the role the Army had written for them, but failed for reasons that remained depressingly consistent: they had neither the staff nor the influence to coordinate all of their support requirements.

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PHOTO: Companies E and F, 51st Infantry (Long Range Surveillance), at the handover of responsibility for Multi-National Command-Iraq's Task Force Phantom, 20 October 2005, at Al Asad airbase, Anbar province, Iraq. (USMC photo)

> *[LRS units were] designed to be bigger, more mobile, and capable of operating over larger areas than the typical infantry rifle company.*

Like Tennessee Williams's heroine Blanche DuBois, LRS units "have always depended on the kindness of strangers." To perform a European-style surveillance mission deep in the enemy heartland, for example, the LRS company had to look far beyond its own ranks for essential support. It required Army aviators or Air Force pilots willing to fly into a hornet's nest of enemy air defenses to drop paratroopers over denied territory; logisticians of the corps support command to figure out how to resupply the teams under the same unpromising conditions; personnel recovery experts to draw up a plan to rescue LRS troops in the event of compromise; and corps frequency managers to dedicate channels for that one company, channels that were in short supply and tightly rationed. Moreover, G2 analysts, accustomed to pondering transnational battlefields, had to switch gears to produce detailed intelligence folders on narrowly defined point targets. Meanwhile, the chief of staff, absorbed with a myriad of other concerns, had to focus his staff on tying together the many loose ends of LRS support.

Not surprisingly, many staff officers preferred to wash their hands of this burden entirely. Following an impressive debut in March 2003, when three surveillance teams moved over 400 kilometers into Iraq to support the advance of 3d Infantry Division, V Corps assigned its organic LRS unit, E Company, 51st Infantry, a series of routine tasks that required little coordination by its headquarters. Even within its own leadership chain, the LRS company was largely neglected by its parent command, 205th Military Intelligence Brigade. That summer the brigade's leadership was distracted by the task of supervising the conventional intelligence operations of eight subordinate battalions—activities that included the creation of a theater-level interrogation center at Abu Ghraib prison. In the war's first months, the 205th showed little interest in enabling its lone

infantry unit to perform its intended combat role. This squandered the LRS company's unique capabilities. After March 2003, Echo Company's LRS teams functioned as little more than spare infantry in Iraq. They escorted convoys, conducted presence patrols, manned guard towers, prowled highways for homemade bombs and, for a brief period, shot feral dogs on U.S. bases. It seemed at times that the teams did almost everything *except* LRS operations.

A second LRS unit, attached to V Corps a few weeks before the invasion, fared somewhat differently. Initially, V Corps sliced Fox Company, 51st Infantry—the XVIII Airborne Corps LRS unit—into groups of free-floating teams, stripped of their organic company leadership and earmarked to individual divisions. In May, the newly-created Combined Joint Task Force 7 brought the unit back together and attached it to the 101st Airborne Division, which further subordinated the corps-level LRS unit to an infantry battalion operating in Mosul. Initially, the LRS company performed important but routine missions—delivering propane gas and guarding banks in the capital of Ninevah province.

Two months later the division commander, Major General David Petraeus, assigned Fox Company a new mission that exploited its special talents for the first time. Dispatched to the northern Kurdish occupied provinces, the unit surveyed Iraq's frontiers with Turkey and Iran and trained Peshmerga militiamen to serve as members of Iraq's new federal border police. Under the deft supervision of the division's military intelligence battalion, Fox Company teams operated with ease in remote, mountainous terrain that would have defeated the vehicles, line-of-sight radios, and back muscles of conventional infantry units. The company's operations and intelligence section came into its own, planning missions and organizing logistic support to LRS teams widely scattered across the Zagros Mountains.

> *Fox Company teams operated with ease in remote, mountainous terrain that would have defeated the vehicles, line-of-sight radios, and back muscles of conventional infantry units.*

Fox Company also provided intelligence reports from border areas where few Americans had ventured since the aftermath of the Gulf War. Washington paid special attention to the unit's eyewitness reports on the shadowy Kurdish PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) guerrilla movement, a source of growing friction between the United States and its NATO ally across the Iraqi border, Turkey. Within weeks, Petraeus's economy-of-force mission turned into a showcase for LRS strengths as U.S. military operations in Iraq began to journey down new and unforeseen paths.

LRS, Version 2.0

Upon their return to Fort Bragg, and armed with experiences in Kurdistan and a letter of support from Petraeus, Fox Company and its parent organization, 519th MI Battalion, spent nine months in 2004 acquiring equipment and training to prepare for genuine LRS operations in Iraq. Company and battalion leaders shuttled to the XVIII Airborne Corps headquarters to explain LRS capabilities and to plead for missions that would exploit the unit's unique skills.

These efforts came at a time when Iraq's growing insurgency was creating a demand for extended surveillance of the country's western borders. By February 2005, when the XVIII Airborne Corps staff took over leadership of Multi-National Corps–Iraq (MNC-I), coalition forces faced a growing campaign of intimidation from suicide bombers. Insurgents engineered a flow of money, men, and equipment from outside the country to create mayhem in Iraq's biggest cities. They took advantage of the long, undefended frontier with Syria to supply Iraqi fighters with the raw materials for homemade bombs and other weapons of terror. In its first two months of independent operations along the border, Fox Company sent irrefutable evidence to Baghdad of the insurgents' undocumented transit in both directions, heedless of Iraqi border police.

MNC-I resolved to gain control of Iraq's western frontier to stop this deadly flow. The 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR) was reassigned from the Baghdad region to a base outside Tal Afar, 40 miles west of Mosul, where it embarked on a counterinsurgency campaign later recognized

as a model of its kind. To support the regiment's efforts, MNC-I subjected its intelligence forces in the north to an extreme makeover. At the heart of this reorganization was a new task force with Fox Company, once again in Iraq, as its anchor.

Created in April 2005, Task Force Phantom represented a rare case of the doctrinal use of an LRS company in combat. Chartered to identify and stop insurgent border crossers, Phantom's 15 LRS teams were joined by a powerful collection of additional intelligence tools taken from MNC-I's supply locker, including—

● Dozens of Omnisensors, remotely monitored automatic sentries that, when approached by vehicles or people, took digital pictures and beamed them to a satellite. Within minutes the pictures were on a secure Internet site that troops in the desert could view.

● An AirScan system consisting of a Cessna 337 with a video package similar to that found on Predator unmanned aerial vehicles. AirScan sent imagery in real time to LRS teams on the ground and to their controllers in Mosul.

● Signals intelligence from a corps eavesdropping system whose Arabic-speaking operator enjoyed immediate access to national-level agencies.

● A tactical human intelligence team of experienced, Arabic-speaking U.S. counterintelligence agents who accompanied LRS troops on their patrols.

● A Trojan Spirit communications ensemble that afforded secure connections to commanders in
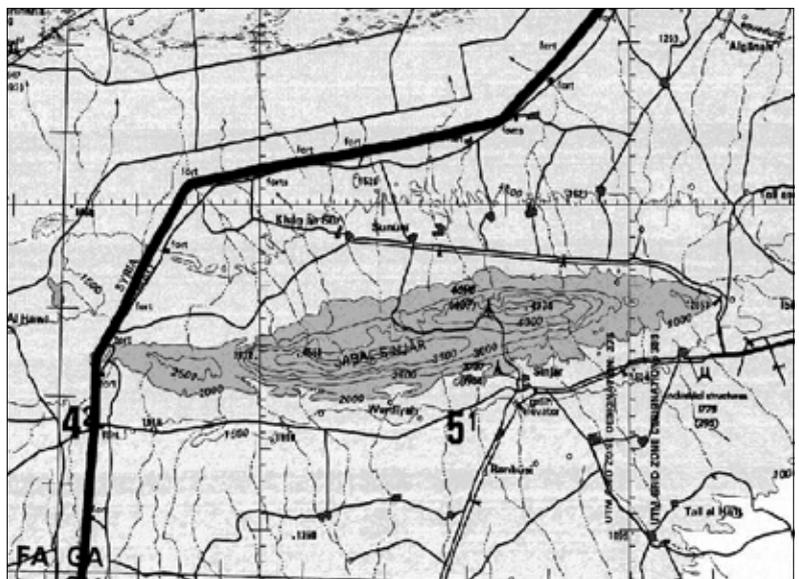
Beginning in January 2005, Task Force Phantom placed teams along the Iraq-Syria frontier west of Sinjar Mountain.

Mosul and Baghdad, plus intelligence data bases at every level.

● Additional analysts, especially in the signals and imagery disciplines, who enabled Task Force Phantom to assess and report its own intelligence, create target folders, and control all steps of the intelligence cycle.

● A U.S. Air Force joint tactical air controller qualified to call for fire support from F-16 fighters and other aircraft. This was an investment in the task force's ability to defend itself and a sign that Task Force Phantom was expected to act on its intelligence and not merely report it.

Although the task force was a corps-level entity, MNC-I placed Phantom under the day-to-day tactical control of a subordinate two-star command, Multi-National Brigade-Northwest, based in Mosul.

Because Task Force Phantom was an intelligence asset, Fox Company's parent MI battalion installed its executive officer, an MI major, as the full-time task force commander and moved him to Mosul. This step placed the responsibility for integrating the task force's diverse assets in the hands of an experienced tactical intelligence officer and freed the Fox Company commander, Captain Thomas M. Hough, to concentrate on leading his infantry troops. The task force commander also ensured that his 20-member operations and intelligence section worked together to organize much of its own support, significantly reducing the burden on its supported headquarters, a burden that had led to the previous misuse of LRS teams in Iraq.

The employment of Task Force Phantom represented both an experiment in traditional LRS doctrine and a test of tactical intelligence doctrine. MNC-I utilized Fox Company *in toto*—as an intelligence sensor, a corps-controlled asset, and a tool against an enemy threat that transcended U.S. unit boundaries. But the task force also reflected the conviction of Lieutenant General John R. Vines, MNC-I's commander for most of 2005, that sensors must be massed and focused to obtain the best results, rather than piecemealed out to divisions and brigade combat teams in a futile search for equity.

Intelligence lines of effort. Focused on the insurgents' "rat lines" into Iraq, Task Force Phantom's operations followed a four-phase cycle that made the most of MNC-I's commitment of troops and systems.

The first three phases, intelligence preparation of the battlespace (IPB), situational development, and target development, typically resulted in a deliberate offensive operation conducted by Phantom's maneuver partner in northwest Iraq. As a result of this operation, Phantom teams conducted the fourth phase, battle damage assessment.

Intelligence preparation of the battlespace occurred in Mosul, where Task Force Phantom analysts plotted signals and human intelligence reports from a variety of sources to identify sectors of Iraq's western frontier for scrutiny.

Situational development consisted of locating insurgents and their sympathizers and determining their vulnerabilities and intentions. Task Force Phantom placed Omnisensors along the border to

This truck was one of many vehicles LRS teams observed carrying military-aged males across the Syria-Iraq frontier in early 2005.

The teams observed regular meetings of AIF facilitators at one illicit border-crossing point near the frontier town of Sinjar, described by the LRS company commander as a "taxi stand" for insurgents. At this crossing site, the facilitators made cell-phone calls and arranged for the transit of men and equipment into Iraq.

Long-range surveillance teams of Company F, 51st Infantry, on patrol near the Syrian border, spring 2005.

detect movement in areas not easily accessed, while LRS teams, sometimes accompanied by Arabic-speaking foreign area officers and other regional experts, drove from village to village in broad daylight to ask local people about strangers in their area. In addition, AirScan flew along Syria's frontier with Iraq looking for breaks in the earthworks, and signals intelligence sensors monitored activity by insurgents and smugglers. In Mosul, analysts sifted through reports from these and other sources, drew connections between enemy personalities and activities, and selected a few for special attention.

Target development required LRS teams to locate suspected insurgent camps and to hunt down and observe suspicious individuals or groups to determine their intentions. LRS teams in their armored HMMWVs trundled hundreds of kilometers through the desert at night to reach surveillance sites identified during previous phases of the intelligence cycle. Electronic eavesdropping systems, working among the Silk Road trails used by smugglers for centuries, searched for clues to distinguish border crossers carrying cigarettes from those bearing a more sinister cargo. In some cases, LRS scouts quietly established "hides" a few hundred meters from their targets and watched them across a flat desert floor for several days and nights in the broiling summer. Depending on the situation, Task Force Phantom could pass targets either to maneuver units like 3d ACR or to the U.S. Air Force for action.

In early June, Phantom's maneuver partner in northwest Iraq, 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment, mounted an offensive operation codenamed Operation Odin. Task Force Phantom targeted twelve different residents of local villages whom its analysts had linked to cross-border trafficking of bomb-making materials. The ACR commander, Colonel H.R. McMaster, marshaled a battalion task force to pick up members of the insurgent cell. McMaster selected positive identification of eight of the twelve target personalities by Task Force Phantom as the trigger to initiate simultaneous nighttime raids on the villages. Drawing together eyewitness reports from surveillance teams, as well as real-time intelligence from national sources, Phantom delivered the intelligence that enabled McMaster's task force to execute rapid precision raids on a handful of houses. In some cases, on-scene LRS teams illuminated selected buildings with laser target designators, guiding McMaster's forces directly to targets and helping them to avoid a broad-brush clearing operation likely to anger villagers throughout the region.

Precision offensive operations like Odin would frequently overturn the chessboard of local perpetrators, enablers and their secret sharers, so intelligence gathering continued as the maneuver unit returned to its base. Task Force Phantom's assets—AirScan, LRS scouts, tactical human intelligence teams, and signals intelligence systems—swept the target area to assess immediate battle damage as well as to look for signs

of new patterns of activity among local target person-alities. Information gathered in this phase sometimes produced the seed corn for future operations.

In Orbe Terrum Non Visi

Task Force Phantom's teams typically worked in remote areas far from Iraq's big cities for five to seven days at a time. Their armored HMMWVs ventured far beyond the logistic support radius of other U.S. units based in Mosul or even Tal Afar. No Stryker brigade or other modularized unit could dwell along Iraq's borders for long, but Task Force Phantom's teams made these areas their home.

The extended distances to border surveillance areas required LRS teams to take extraordinary measures to protect themselves. With helicopter reinforcements frequently over an hour away, the LRS company had to raise ground quick-reaction forces from its own ranks. In addition, evacuation to the nearest field hospital by Black Hawk helicopter typically took at least 90 minutes, so it was vitally important that virtually every team member be a certified combat lifesaver or emergency medical technician.

To reduce the risk, LRS teams placed a proposed surveillance site under observation for a night and a day before occupying the "hide" to watch a target. Careful advance study of prospective surveillance areas by analysts in Mosul also helped the task force reduce the danger of sudden compromise, and additional insurance took the form of the JTAC seconded to Phantom, who could summon devastat-ing fires from coalition fighter aircraft. Nonetheless, the requirement for self-protection tended to limit the number of teams that could perform surveil-lance at any given time to about five—a single LRS platoon.

Through the efforts of these teams, MNC-I gained specific, documentary evidence of substantial movements of men and materiel from Syria to Iraq, movements that were the subject of bitter contro-versy between Damascus and Washington in 2004 and 2005. Syria strengthened its own border control

measures to restrict the flow, and Task Force Phantom was positioned to verify these changes as well.

Working in tandem with 3d ACR, Task Force Phantom conducted a series of platoon operations in Iraq's western desert during the spring and summer of 2005. Each time teams returned from the frontier, the task force handed its maneuver partners target packets, which they used to clear insurgents and their facilitators from border areas. As summer cycled into autumn, MNC-I funneled additional bat-talions into the Euphrates River valley, and Phantom shifted its surveillance activities steadily southward. When the task force reached the river, MNC-I trans-ferred tactical control of the force to the Marines of Multi-National Division–West, who oversaw the vast western province of Anbar. Because the corps had designed Phantom to be portable, the task force quickly moved its troops and ground equipment from Mosul to Al Asad Air Base with little inter-ruption in surveillance. (The task force has since moved to another region of Iraq.)

Task Force Phantom's reporting drew widespread praise from conventional and special operations commanders throughout northern Iraq. By the time Fox Company rotated out of the theater in November, a new LRS company, E/51st Infantry, had replaced it as the anchor of the corps task force. This handover of authority was the clearest sign yet that the LRS organization and doctrine underpin-ning Phantom were meeting an urgent, enduring need in MNC-I.

New Lessons from Old Doctrine

As the Army ponders the future of 21st-century human intelligence collection, Task Force Phan-tom's experiences in Iraq in 2005 point to the fol-lowing lessons:

● The Army's original LRS doctrine works. Senior commanders get the best results from an LRS company when they employ the unit intact with its own command and control mechanisms, when it is guided at the two- or three-star level, and

Through the efforts of [LRS] teams, MNC-I gained specific, documentary evidence of substantial movements of men and materiel from Syria to Iraq…

when it is directed against enemy targets of national significance.

● An LRS company is an intelligence-gathering unit. Using it in any other role denies the Army an appropriate return on its investment.

● Adding a handful of analysts and planners to the LRS company headquarters eliminates most of the support burden on the three-star headquarters staff and strengthens the continuity and coherence of surveillance operations to boot.

● The LRS company plays a vital strategic and operational intelligence-collection role not easily duplicated elsewhere in the Army. Neither conventional units, because of the limitations of their equipment, nor special operations forces, for which demand everywhere outstrips supply, can perform these roles.

●Massing intelligence sensors gets results; piece-mealing the assets squanders them.

● LRS companies have compiled a record of proven achievements in Iraq, which makes them a natural anchor of the Army's new battlefield surveillance brigades, hybrid formations of combat arms and intelligence troops that will replace the corps MI brigades over the next five years.

Task Force Phantom's achievements in Iraq suggest that perhaps one more item should be added to the small list of 1980s artifacts that have acquired new resonance in the 21st century. Just as the spotlight of history is circling back to Steve Jobs, Live Aid, and gas-efficient automobiles, world events have made the Army's long-range surveillance doctrine suddenly interesting and relevant again. Like those 1980s icons, LRS units have commanded attention for breaking molds and defying expectations. But best of all—and unlike Duran Duran—the doctrine has the potential to save a life or two. *MR*

A Synchronized Approach to POPULATION CONTROL

Brigadier General Joseph Anderson, U.S. Army, and Colonel Gary Volesky, U.S. Army

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Colonel Gary Volesky is the deputy chief of staff, Mult-National Corps-Iraq. He earned a bachelor's degree from Eastern Washington University and a master's degree from Princeton, and is a graduate of the Air War College. COL Volesky has served in a wide variety of command and staff positions, including special operations, in the continental United States and abroad.

PHOTO: An Iraqi Soldier patrols in the Rusafa district, Baghdad, Iraq, 21 February 2007. (U.S. Army/SGT Curt Cashour, MNC-I Public Affairs)

MULTI-NATIONAL CORPS–IRAQ'S (MNC-I) GOAL of reducing violence, gaining the support of the Iraqi people, stabilizing Iraq, and enabling the attainment of security self-reliance by the Iraqi Government is under attack by diverse groups that have changed their tactics significantly during the past few years. We must protect and secure the population because of the threat this cycle of violence presents to both coalition forces and the people of Iraq. A critical component in securing the population from the insurgent groups is population control. Right now, population control is a key part of Operation Fardh Al-Qanoon, the Iraqi Government-led security plan for Baghdad, which calls for a number of measures specifically designed to bring stability and security to Iraqis and to protect them from the violence perpetrated by terrorists and militias.

The threats opposing our efforts in Iraq can be divided into the following categories: sectarian violence, Al Qaeda and Al Qaeda-Iraq (AQ/AQI), the Sunni insurgency (former regime members/Ba'athists), Shi'a extremists (militias), and Shi'a-on-Shi'a violence. Originally, coalition forces were the primary focus of attacks because the enemy's goal was to force us out of Iraq. The threat these groups posed directly affected our efforts to provide the security and stability that would allow the Iraqi Government to build the capacity to secure its territory, to increase its ability to provide for and meet the needs of its population, and to earn it legitimacy in the eyes of the people. While a coalition withdrawal remains the enemy's primary objective, the elements confronting us have expanded their vision to defining Iraq after we leave. Some of their most frequently mentioned objectives are to expand their power base, regain lost influence and power throughout Iraq, and establish a safe haven to facilitate the creation of a caliphate.

A key part of the groups' strategy to achieve their end state involves the Iraqi population. Some groups, such as Jaysh al-Mahdi, promote themselves as the protectors of a certain segment of the population (Sunni and Shi'a). This is a classic insurgency strategy. Other groups, such as AQI, target certain segments of the population along sectarian lines by using suicide vehicle-borne

improvised explosive devices (SVBIEDs), suicide-vest improvised explosive devices (SVIEDs), and other means to kill as many civilians as possible. The lethal targeting of civilians is intended to terrorize the population, demonstrate the government's and Iraqi Security Forces' (ISF) inability to protect the people, and, most importantly, provoke a violent response along sectarian lines. To some extent, it has worked, creating a cycle of violence that continues to destabilize the country and prevent the government from building the capacity and setting the conditions that will eventually lead to self-reliance. This cycle of violence poses the biggest problem to the coalition as it attempts to achieve its desired goal of stability in Iraq.

The employment of population control measures to secure the populace is one effective tool the coalition can use to break the cycle of violence. Population control measures include physical activities meant to protect the population; influence operations that engage key leaders and an information operations strategy to build support for our actions; and the promotion, coordination, and facilitation of economic opportunities to reduce the pool of disenfranchised communities that enemy forces can rely on for support.

Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, discusses population control measures and the role they play in the overall counterinsurgency effort: "Population control includes determining who lives in an area and what they do. This task requires determining societal relationships—family, clan, tribe, interpersonal, and professional. Establishing control normally begins with conducting a census and issuing identification cards."*

Population control, however, cannot be solely focused on actions at the tactical level that center on restricting movement or acquiring data on the population. Strategic and operational-level leaders must plan, coordinate, and execute activities that set the conditions for success at the tactical level. A plan that is not synchronized at all levels may achieve isolated short-term success, but it will fail to realize the sustainable, long-term success required to reduce violence, build capacity, and establish a stable and viable environment.

Strategic Population Control

Strategic population control in Iraq requires the engagement of leaders at all levels in the coalition, the Iraqi Government, the ISF, and other influential players. For the purpose of this article, engagement is defined as leader discussion and negotiation with an appropriate counterpart in order to gain support or produce a desired effect. The purpose of such engagements is to ensure development and oversight of the critical systems needed to achieve the organization's goal. In the population control arena, the critical systems needing development and oversight at the strategic level are a national identification card system, a census collection and biometrics registration program, a weapons registration program, border points of entry control procedures, strict rule-of-law enforcement policies, a public assembly permit policy, and economic programs that facilitate long-term employment opportunities.

Operational Population Control

Operational population control in Iraq requires continued engagement with key community leaders and the synchronization and allocation of unique resources

An Iraqi soldier with the 3d Battalion, 1st Brigade, 3d Iraqi Army Division, stands guard along with a trooper from the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2d Infantry Division, at a market in Baghdad's Dora neighborhood, 5 April 2007.

U.S. Army/SGT Curt Cashour

available to the operational commander that aid tactical-level operations. Critical actions at the operational level include senior-leader engagement with influential tribal sheiks, prominent religious leaders, and local political leaders; leveraging and allocating intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets to gather information on organizations targeting the population; coordinating public affairs messages between the Iraqi Government, coalition forces, and the ISF; giving up control of MNC-I enablers to subordinate units (i.e., pushing engineer and civil affairs units down to brigades) for tactical operations; and developing an integrated economic plan.

Tactical Population Control

Tactical population control in Iraq requires coalition forces and the ISF to coordinate in providing security. Key tasks are conducting combined offensive operations (cordon and searches and precision strikes) against groups attacking the population; focusing the use of ISR assets on key nodes and locations; increasing friendly visible presence in urban areas through the use of joint security stations, combat outposts, and traffic control points (TCPs); and limiting access to population centers through entry control points (ECPs) and TCPs.

One of the techniques used at the tactical level to protect the population is to create gated communities. These are built with temporary barriers, berms, and other obstacles and incorporate designated ECPs to prevent access by would-be attackers. The technique has proven effective in reducing the number of attacks on population centers and has brought a greater sense of security to many of Baghdad's people. Similar methods used to protect markets and other critical sites are showing positive results throughout Baghdad.

Population Control Risks

When implementing population control measures at the tactical level, commanders must consider how the measures and the resources used to secure the population are perceived, not only by enemy forces, but also by the populations they are intended to secure. While members of a community want security, over time they come to view the measures used to isolate their community and regulate access into it as impediments to freedom of movement. Elements that oppose our efforts will capitalize on any loss of support among the people; they will put pressure on the government through the media and other conduits to make the coalition and ISF reduce the control measures.

To mitigate any such development, the Iraqi Government and the coalition will define the conditions that must be met before the population control measures are reduced. Failure to develop such a plan may result in significant public opposition to current and future protection measures, as was seen in the Adhamiyah district of Baghdad in April 2007.

Commanders must also consider how enemy forces could take advantage of our control measures even if the community embraces those measures. For example, gating urban areas and establishing ECPs effectively clusters the inhabitants into centralized locations, making them vulnerable to indirect fire and SVBIED and SVIED attacks that may lead them to believe the control measures have made them less secure, not safer. The media will highlight successful attacks, and enemy forces will use the reports to reinforce their claims that the government and coalition forces cannot protect the people.

Regardless of potential vulnerabilities or drawbacks, protecting the population through control measures is a critical component of our strategy to help the Iraqi Government create a stable, secure Iraq. Some of our measures might restrict the freedom of movement of individuals, and we can expect the enemy to use every means available to discredit us and degrade the population's confidence in and support of our efforts. But increased security trumps inconvenience and hollow accusations almost every time. Keeping the Iraqi people safe by implementing temporary control measures will set the conditions for Iraqi self-reliance. To attain our objectives and achieve success, we must synchronize our efforts at all levels and not be deterred. *MR*

NOTES

* Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 5-21.

The Art and Aggravation of Vetting in Post-Conflict Environments

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PHOTO: Over 300 applicants turned up for an Iraqi Police recruiting event held 11 January 2005 at the Baghdad Convention Center. (U.S. Army/SPC Erik LeDrew)

ON 22 FEBRUARY 2006, insurgents posing as Iraqi police officers destroyed the Golden Mosque in Samarra, one of Iraq's holiest Shi'ite shrines. The attack set off a spasm of sectarian violence that has metastasized into what some consider an intractable civil war. Since then, the insurgent tactic of infiltrating the security forces and corrupting its personnel has become almost commonplace, with catastrophic results for Iraq. The populace distrusts Iraqi security forces, coalition forces distrust their Iraqi counterparts, the Iraqi Government is viewed as increasingly illegitimate, and the country has plunged into further chaos, delaying the safe transfer of security responsibilities to Iraqi forces.

The undermining of the Iraqi police forces occurred, in part, because of negligible *vetting*—the investigation and selection of new recruits for the police force. Creating a professional indigenous security force is a mandatory component of any exit strategy in a costly post-conflict reconstruction mission. Yet creating such a force depends utterly on the competent vetting of candidates for that force. Failure to vet recruits to ensure they possess the "proper character" can result in the infiltration of criminals, insurgents, warlords, and other undesirables into the state's security apparatus, setting up the possibility of a coup d'etat or worse.[1] This, in turn, may trigger a cycle of costly international interventions and endless peacekeeping operations. Thus, competent vetting of indigenous security forces is the linchpin of post-conflict reconstruction.

Unfortunately, no model for vetting exists, and recent efforts to establish a vetting process in Iraq and elsewhere have been ad hoc and disappointing. Nor has the situation been helped by the paucity of literature, either academic or practical, on vetting indigenous security forces: there is scant scholarship on the issue and no large-scale comparative study of vetting. That no international treaty addresses the subject reflects the relative novelty of the issue and the general lack of interest in formulating a common approach. Also, no U.S. Government, United Nations, or nongovernmental organization has written a manual on vetting, a remarkable fact given that security forces are currently being reconstituted in Iraq, Afghanistan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and elsewhere.

Lessons Learned After WWII

Since the end of World War II, the international community has learned many lessons about security force vetting and *lustration* (culling an existing security force for the best individuals while dismissing the others).

The first lesson is that *the effects of vetting or lustration may be short-lived if the process is hurried or abandoned halfway through* (i.e., recruit first, vet later). The largest post-WWII lustration effort occurred immediately following the war, as the Allies judged Axis leaders. In Europe, this was known as denazification, and it is estimated that 13 million Germans underwent it, 600,000 of whom were sanctioned. Separately, France purged collaborators of the Vichy regime and Italy dismissed approximately 2,000 government employees. Despite denazification, many former Nazis eventually made their way back into public service. Similarly, Italy reinstated all lustrated personnel in 1948.

A second lesson is that *failure to respect the rights of individuals under review will delegitimize the process and open it up to external challenges*. Following the fall of the Berlin Wall, former Communist countries passed lustration laws to drastically reduce the size of their governments, including the security sectors. In Hungary, 12,000 high-level officials were subject to lustration, although only a fraction were sanctioned for their participation in the previous regime. In Czechoslovakia, out of approximately 300,000 cases considered, 15,000 individuals were removed from office. Poland also lustrated citizens alleged to have collaborated with the secret police. All the post-Communism lustration laws of the 1990s were widely criticized for insufficiently taking into account the rights of those subjected to lustration.[2]

A third lesson is that *a lack of political will, inadequate resources, or a poorly thought-out plan will result in failure*—the task is that complex. The International Police Task Force in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was initially tasked with screening all candidates for the Federation's police forces and identifying anyone previously engaged in ethnic cleansing or other crimes against ethnic minorities. Its vetting was so ineffectual that the task was eventually transferred to the Human Rights Office in Bosnia.[3]

Lesson four is that *process matters*. A 2005 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report,

Southeast Asia: Better Human Rights Reviews and Strategic Planning Needed for U.S. Assistance to Foreign Security Forces, examined U.S. security sector reform efforts to equip and train military and police forces in the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia from 2001 to 2004. It found "no evidence that U.S. officials vetted an estimated 6,900 foreign security trainees" as required by U.S. law.[4] Worse, 32 Indonesians from a notorious special-forces police unit received training, even though the unit was prohibited by the U.S. Department of State (DOS) from receiving U.S. training funds because of human rights abuses. This undesirable outcome resulted from the lack of "clear policies and procedures for vetting foreign security forces."[5] The GAO found little evidence of "ground-truthing," investigating, public records checking, consultation with victims' groups, or accounting for aliases or noms de guerre. No consolidated written policy existed to establish interagency vetting standards and procedures, sources and methods, roles and responsibilities, databases, or oversight mechanisms. Conducting Internet searches and scanning newspaper clippings—the usual expedients—is simply insufficient for complex, prolonged conflicts.

The fifth and last lesson learned is that *the failure to vet recruits might help an insurgent organization penetrate state security forces*. The joint Department of Defense (DOD) and DOS inspector general (IG) report on vetting for the new Iraqi Police Service (IPS) states that "recruitment and vetting procedures [were] faulty," resulting in incompetents, criminals, and insurgents joining the IPS, a problem not easily undone.[6] The report also reveals that "the IG Team was told that, especially early in 2003, only a cursory background check, if even that, was conducted before policemen were trained or entered the force."[7] The vetting process was stymied by a lack of public records and witnesses and by cross-cultural and language difficulties. Overall, according to the report, "the Coalition's ability to conduct thorough background checks on IPS personnel [was] severely limited."[8] The report notes that inducting criminals into the IPS was a continual concern. Even more troubling was infiltration by terrorists or insurgents. Sufficient evidence was found to conclude that "such persons indeed are among the ranks of the IPS," which underscores "the need for the most rigorous possible review of each applicant's records."[9]

Why Vetting is Difficult

One reason why no coherent vetting policy exists is because failed and weak states are, by their nature, disordered and chaotic. Typical sources and methods used in background checks (criminal records, credit history, education records, employment history, and so on) do not exist, are not credible, or are insufficient. Even establishing identity can prove daunting, as attempts to hold legitimate elections in post-conflict states have demonstrated.

Another reason why no policy exists is the high prevalence of criminal behavior during conflicts, especially during prolonged civil wars. In such environments the number of problematic candidates will be correspondingly high. Those conducting the vetting process might find themselves rejecting most of the candidates. Lustration also might not work as a security sector reform technique because, given the high rate of crimes, remaining veterans might corrupt new recruits, thus compromising the new security force. Instead, it might be better to completely demobilize the security sector and reconstitute it.

However, reconstructing a state's security sector is dangerous. Instability and violence are never far beneath the surface in post-conflict environments, and the vetting process can easily cause dangerous ripples. In weak or failed states, a security force is often the strongest institution, and, in many cases, is or was a major contributing factor to the state's demise. Attempts at reform can result in violent reprisals against staff and supporters of reform, while investigations into war crimes might dredge up painful memories for a fragile population and possibly rekindle violence over unaddressed wrongs. The vetting process must remain absolutely unconnected to instruments of post-conflict justice such as so-called truth and reconciliation commissions. Often, security and justice are at odds in post-conflict settings.

Vetting is a highly sensitive process that invites a relapse of violence and state failure. If the vetting process fails to safeguard the identities of victims who help identify perpetrators, then those victims might be intimidated, coerced, or killed in reprisal. If the vetting process accidentally overlooks a war criminal, then all vetted individuals could be discredited and a violent backlash might occur. Additionally, wrongful denunciations of innocent individuals could generate antagonism in the com-

Current and former child soldiers present vetting challenges in post-conflict environments, Liberia, 2005.

munity. The vetting procedure must understand these risks and remain sensitive to how the process might affect a frail society. Failure to do so could result in tensions within the new security force, a lack of public confidence in the force, and the emplacement of a force more likely to reproduce patterns of abuse.

A post-conflict environment is one of the most difficult operating environments in the world. It is almost uniformly characterized by extreme poverty and lack of infrastructure, law, and security. Simply moving cross-country can become a daunting expedition requiring robust security convoys, careful route reconnaissance, resupply points, spare vehicles, air medical evacuation support, river-crossing

A self-contained recruiting and vetting convoy of 14 vehicles moves into Liberia's interior for a 21-day mission, 2006.

capabilities, a disciplined staff, and significant contingency planning. Other factors that could affect operations include institutionalized corruption, exotic diseases, prevalence of traffic accidents, a lack of logistical resupply, wild animals, and high rates of crime. One cannot assume the availability of amenities such as potable water, electricity, and shelter. A vetting staff must be prepared for a possible lack of cooperation from authorities, the novelty of the procedure for the population, the absence of precedents, and cultural misunderstandings that could prove disastrous. Consequently, the vetting program must be designed around these limitations, all of which influence morale, operations, budgeting, scheduling, and the quality of vetting.

A Vetting Model

The purpose of vetting personnel for an indigenous security force is to select individuals who will respect the rule of law and human rights norms. Vetting is often part of a larger security sector reform program to create a new force subservient to the state, not vice versa. To achieve this, the vetting staff's primary goal should be to ensure that no person of improper character is accepted into the new force. This is the raison d'etre of vetting, and it overrides all other priorities, such as an applicant's relevant experience or technical skills.

Before designing a vetting plan, practitioners must develop an end-state vision for the new force through consultations with stakeholders. Typically, the security force will be an all-volunteer force with a balanced mix of ethnicity, religion, gender, and other political categories. The goal of the recruiting, vetting, and training components of security sector reform is to achieve a force that maintains a professional ethos, respects the rule of law, cultivates public service leadership, is apolitical, and accepts civilian control with transparent oversight mechanisms. The force must be postured so that it is strong enough to defend the integrity of the nation's borders but not so strong that it threatens neighbors with its force-projection capability. Its structure, equipment, and training must be appropriate to the force's mission (for example, Liberia does not require F-16 fighter jets). Perhaps most critically, the new security force must not be so large that the government cannot pay its salaries. Such a condition is a precipitant to civil war.

In line with the end-state vision, the vetting process is not about establishing guilt or innocence, but about determining suitability for acceptance into the new security force. A vetting model must be founded on two fundamental but divergent considerations: normative issues and pragmatic concerns. The normative component concerns what to vet. In other words, what behavior, criminal or otherwise, justifies rejecting a candidate from the indigenous force? The pragmatic component examines how to vet. That is, what are the actual vetting procedures, how is a candidate's application examined, and what principles are applicable to that examination?

The grounds for disqualification are fundamentally different for each component. The normative component rejects a candidate based on credible evidence of wrongful conduct unrelated to the vetting process, such as prior crimes. For the pragmatic component, a candidate is rejected based on credible evidence of wrongful conduct related to the vetting process, such as cheating, lying, or refusing to cooperate during the vetting procedure.

Normative Component: What to Vet

What behaviors or crimes justify rejection from service in post-conflict state security forces? How do we derive these rejection standards? How do we legitimize these standards to the myriad domestic and international stakeholders?

Because each post-conflict environment is unique, we cannot decree a universal set of vetting principles. However, it is possible to develop a set of core crimes to serve as the foundation for vetting. Core crimes are wrongful acts such as genocide that justify exclusion from state security forces in most situations. Individual security sector reform programs can build on this set of core crimes to develop a tailored set of behavioral standards appropriate for each post-conflict situation. Several sources of international law exist that can inform the compilation of a set of core crimes, including international criminal law (ICL), international humanitarian law (IHL), and international human rights law (IHRL).

International criminal law. ICL is an imperfect instrument for vetting because it often requires proof of intent, which is difficult to demonstrate. As defined in the 1948 Geneva Convention on

the Prevention and Repression of Genocide, the international crime of genocide requires proof that the crime has been pursued "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group."[10] Such intent would be difficult to prove. The act of murder, however, is easier to prove and equally effective as a rejection criterion. In fact, any of the underlying acts enunciated by the 2002 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court definition of crimes against humanity are sufficient for rejection from most security forces.[11]

International humanitarian law. IHL, also known as the law of war, provides a useful framework for vetting. Although IHL is designed to exculpate individuals from acts during war (such as killing) that would be considered crimes in civil society, this distinction is often complicated by the intrastate nature of most of today's conflicts. However, any grave breach of the Geneva Conventions or violation of the customs of war would warrant rejection from most security forces, especially if the country were party to the Conventions. Of particular relevance within the Conventions is the treatment of noncombatants.[12]

International human rights law. IHRL can buttress IHL, but it is too nebulous to use in developing a set of core crimes. For example, are international human rights directives or aspirations? Which human rights violations clearly justify rejection of an applicant? Some rights are too vague for a candidate's disqualification, such as violating the right "to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms . . . can be fully realized."[13] Because most current post-conflict settings are recovering from intrastate wars characterized by widespread human rights abuses over many years (Sudan, Liberia, Iraq, Somalia, Haiti, El Salvador, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, and so on), it is unrealistic to judge post-conflict populations by the same standards of reasonably functioning rule-of-law states during the same period. What would be considered a serious violation of human rights in the developed world might be overshadowed by more egregious violations committed by others during an armed conflict.

Given the ambiguities of human rights and the nature of intrastate warfare, determining what constitutes core crimes comes down to distinctions between violations that result in immediate disqualification and those that do not. Many international human rights

instruments make such a distinction by differentiating between derogable and nonderogable rights. Derogable rights are rights that may be suspended by states under limited circumstances, as specified in article 4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Nonderogable rights cannot be restricted even in cases of public emergency. They include—

● The right to life (article 6).

● The right not to endure torture and cruel or inhuman punishment (article 7).

● The right not to endure slavery and involuntary servitude [article 8(1) and (2)].

● The right not to endure imprisonment for breach of contract (article 11).

● The right not to endure retrospective criminal legislation (article 15).

● The right to be recognized before the law (article 16).

● The right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion (article 18).[14]

By analyzing international law, it is possible to derive a set of core crimes to use as a basis for most security sector reform vetting programs. These crimes constitute per se disqualifications for service in the security sector (see Table 1). In order of gravity, core crimes are unlawful killing, unlawful wounding, torturing, outrages on personal dignity, rape, and abduction or arbitrary detention.

For a vetting program to operate successfully in a post-conflict environment, the program must be perceived as legitimate. It is critical for stakeholders to find common ground on fundamental questions regarding the definitions of core crimes, the proper character for police or military candidates, and the standard of evidence necessary to reject a candidate. Although core crimes are based on international law, a country's own domestic law should be built into the edifice. Domestic penal law will generally include a number of offenses that find equivalency in core crimes, such as criminal homicide; assaults, endangering behavior, and threats; sexual offenses; and kidnapping and related offences. Combining international core crimes and domestic law will help secure legitimacy and local cooperation.

Pragmatic Component: How to Vet

Vetting candidates in post-conflict environments is extremely challenging. How should candidates

CORE CRIME	INTERNATIONAL LAW			
	Genocide (ICL)	Crimes Against Humanity (IHL)	War Crimes (IHL)	Grave Human Rights Abuses (IHRL)
Unlawful Killing	Killing	Murder	Willfully killing or wounding a combatant who, having laid down his arms or having no longer means of defense, has surrendered at discretion; killing treacherously a combatant adversary	Violation of the right to life
Unlawful Wounding	Causing serious bodily or mental harm	Inhuman acts… intentionally causing serious injury to body or to mental or physical health	Willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health; subjecting persons who are in the power of an adverse party to physical mutilation; wounding treacherously a combatant adversary	Violation of the right to be free from cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment
Torture		Torture	Torture	Violation of the right to be free from torture
Outrages Upon Personal Dignity		Inhuman acts… intentionally causing great suffering	Inhuman treatment, committing outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment	Violation of the right to be free from cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment
Rape		Rape	Committing rape; sexual slavery; enforced prostitution; forced pregnancy as it is defined in article 7, paragraph 2 (f); enforced sterilization; or any other form of sexual violence	Violation of the right to be free from torture and from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
Abduction, Arbitrary, Detention, and/or Hostage-Taking		Deportation, imprisonment, or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law	Unlawful deportation or transfer or unlawful confinement, taking of hostages	Violation of the right to personal liberty

Table 1. Core crimes and international law.

be selected in a country where many individuals are victims, perpetrators, or both of human rights abuses? How can the vetting staff conduct background checks in a country that has no credible public records, a dubious justice system, weak institutions, institutionalized corruption, and a distrustful public?

Currently, there is no widely accepted methodology for recruiting indigenous security forces in a post-conflict setting. Typically, vetting is embedded within the recruiting program of a larger security sector reform effort. Most recruitment efforts include—

● Conducting a nationwide public information campaign.

● Taking applications from candidates at a recruitment center.

● Giving candidates a physical-fitness test, a functional literacy and/or aptitude test, and a medical exam.

● Conducting the vetting process.

● Making a final review and judgment of a candidate's suitability for service.

● Informing rejected candidates of their limited right to review why they were rejected.

● Informing accepted candidates that they must serve the first year on a probationary status (allowing additional time for vetting, if necessary).

Recruitment begins with a national public information campaign, which serves two functions: to sensitize the populace to the reconstitution of the security force and to attract volunteers. The sensitization process helps in explaining why a new security force is needed and what its mission and

principles will be (such as respecting the rule of law, human rights, and so on). Volunteers can be attracted by describing service benefits and eligibility standards and by informing interested persons how and where to apply. Planning and implementing such a campaign might be an onerous task given a lack of infrastructure, low literacy rate, diverse ethnic languages, conflict history, and general mistrust, especially the mistrust of security forces that is prevalent in post-conflict societies.

If the public information campaign is ably conducted, recruitment centers can expect many applicants. The prospect of a stable, honorable income in a poor country with high unemployment will appeal to many, and this should generate a sizable candidate pool for the security sector reform program. However, the legacy of violence will also mean that many candidates of dubious character will seek to join the new military or police force, owing to the historic relationship between power and force. As a result, the vetting process should not count on self-selection; rather, it must rely wholly on the rigors of the vetting procedure to uncover unqualified individuals.

Once candidates arrive at a recruitment center, they are systematically evaluated as efficiently as possible. Failure to pass the physical test, functional literacy test, or medical exam should result in an immediate exclusion from service without appeal.[15] The vetting staff should administer tests in the order of least resource-intensive to most resource-intensive, because it is cheaper and faster to evaluate candidates' physical fitness than their literacy. By combining immediate exclusions and prioritization of resource-efficient tests, recruiters can rapidly weed out unqualified candidates. This is critical because vetting is the most resource-intensive portion of the recruitment process, and the candidate pool must be culled as much as possible early on to allow a more manageable caseload for the vetting team and to ensure higher quality vetting.

Vetting in post-conflict environments involves background checks, records checks, and publication vetting. Actual vetting begins when the investigating team (one international and one local investigator) interviews the applicant. The team should ask each candidate a standard set of comprehensive questions in order to obtain and confirm basic information regarding the identity and background

Recruits for security forces take a physical training test in Liberia, 2006. This test is administered first to reduce the number of recruits before the resource-intensive vetting process takes place.

information the candidate provided on the application. Following the interview, the team should conduct a background investigation to establish the overall truthfulness of the applicant's claims and to uncover any credible evidence of wrongdoing. The background check should cover such essentials as age, citizenship, schooling, work history, claimed special skills, and any documents the applicant submitted. The investigating team should also

Each vetting team should consist of one international and one national member—equals who offer complementary skills, Liberia, 2006.

interview people who know the candidate well: people who provided the candidate's references as well as neighbors, employers, co-workers, relatives, municipal authorities, teachers, community leaders, and local religious leaders. In many cases, it will be helpful to have an applicant draw a map to his or her home and community, since street names and numbers can be rare in post-conflict settings.

Simultaneously, the vetting team runs a public-records check on the applicant. Although weak states often have few credible records, a public-records audit can prove useful to determine document fraud, criminal activity, and allegations of human rights abuses. Sources of information include old government records, domestic and international nongovernmental organizations, the United Nations, and other government sources such as U.S. watch lists. The records audit should produce a weighted index of record veracity, breadth, depth, and applicability.

Publication vetting is a direct appeal to the population to solicit local knowledge of a candidate's past wrongdoing. Safe, anonymous channels must be established so that victims can give information without suffering reprisal. In this form of vetting, the candidate's picture, name(s), physical description, place of birth, and unique recruiting identity number are publicized nationally to afford witnesses and victims an opportunity to identify undesirable candidates. Mediums for publication vetting include radio and television stations, especially those with nationwide coverage; national and regional newspaper inserts; and posters and face-books positioned at transportation hubs, commercial districts, victim centers, refugee and internally displaced people camps, and major community centers such as churches, schools, and sports stadiums. The team might also ask select members of the public who possess special knowledge of past crimes, such as solicitors, academic researchers, civil society groups, and journalists, to submit relevant information concerning the human rights records of candidates. Because publication vetting invites false accusations, the vetting staff must allocate extra time for investigating complaints. While publication vetting is resource-intensive, the cost of not engaging the public in vetting is greater, given the limitations of background checks and public records in failed states and post-conflict environments.

After gathering relevant information and records, the vetting staff must make a final judgment about the candidate. The staff should designate a joint review board or similar entity to act as the selection approving authority. The board should include major stakeholders in order to foster local ownership, imbue the process with legitimacy, and help insulate the vetting staff from culpability should a candidate be or become an insurgent.

As aforementioned, candidates can be disqualified on either normative or pragmatic grounds. The latter refers to credible evidence of wrongdoing during the recruitment and vetting process (lying, cheating, noncooperation, or other behaviors not desirable in a security force). Normative grounds—credible evidence of wrongdoing unrelated to the vetting process—include but are not limited to—

● Credible allegations of commission of one or more core crimes.

● Discovery of a criminal background or association with or direct involvement with persons engaged in criminal activity.

● Association with any party or persons wanting to do harm to or interfere with reconstruction programs.

● Involvement in financial crimes, acts of corruption, or the accumulation of significant illegal wealth, property, or possessions as a result of intimidation, corruption, the taking of bribes, smuggling in violation of international sanctions, or other illegal acts.

● Mental instability that could be a threat to the safety and security of soldiers and civilians.

● Use of illegal narcotics or other illegal drugs.

If there are allegations against the recruit, the staff must assess the gravity of any crime and the credibility of the evidence. As is the case with determining what constitutes a human rights abuse, it is inappropriate and unpractical to apply the same legal standards for developed states to failed states when attempting to determine the credibility of an allegation. The "balance of probabilities" standard, widely accepted by the European Court of Human Rights in adjudicating human rights cases, offers the best hope for a post-conflict vetting environment. In essence, the balance-of-probabilities standard is an injunction to evaluate whether an alleged offense is more probable than not. Guidelines for assessing the credibility of evidence are:

● The general trustworthiness of allegations made against an applicant (level of detail; coherence and

Recruits in basic training with a drill instructor, Liberia, 2006.

absence of contradiction; identification of dates, locations, and circumstances).

● The general trustworthiness of the authors of the allegations (personal circumstances, general interest or involvement, link with the applicant, link with parties to the conflict, link to other applicants).

● Whether or not there are concurring allegations, especially when the circumstances of the crime's commission indicate that multiple persons witnessed the crime or its circumstances. However, the fact that an allegation comes from only one source should not be a bar to its being considered credible, particularly if the circumstances of the alleged criminal behavior make it likely that there could be only one witness.

The final review process is critical because it corrects deficiencies in vetting, maximizes probity within the process, and instills a sense of procedural justice for disqualified applicants, thereby reducing acts of vengeance against the security sector reform staff and society in general.

A Tightrope Act

Vetting is a high-profile tightrope act in which the need for individuals of proper character must be balanced against the need for skilled individuals with scarce expertise, while the rights of victims must be weighed against the interests of applicants. Also to be considered is the ethnic mix of the new security force. Because internal conflicts and civil wars are often fought between groups of different ethnicities, religious beliefs, tribes, and other non-state identifiers, the ethnic mix of a new security force can be a particularly sensitive issue. Generally, post-conflict reconstruction seeks diversity in government and power-sharing among divided populations. A single group should not disproportionately dominate the new security sector lest it seize control of the government.

But what happens when the principle of diversity collides with other principles necessary for a competent indigenous security force? Should a vetting program lower the standards for human rights vetting for a group with a high rate of human rights violations in order to achieve diversity in the new armed forces? Should a vetting program waive the literacy requirements for groups that were unfairly denied access to education? Having multiple standards of entry among an already polarized and unstable society can have deleterious consequences for the security forces. However, for one group or only a few people to dominate the security force could prove disastrous. Achieving balance within nascent security forces is often a Hobson's choice. It is what makes vetting as much an art as a science. ***MR***

NOTES

1. For lack of a better term, I use "proper character" to loosely convey the qualities and ethics desirable in individuals charged with providing state security and applying force. The specificities and standards of these characteristics must be negotiated among stakeholders before vetting begins.

2. See Wojciech Sadurski, "'Decommunisation,' 'Lustration,' and Constitutional Continuity: Dilemmas of Transitional Justice in Central Europe," EUI Law Working Papers, no. 2003/15 (2003); Roman Boed, "An Evaluation of the Legality and Efficacy of Lustration as a Tool of Transitional Justice," in *Post Conflict Justice*, ed. Cherif Bassiouni, (2002); Marc S. Ellis, "Purging the Past: The Current State of Lustration Laws in the Former Communist Bloc," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 59, no. 4 (1996): 181-196; Mark Gibney, "Decommunization: Human Rights Lessons from the Past and Present, and Prospects for the Future," *Denver Journal of International Law and Policy* 87 (1994).

3. Human Rights Watch, "Bosnia and Hercegovina: Beyond Restraint; Politics and the Policing Agenda of the United Nations International Police Task Force," vol. 10, no. 5(D), June 1998, <www.hrw.org/reports98/bosnia>.

4. U.S. law restricts the provision of funds to units of foreign security forces when the U.S. Department of State (DOS) has credible evidence that the unit has committed gross violations of human rights. Commonly referred to as the Leahy Law, this restriction first appeared in the 1997 Foreign Operations Export Financing and Related Appropriations Act (P.L. 104-208) and only applied to funds appropriated to DOS's international narcotics control program. In 1998, Congress broadened the law to apply to all funds appropriated under the 1998 Foreign Operations Export Financing and Related Appropriations Act (P.L. 105-118). In 1999, a similar provision appeared in the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) Appropriations Act (P.L. 105-262), which applied to funds appropriated under that act. The two provisions have appeared each year since in the annual Foreign Operations Appropriations Act and the DOD Appropriations Act, respectively.

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6. Office of the Inspector General Report, "Interagency Assessment of Iraq Police Training," 15 July 2005, 22.

7. Ibid., 23.

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13. UN, A Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 38, Geneva, 1948.

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15. There are exceptions to the vetting process I describe here, but a fuller explanation and analysis of post-conflict recruitment is beyond the scope of this study.

Iraq: The Social Context of IEDs

Montgomery McFate, J.D., Ph.D.

IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE devices (IEDs) are among the deadliest weapons coalition forces face in Iraq, and defeating their use by insurgents is both essential and extremely challenging. Thus far, U.S. defense science and technology communities have focused on developing technical solutions to the IED threat. However, IEDs are a product of human ingenuity and human social organization. If we understand the social context in which they are invented, built, and used we will have an additional avenue for defeating them. As U.S. Army Brigadier General Joseph Votel, head of the Pentagon's Joint IED Task Force, noted, commanders should focus less on the "bomb than the bombmaker."[1]

A shift in focus from IED technology to IED makers requires examining the social environment in which bombs are invented, manufactured, distributed, and used. Focusing on the bombmaker requires understanding the four elements that make IED use possible in Iraq: knowledge, organization, material, and the surrounding population.

Knowledge

The IEDs that are killing Americans in Iraq were not imported from abroad. Saddam Hussein's regime designed them. The insurgency's expert bombmakers are mostly former members of the Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS), the Mukhabarat.[2]

The IIS unit called M-21 (also known as the Al Ghafiqi Project) operated a laboratory that designed IEDs. Bomb manufacturing at M-21 was a collaborative enterprise: "No one person constructed an entire explosive device alone. . . . An improvised explosive device began in the chemistry department which developed the explosive materials for the device. The electronics department prepared the timers and wiring of the IED and the mechanical department produced the igniters and designed the IED."[3] M-21 designed a number of clever ways to conceal explosives, including in books, briefcases, belts, vests, drink containers, car seats, floor mats, and facial tissue boxes.[4] M-21 also produced manuals on how to conduct roadside ambushes using IEDs; how to construct IEDs from conventional high explosives and military munitions; and how to most effectively take out a convoy by disguising an IED.[5] The IIS M-21 unit is a key reason the Iraqi insurgency is so adept at constructing IEDs. They provided "the blueprints of the postwar insurgency that the U.S. now faces in Iraq."[6]

Beginning in September 2003, IEDs became more sophisticated, evolving from simple suicide attacks to more complex remote-control, vehicle-borne IEDs and daisy-chained IEDs using tripwires.[7] Such a rapid increase in technological sophistication indicates the infusion of "expert" knowledge into the process of building and deploying IEDs. The increased sophistication of IEDs over time also indicates that their design and construction has become a specialized function within the insurgency, rather than a dispersed function.

Functional specialization of IED manufacturing and emplacement suggests there are relatively few expert bombmakers. Indeed, the

An ammunition dump at Tikrit Airport, 19 April 2003. (*Inset*) Captured IED components.
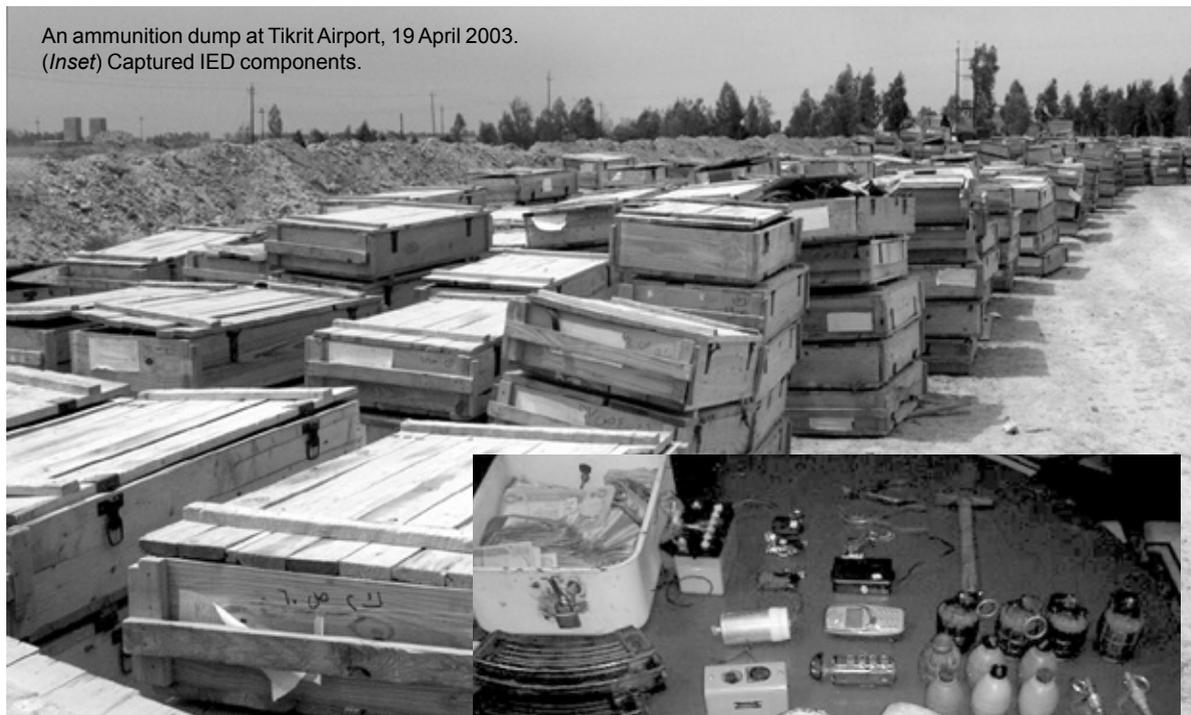
British Army believes insurgents have a small number of expert bombmakers who are involved in designing and mass-producing IEDs.[8] General Martin Dempsy, commander of V Corps' 1st Armored Division agrees: "I think that there is an element of central planning and central training and central supplying for improvised explosive devices."[9]

If bombmaking is a specialized function, coalition forces can take advantage of this in two major ways. First, if bombmakers are captured or killed, their expert knowledge dies with them. Although manuals can be instructive, knowledge gained through years of experience is not easy to reproduce through written instructions. Thus, removing the bombmakers would weaken the insurgents' ability to mass-produce bombs. Second, specialization of function makes those who plan, transport, and detonate bombs dependent on those who build them. Although the insurgency is organized in cells, multiple members of each cell must know the identity of the bombmaker in order to retain access if cell members are killed. Thus, multiple "customers" within the network know the bombmaker's identity.

Identifying the bombmakers should be an absolute priority, and the best way to identify them is through intelligence provided by the bombmaker's customers. Thus, where possible, cell members should be captured rather than killed.

Organization

IED deployment also depends on the existence of an organization dedicated to this task. According to a Joint Intelligence Task Force analysis, Iraqi officers of the Special Operations and Antiterrorism Branch (also known as M-14) are responsible for planning IED attacks.[10] While major combat operations in Iraq were still occurring, members of M-14 scattered across Iraq to lead an insurgency. The operation was designed with little central control so cells would remain viable even if commanders were captured or killed.

British military sources have confirmed that the insurgency is composed of highly organized cells operating in small numbers.[11] Typically, each cell has a variety of members who specialize in different tasks. For example, one group of insurgents consisted of two leaders, four subleaders, and 30
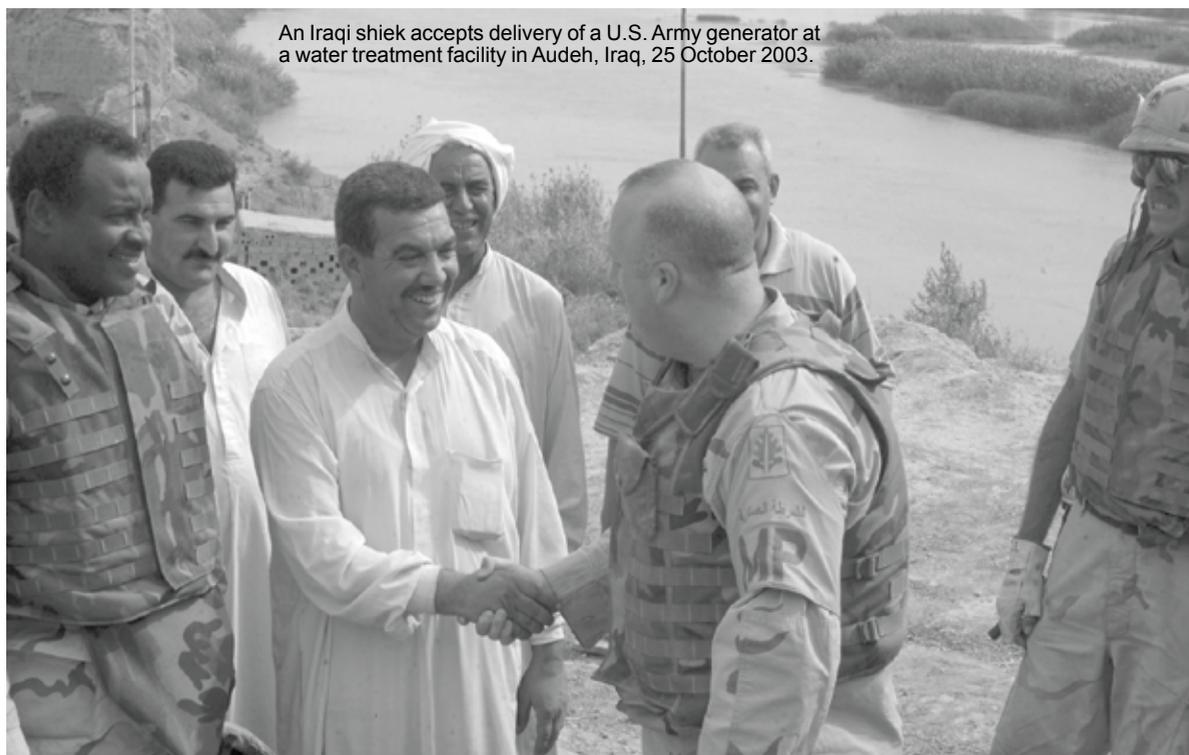
An Iraqi shiek accepts delivery of a U.S. Army generator at a water treatment facility in Audeh, Iraq, 25 October 2003.

US Army

members. Broken down by activity, there was a pair of financiers; two cells of car-bomb builders; an assassin; mortar and rocket launching teams; and others in charge of roadside bombs and ambushes.[12] Members of insurgent cells operate part-time and blend back into the civilian population when operations are complete.

While some foreign fighters might be present, the majority of insurgents are native Iraqis connected to each other and to the general population by social networks and relationships. The most important social network in Iraq is the tribe. Most Iraqis are members of one of 150 major tribes, which are subdivided into about 2,000 smaller clans. The largest clans contain more than one million people; the smallest, a few thousand.[13]

After Iraq's economic collapse following the Persian Gulf War, the Sunni tribal network became the backbone of Saddam Hussein's regime, with tribe members performing everything from security functions to garbage collection.[14] Humiliated during Operation Iraqi Freedom, frozen out of positions of power by "de-Ba'athification," and having lost their prestigious jobs in the armed forces and internal security apparatus, Sunni tribal members have become the backbone of the insurgency.[15] The tribes provide money, manpower, intelligence, and assistance in escape and evasion after an attack.[16]

How do you locate insurgents within a tribal network? Social network analysis (SNA) provides valuable tools for understanding tribal organization and charting the links between tribes and insurgents. Social network analysis is the mapping and measuring of relationships and flows between people, groups, organizations, and computers or other knowledge-processing entities. These methods proved highly successful in capturing Saddam Hussein. The 104th Military Intelligence Battalion developed a social network program called "Mongo Link" to chart personal relationships using data from Iraqi informants, military patrols, electronic intercepts, and a range of other sources. One of the 62,500 connections led directly to Saddam.[17]

SNA resources, such as those under development at the Office of Naval Research, identify how to maximally disrupt a network by intervening with the key players and how to maximally spread ideas, misinformation, and materials by seeding key players. By using data about IIS members and their personal relationships within the Iraqi tribal network, SNA can describe terrorist networks, anticipate their actions, predict their targets, and deny the insurgents the ability to act.

Material

The insurgency's ability to construct IEDs depends on the availability of bombmaking materials, particularly explosives. The widespread availability of explosives in Iraq means the insurgency

will have the material resources to build IEDs for many years to come. Currently, approximately 80 tons of powerful conventional explosives (mainly HMX and RDX) are missing from the former Iraqi military base at Al Qaqaa. These explosives could produce bombs strong enough to shatter airplanes or tear apart buildings and are probably already in the hands of the insurgency.[18] The director of the Iraqi police unit that defuses and investigates IEDs notes: "One of the coalition's fatal mistakes was to allow the terrorists into army storerooms. . . . The terrorists took all the explosives they would ever need."[19]

Because the insurgency is connected to the Sunni tribal system, certain sheiks probably know exactly where these explosives are stored. The sheiks are vulnerable in two ways: through their love of honor and through their love of money. Although they cannot be pressured to divulge the whereabouts of explosives through appeals to honor, because they see us as infidel adversaries, they are vulnerable to financial rewards. In Iraq, there is an old saying that you cannot buy a tribe, but you can certainly hire one.[20]

The ability to hire tribal loyalty is an aspect of the patronage system in Iraq. Patrons at the top dispense riches and rewards downward. Sheiks, who stand at the penultimate point in the patronage system, have a social responsibility to distribute funds downward to subsheiks, who in turn distribute resources to tribal members. Thus, the sheiks always need money to keep subsheiks loyal to them. Coalition forces should use this patronage system to buy temporary tribal loyalty. In so doing, they should be careful not to offer money as a "reward" for divulging the whereabouts of explosives, but as a show of goodwill to the sheik, combined with a humble request for assistance.

Surrounding Population

The insurgency seeks two kinds of support from the civilian population: active and passive. Civilians provide active support when they transport, emplace, and detonate bombs. Insurgents gain civilian cooperation through coercion, threats, and financial remuneration. Civilians provide passive support by allowing insurgents to escape and "disappear" among the general population. In this, the insurgency has an advantage, because officials from the remnants of Saddam's intelligence and security services know who is loyal, where they live, and with whom they associate.[21]

Even when Iraqis are not sympathetic to the insurgency's aims or methods, the fear that the insurgents might retaliate against them deters them from supporting the interim Iraqi government. The key to winning the war against the insurgency is to separate the insurgents from the surrounding population. As Mao Tse-tung said, "The people are water, the Red Army are fish; without water, the fish will die."[22] Separation of the insurgents from the supporting population requires provisioning economic, social, and police security to the civilian population; establishing trust, especially through long-term relationships; and removing incentives for joining or supporting the insurgency. ***MR***

NOTES

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21. Ritter. According to Ritter, "A chilling realization overcame us when we entered a gymnasium-sized room and saw that the floors were painted in a giant map of the neighborhood. The streets were lined with stacked metallic 'in-box' trays—each stack represented a house or apartment building. A three-story building, for example, contained three levels of trays; each tray contained dossiers on each citizen living on that floor. Similar units existed in other neighborhoods, including those deemed 'anti-regime.'"
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TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT LESSONS LEARNED

Lieutenant Colonel Michael Eisenstadt, U.S. Army Reserve

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES—overt interactions between coalition military and foreign civilian personnel for the purpose of obtaining information, influencing behavior, or building an indigenous base of support for coalition objectives—have played a central role in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). They have involved efforts to reach out to village headmen (*mukhtars*), tribal sheikhs, Muslim clerics, elected officials and representatives, urban professionals, businessmen, retired military officers, and women.

Tribal engagement has played a particularly prominent role in OIF. This reflects the enduring strength of the tribes in many of Iraq's rural areas and some of its urban neighborhoods. And tribal engagement has been key to recent efforts to drive a wedge between tribally based Sunni Arab insurgents and Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in Anbar province and elsewhere, as well as efforts to undermine popular support for the Mahdi Army in largely Shi'ite neighborhoods and regions of the country.[1]

Because of the growing importance of tribal engagement for coalition strategy in Iraq, its potential role in future contingency operations, and its potential contribution to future phases of the War on Terrorism, it is vitally important for Army leaders at all levels to understand what history and the social sciences suggest, and what coalition forces in Iraq have learned, about how to engage and leverage tribes and tribal networks.

Anthropology 101 for Soldiers: What is a Tribe?

A tribe is a form of political identity based on common *claimed* descent.[2] It is not necessarily a lineage group, as tribal subunits (sections or subsections) may manufacture fictive kinship ties or alter their tribal identity or affiliations for political, economic, or security-related reasons.[3] Tribes may also be of mixed sectarian or ethnic composition. Thus, Iraq's Shammar and Jubur tribes have Sunni and Shi'ite branches, while Qashqa'i tribesmen in Iran are of Turkish, Persian, Arab, Kurdish, Lak, Luri, and Gypsy origin.[4]

There is no such thing as a "typical" tribe. Tribes may embody diverse kinship rules, structures, types of political authority, and lifestyles (sedentary, semi-nomadic, nomadic),[5] which may be influenced by security and economic conditions and government policies.[6] Thus, for instance, the Arab tribes of the Arabian Peninsula, Levant, and North Africa tended, at least traditionally, to be relatively egalitarian and non-hierarchical organizations lacking a well-developed leadership structure, while the Turkic tribes of the Central Asian steppes tended to be hierarchical, highly centralized organizations ruled by powerful chieftains.[7]

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PHOTO: An Iraqi tribal elder at a transfer of authority ceremony in Mosul, Iraq, 18 December 2006. (U.S. Army, SFC Robert Brogan)

Although Arab tribal ideology is relatively egalitarian, in reality, major disparities in status, power, and wealth exist within and between tribes.[8] Among settled tribes, sheikhly families and clans tend to form dominant lineages that are better off and more influential than other families and clans in the tribe.[9] Bedouin tribes of "common" origin are looked down on by those of "noble" origin, while smaller ("weak") settled tribes are often looked down on by larger ("strong") settled tribes.[10]

Tribal Values, Processes, and Organization[11]

Tribal values remain deeply ingrained in Iraqi society and have had a profound influence on Iraqi social mores and political culture. (This observation holds for much of the rest of the Arab world as well.) These values include the high premium put on in-group solidarity (*'asabiyya*), which finds expression in loyalty to the family, clan, and tribe,[12] coupled with a powerful desire to preserve the autonomy of the tribe vis-à-vis other tribes, non-tribal groups, and the authorities;[13] personal and group honor (*sharaf*); sexual honor (*'ird*), which pertains to the

chastity of the family's female members; manliness (*muruwwa)*, which finds expression in personal traits such as courage, loyalty, generosity, and hospitality; and pride in ancestry (*nasb*).[14]

Tribal processes include traditional forms of interpersonal and group conflict such as the blood feud, as well as mechanisms for regulating and resolving such conflicts: the cease-fire (*atwa*), blood money (*fasl*), and peace agreement (*sulha*).[15] These processes are conducted in accordance with tribal law (*'urf),* as opposed to *Sharia* (Islamic) or civil law, and are applied mainly in rural towns and villages and some urban areas, though the precise extent to which tribal law is applied in Iraq today is not clear.[16]

Organizationally, the tribes of Iraq consist of nested (vice hierarchically organized) kinship groups (see Table 1). There are thousands of clans, hundreds of tribes, and about two dozen tribal confederations in Iraq today, each with its own sheikh. (Saddam Hussein's regime officially recognized some 7,380 tribal sheikhs.)[17] The terms used to describe these kinship groups and the meanings ascribed to them may differ by tribe or region, however, and tribesmen frequently disagree about

Tribal Segment	Number of Adult Males	Residence Patterns	Kinship
Asha'ir/Qabila/Sillif (Tribal Confederation)	Thousands–hundreds of thousands	Local areas, provinces, or large regions, sometimes crossing international boundaries	No traceable kinship
Ashira (Tribe)	Several hundred–many thousands	Neighboring villages or local areas	Descent from a common claimed ancestor, or an ancestor who came to be associated with the tribe
Shabba/Hamula (Clan/Tribal Section)	Several score–several hundred	Same or nearby villages	Descent from common ancestor
Fakhdh (Lineage/Tribal Subsection)	Several tens–several hundred	Same village	Three-five generations or more; may be coterminous with or encompass the *khams*, the five-generation group that acts as a unit for purposes of avenging blood and honor
Bayt (Family/Household)	One or more	Same house	Nuclear/extended family

Source: Adapted from Robert A. Fernea. *Shaykh and Effendi: Changing Patterns of Authority Among the El Shabana of Southern Iraq* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 82-83, supplemented by information from Shakir Moustafa Salim, *Marsh Dwellers of the Euphrates Delta* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1962), 43-54.

NOTES: 1) The terms *fasila* and *hamula* are sometimes used in Iraq to refer to a subsection of a fakhdh, consisting of an extended family of several adult males, often living in the same housing cluster or compound; 2) Alternative designations for a hamula include *lahama* or *kishba*; 3) Other terms used in Iraq to refer to various types of tribal sections or subsections include *batn, fenda, firqa, 'imara, sadr, sha'b,* and *'unuq.*

Table 1. The Arab tribal system in Iraq.
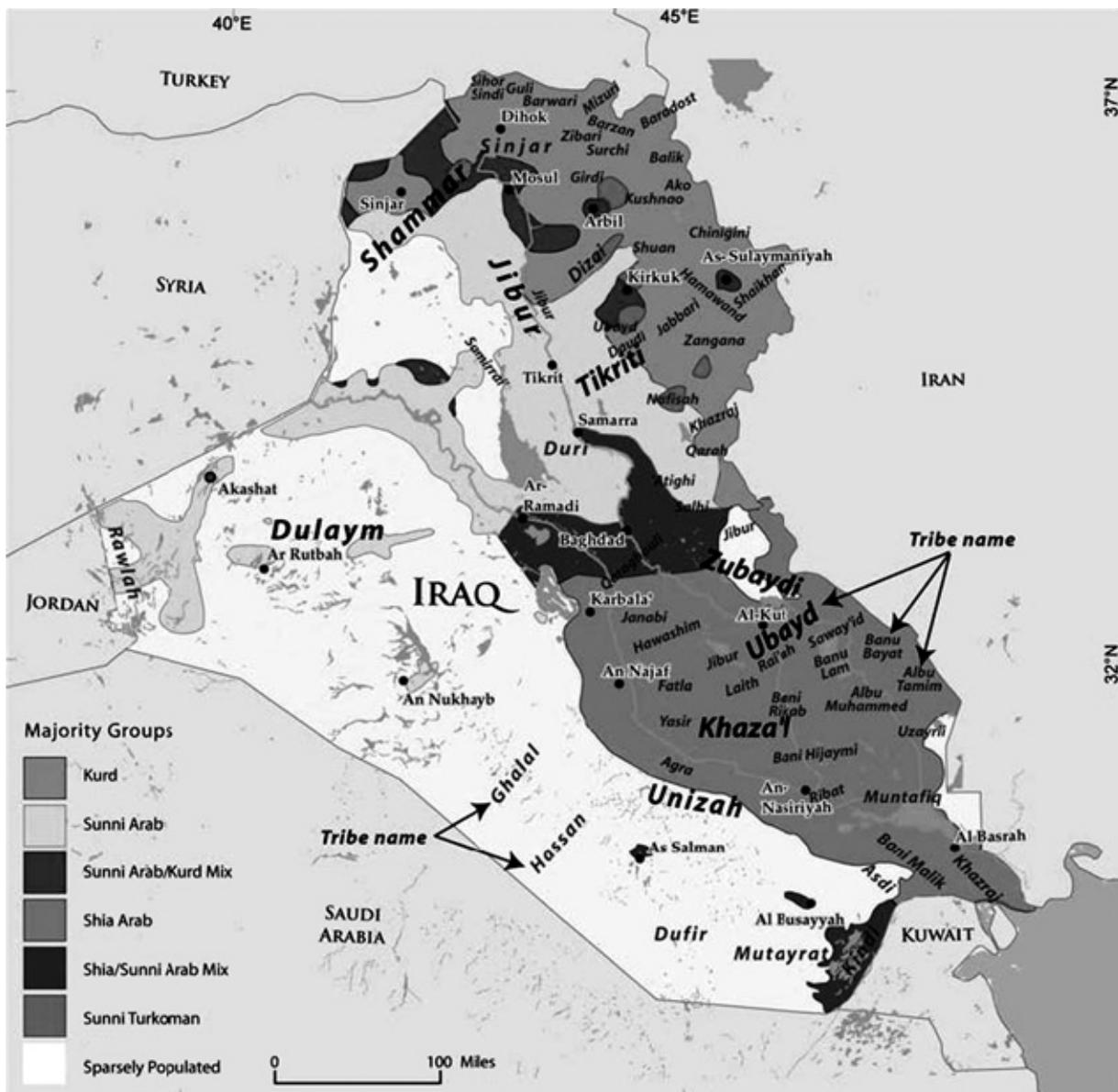
Distribution of ethnoreligious groups and tribes in Iraq.

tribal lineages, relationships, and nomenclature.[18] This complicates efforts by outsiders to understand tribal relationships, dynamics, and politics.

The collapse of central-government authority and the rise in political and sectarian violence in the wake of OIF has caused many Iraqis to fall back on the family, tribe, sect, or ethnic group for support in confronting the daily challenges of living in post-Saddam Iraq. As a result, tribal identities have assumed greater salience in Iraq in recent years. It would, however, be a mistake to overemphasize the role of the tribes or to regard the tribe as the central organizing principle of Iraqi society today. Large parts of Iraq are inhabited by detribalized or non-tribal populations, and tribal identity often competes with and is overshadowed by other forms of identity (sect, ethnicity, class, or ideological orientation). Moreover, the demise of the old regime has led to the rise of new social forces and actors in Iraq—particularly Islamist movements, militias, and parties, which are playing an increasingly important role in Iraqi politics. Recent events in Anbar province, however, demonstrate that under certain conditions, the tribes can still be decisive actors.

A detailed, up-to-date picture of the tribal system in Iraq does not exist—at least in the open literature. Much of what is known about it is based on a very

small number of studies done more than half a century ago, and information gaps frequently have to be filled by inferences drawn from more recent studies undertaken in neighboring Arab states. While there are a number of useful compendiums on the tribes of Iraq done by Iraqi scholars, these are largely catalogs of tribes, tribal sections, and their sheikhs that are in much need of updating.[19] Finally, there has been no systematic effort to assess the impact of violence and coalition and Iraqi Government policies on the tribes and the state of relations between tribal and non-tribal groups in Iraqi society.[20] This article will hopefully constitute a modest first step in this direction.

The Cultural Logic of Tribes and Tribalism

How do tribal values express themselves in the conduct of Iraqi tribesmen and tribes? Tribesmen are intensely jealous of their honor and status vis-à-vis others[21]—to the extent that honor has been described as the "tribal center of gravity." [22] The culture of honor and the implicit threat of sanction or violence if one's honor is impugned may be a vestige of the Arabs' Bedouin past—a means of ensuring individual and group survival when there is no higher authority around to keep the peace.

As a result, social relations between individuals and groups are characterized by a high degree of competition and conflict (usually nonviolent) over honor, status, and access to resources.[23] A well-known Bedouin Arab proverb expresses this tendency: "Me and my brothers against my cousins; me, my brothers, and my cousins against the stranger." Some see the extraordinary politeness, generosity, and hospitality that characterize social relations in Arab society as a means of curbing this propensity for competition and conflict.[24]

What accounts for this tendency? One explanation is that it is a consequence of endogamy (marriage within the lineage group), which may have started as a functional adaptation to desert life, but which remains a powerful factor in Arab society today. (In the desert, endogamy reinforced group cohesion, enabling the group to better counter external threats.)[25] Another explanation is that it is a characteristic feature of segmentary lineage groups, which tend to divide into fractious, competing lineages (families, households, and clans).[26]

In tribal society, family, clan, and tribal affilia-tions define one's identity and status. Consequently, all personal interactions potentially have a collective dimension. Marriage is not a personal choice, but a family affair, with implications for the status and standing of the entire family. Conflicts between individuals always have the potential to become conflicts between groups.

Relationships are central to tribal life. In an environment marked by competition and potential conflict, building and maintaining relationships is a way to reduce the circle of potential adversaries or enemies. This is why feuds, when not resolved by the payment of blood money, were traditionally resolved by the gifting of brides—to create ties that bind between formerly aggrieved parties.[27]

In Iraq, as elsewhere in the Arab world, tribes rarely provide the basis for sustained collective action. Tribal solidarity has been undermined by the dramatic socioeconomic changes of the past century. (The last tribal rebellion in Iraq was in 1936.) And even in the distant past, when inter-tribal wars occurred, it was unusual for all sections of a tribe to participate; subsections of warring tribes often remained on friendly terms or opted to sit the war out.[28]

The household (*bayt*) is the fundamental unit of social, economic, and political action in tribal society, while the tribal subsection (the *fakhdh* or its equivalent)—the lowest level of tribal organization at which individuals are still bound by blood and marriage—is normally the highest level at which sustained social action occurs, usually as a result of a blood feud.[29] On the rare occasion when tribe-wide cooperation does occur, it is generally in response to an extraordinary event, such as an outside threat or attack.[30]

Thus, normally contentious tribesmen will band together to fend off an external threat, then return to a state of competition and conflict once the threat subsides.[31] This may be the dynamic driving the "Anbar Awakening," wherein disparate tribes have coalesced to confront the growing influence and strength of AQI.

Another pattern that has repeated itself throughout Arab and Muslim history is that of the marginal man or transplanted outsider who unites otherwise fractious tribesmen under the banner of religion.[32] Examples include the Prophet Muhammad in Arabia in the 7th century; the Sanusis in Libya and the Sudanese Mahdi in the 19th century; and the Hashemites in the Hejaz, Jordan, and Iraq and

the Saudis in Arabia in the 20th century.[33] Today, this pattern is repeating itself in parts of Iraq with the emergence of religiously based movements and parties led by formerly obscure charismatic clerics (Muqtada al-Sadr and the Mahdi Army), former exiles ('Abd al-'Aziz al-Hakim and the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council), or foreigners (the late Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and AQI). However, many of the rank and file of these groups are neither of tribal origin nor particularly religious, consisting, to some extent, of opportunistic and criminal elements.[34]

Tribal identity has a territorial dimension as well.[35] Tribes are often identified with specific localities or regions: pastoral nomads with particular grazing areas, settled tribesmen with lands located near a particular village or town or in a particular region.[36] Thus, a description of tribal affiliation generally conveys information about both an individual's family and his geographic origins.[37]

For settled tribesmen, the tribal domain usually consists of a compact territory owned exclusively by members of the tribe. It is divided into plots owned by the various sections of the tribe, and surrounded by a belt of land partly owned by neighboring tribes or townsmen.[38] It is not clear how the tribal relocation and resettlement policies selectively pursued by Saddam Hussein's regime affected traditional tribal residential patterns.[39]

Among settled tribesmen, there is strong pressure not to alienate ancestral lands by marrying outside the tribe (lest land pass to another tribe through inheritance) or by selling land to a "foreigner" (i.e., a non-tribesman).[40] Infringement of a tribe's territorial domain by outsiders is often a cause for conflict. This has led to inter-tribal strife in post-Saddam Iraq, when the coalition has paid some tribes to secure oil pipelines in territory traditionally claimed by other tribes.[41]

Some tribes take the form of geographically dispersed networks. Tribes belonging to a large confederation may be spread over a vast area, even across international boundaries. Tribal ties are sometimes reinforced by marriage alliances and personal or business relationships, and may be mobilized in the pursuit of shared interests. Saddam Hussein's regime was particularly adept at mobilizing tribal networks and forging tribal alliances, which accounted in part for its durability.[42]

Sheikhs, Tribes, and Power

Historically, states and empires have dealt with sheikhs as local power brokers to help rule or administer their territories or overseas possessions, and they have often attempted to co-opt tribes as part of a strategy of "divide and rule." Coalition forces have likewise attempted to engage the sheikhs and their tribes as part of their effort to stabilize Iraq and defeat AQI. It is therefore important to understand the sources—and limits—of sheikhly authority and tribal influence.

Sheikhly authority. The sheikh traditionally performs a number of functions related to the inner life of the tribe and its relations with the non-tribal world and the authorities. The role of the sheikh has not changed all that much over the last century and a half, and sheikhs still fulfill a number of important functions. These may include—

● Ensuring security throughout the tribe's domain.

● Mediating and resolving internal disputes.

● Trying cases and imposing punishments in accordance with tribal law.

● Representing the tribe to the non-tribal world and the ruling authorities.

● Extending hospitality to guests of the tribe.

● Providing conscripts or tribal levies for the security forces.

● Preserving the autonomy of the tribe vis-à-vis other tribes and the authorities.

● Organizing and regulating smuggling, to the extent that the tribe engages in such activities.[43]

An individual may become a tribal sheikh in several ways. Sheikly status may be bestowed on the basis of an individual's character traits (e.g., generosity, wisdom, courage); inherited within "sheikhly families" (usually by the most capable son); wrested from others by force of personality, subterfuge, or even force of arms; and conferred by the state or the ruling authorities. Today, most sheikhs in Iraq belong to sheikhly families and have inherited their position.[44]

Among Bedouins, sheikhs traditionally led by consensus, functioning as a first among equals; their exercise of authority was generally based on their reading of popular sentiment in their tribe.[45] This is probably because Bedouin tribesmen could simply pick up and leave (taking all their worldly possessions with them) and join another section or tribe if they were unhappy with their sheikh.[46]

Among settled tribesmen, matters are more complicated. Various Iraqi governments (including Saddam Hussein's) cultivated the sheikhs as allies, contributing to their emergence as a privileged stratum of landowners and businessmen, whose fortunes have waxed and waned, depending on government policies and general economic conditions. This development, however, often transformed the relationship between sheikh and tribesman from one of formal equality to one marked by tension and resentment over the sheikh's status as a landowner, employer, or agent of the state. Nevertheless, elements of the traditional leadership model still apply: sheikhs cannot impose their will on their tribe and generally are constrained to act within the bounds of popular opinion. Conversely, their standing in the eyes of their tribesmen depends on their ability to secure the tribe's interests.

Tribal influence. In the distant past, tribal influence was reckoned in terms of the number of tribesmen under arms. Size mattered. Small ("weak") tribes were considered less powerful than large ("strong") tribes. Reputation also mattered. Some tribes were considered more warlike than others. Moreover, the influence of the tribes generally varied inversely with that of the state: the tribes were strong when the state was weak, and vice versa.

Today, as mentioned above, the tribal subsection is generally the highest level at which sustained social action occurs; tribes are no longer effective units of action. And the influence of a tribe is generally measured in terms of its sheikh's prestige among his own and other tribesmen, his ability to secure the interests of his tribe, and the willingness of a clan or tribe to exact retribution for slights to its honor or for harm visited upon its members.[47]

The tribal system today. The authority of Iraq's sheikhs and the influence of Iraq's tribes have varied greatly from place to place and over time, during the past century and a half.[48] Despite occasionally supportive government policies (e.g., during the Mandate, under the Monarchy, and during Saddam Hussein's rule), the impact of certain long-term socioeconomic trends such as urbanization, the decline of agriculture, the rise of the modern economy, and the emergence of alternative non-tribal forms of identity, have undermined sheikhly authority and tribal cohesion and influence. This is part of a broader trend also evident in other tribal societies

(e.g., Somalia, Afghanistan) where socioeconomic change, war, and resurgent Islamist movements have undermined tribal influence.[49]

The tribes experienced something of a comeback under Saddam Hussein. To strengthen central-government control, Hussein bought the loyalty and bolstered the authority of the sheikhs with cars, land, money, and arms, and he replaced sheikhs whose loyalties were suspect with more compliant ones.[50] (Because of this latter policy, identifying "authentic" sheikhs who enjoy legitimacy in the eyes of their tribesmen has been a challenge for coalition forces in post-Saddam Iraq.)[51]

Today, like most Iraqis, the sheikhs are consumed by the daily struggle to survive and to preserve what remains of their status and privileges. In some rural areas, they remain the dominant force. In this regard, former Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) official Rory Stewart's assessment of the sheikhs of Maysan province in southeastern Iraq, where he served from 2003-2004, is worth quoting at length.

> Most urban Iraqis perceived the sheikhs as illiterate, embarrassing, criminal, powerless anachronisms who should be given no official recognition. The sheikhs could no longer, despite their claims, raise ten thousand armed men—perhaps they never could. I never observed them raise more than a couple hundred. Their daily visits to our office to request building contracts, clinics, and the chance to form militias proved how short they were of money and patronage power . . . . They were [however] still the most powerful men in the rural areas, where about half the population remained; they owned much of the land, and agriculture was the only half-functioning element of the shattered economy. Almost every crime in the villages was tried and settled by the sheikhs . . . ."[52]

In other areas, the sheikhs find themselves jostling for power with the various Islamist militias and parties that are playing a growing role in the life of the country, and many are hard pressed to compete in an arena in which local political power increasingly comes from the barrel of a gun. Anthony Shadid of *The Washington Post* described this dynamic in a 2006 article about a visit with Sheikh Adnan Aidani in the village of Yusufan, near Basra. According to Shadid—

> There is a saying in southern Iraq today, "No one pays respect to the saint who won't mete out punishment." Violence is the cadence of the

country. To navigate the chaos, Aidani tries to draw on century-old traditions honed by Bedouins in the desert, rules built on honor, respect, and reciprocity. He relies on the intimacy of a village where every neighbor knows the other. But in the end, the threat of punishment secures respect for Aidani. That same threat gives power to militias, gangs, and criminals who now hold sway even in the streets of a village like Yusufan.

The sheikh has his authority, backed by what he says are the hundreds of armed men he can cull from the tribe's 12,000 members. But in a sign of his curtailed reach, he twice failed to get elected to parliament, and villagers sometimes treat him as just another player…When trouble arises, villagers say, they try to settle it themselves, then go to the sheik, representatives of the Islamic parties or the town's part-time cleric…Usually, they keep to themselves. With violence endemic, it is often heard that if it's not your neighbor, friend or family killed, you keep quiet.[53]

Still, other sheikhs have adjusted well to the new rules of the game, participating in Iraq's conflict economy and transforming themselves, for all practical purposes, into local warlords. Perhaps the best example of this new type of leader is Sheikh 'Abd al-Sattar Biza'i al-Rishawi of the Albu Risha tribe, leader of the Anbar Awakening. According to published reports, after the fall of Saddam Hussein, Sheikh 'Abd al-Sattar led a band of highwaymen who operated near Ramadi and worked as a facilitator for AQI on the side, providing its operatives with cars, safe houses, and local guides. But when the AQI operatives he was helping started working as highwaymen too—encroaching on his 'turf,' cutting into his profits, and then killing his father and several brothers—the relationship soured, prompting the sheikh to turn on AQI and to ally himself with coalition forces.[54]

Based on these few examples, the most that can be said with confidence is that sheikhly authority and tribal influence in Iraq today vary in accordance with local circumstances and conditions, and that sheikh and tribesman are increasingly subject to conflicting pressures. There are strong incentives for people to seek refuge in tribal identities as protection against pervasive violence and economic insecurity, and for sheikhs and tribesmen to hang together for purposes of survival.

At the same time, the sons of Iraq's tribes are well-represented in the many insurgent groups and

U.S. Army, SGT Curt Cashour

Sheikh 'Abd al-Sattar Biza'i al-Rishawi during a meeting with Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and LTG Ray Odierno, commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq, at Camp Ramadi, Iraq, 2 April 2007. Sittar helped spark the Anbar Awakening, a widespread rejection of Al-Qaeda by leaders of the province.

sectarian militias that are driving the violence that is tearing Iraqi society apart; consequently, sheikhs who are not involved with insurgent groups or militias must tread lightly vis-à-vis their tribesmen who are, lest they run afoul of the masked armed men who wield ultimate authority in Iraq today.

The Unfulfilled Promise of Tribal Alliances in Iraq

Some analysts and practitioners have argued that tribal alliances are key to defeating the Sunni Arab insurgency in Iraq.[55] While efforts to engage and leverage Iraq's tribes have yielded some successes, particularly in Anbar province, the overall effort has fallen short of expectations. It is not clear whether this is due to flaws in the coalition's tribal engagement policy, the security environment—which often makes engagement difficult and dangerous—or unrealistic assumptions about the influence of the sheikhs and the tribes.

Clearly, at various times the coalition has harbored unrealistic expectations regarding the influence of the sheikhs and the tribes. Early coalition engagement activities reflected this misconception—for instance, in the run-up to the battle for Fallujah, when coalition military officers met with sheikhs in the expectation that they would be able to tamp down insurgent violence racking the town. In *No True Glory: A Frontline Account of the Battle for Fallujah*, Bing West describes a number of such episodes:

General Abizaid…met with the sheikhs, demanding that they show leadership and stop the violence. There were as many attacks on the outskirts of Fallujah, where the sheikhs had power, as inside the city, where the clerics dominated…. In a separate meeting with the sheikhs, Major General Charles H. Swannack, commander of the 82nd [Airborne Division], was equally forceful. "I am not going to tolerate these attacks anymore," he said. "I know the sheikhs have the ability to control their tribes." The sheikhs protested that the 82nd didn't appreciate the limits of their power. Threatening them would do no good. Improvement projects made no difference to the men with the guns. In the eyes of the sheikhs, power had shifted from them to the young clerics in Fallujah preaching that America was waging a war against Islam and was bringing in Jews to rule Iraq.[56]

This tension between tribal elements and Islamists was also evident in largely Shi'ite areas, where newly empowered Sadrists challenged the established power of the tribes. According to Mark Etherington, a former CPA official who served in Wasit Province in south-central Iraq in 2003-2004:

As the threat from Moqtada al-Sadr's followers increased and the death threats were made against CPA employees, the tribes increasingly instructed "their" interpreters to leave our employ, which many of them did immediately. This might seem a curious moral retreat, given the tribes' much-vaunted resistance to external interference in their affairs; actually it merely shows the power that Sadr's followers were able to wield over ordinary Iraqis in combining Islam with nationalism. If one concluded from this phenomenon that the tribes were actually weaker than they appeared, a recent CPA poll appeared to buttress the idea; of 1,531 people in five Iraqi cities only 1 per cent of respondents said that they would vote for a tribal party; 4.8 per cent that they would vote for a party of the same tribe but 95.2 per cent that they would not; and 98.6 per cent that they would not comply if ordered to vote in a particular manner by a tribal chief. Conversely, one might as well say that the cities were not the best of places to canvass tribal loyalty given their overwhelmingly rural roots.[57]

Nevertheless, the coalition's engagement efforts have yielded a number of modest but important benefits. Because the sheikhs are generally well connected and plugged into various tribal and non-tribal networks (essential if they are to look after the interests of their tribe), they have generally proven useful as sources of information and advice and as vectors of influence among their tribesmen. Sheikhs have assisted, too, in the pursuit and apprehension of insurgents and former regime officials, the screening of detainees for insurgent ties, and the recovery of kidnapping victims (such as journalist Jill Carroll).[58] Moreover, efforts to work with tribal sheikhs to reduce insurgent activity in their tribal areas of influence, in return for various *quid pro quos* (e.g., construction contracts, reconstruction projects, the freeing of detainees), have often yielded impressive results—most notably a significant reduction in the lethality and number of attacks on coalition forces (frequently by 50 percent or more).

On the down side, tribal engagement has not brought about a total halt in attacks in tribal areas of influence.[59] It is not clear whether this is due to the sheikhs' inability to influence younger fighters—who are heavily represented in the ranks of the insurgents, or certain sections or subsections of their tribe.[60]

Furthermore, efforts to employ tribes to protect strategic infrastructure such as oil pipelines and electrical power lines have failed. (See inset, "Freakonomics on the Tigris.") And until recently, sheikhs have rarely delivered on promises to provide tribal levies for anti-AQI militias such as the "Desert Protectors" in Husaybah and the Albu Nimr police force in al-Furat or to provide large numbers of conscripts for the Iraqi Security Forces.[61] This is particularly telling, given the high rates of unemployment in Iraq today.

The success of the tribally based Anbar Awakening, which has reportedly recruited some 12,000 volunteers for local police forces this year, represents a sea change in coalition engagement efforts.[62] It has revived hopes that tribal engagement can turn the tide against the Sunni Arab insurgency and

Freakonomics on the Tigris:
The Hidden (Tribal) Dimension of Infrastructure Protection

In their best-selling book *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Investigates the Hidden Side of Everything*, Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner argue that understanding the role of incentives "is the key to solving just about any riddle" pertaining to human behavior and to understanding that very often "things aren't quite what they seem."[63] Might Freakonomics help answer why the coalition has been unsuccessful at using Iraqi tribes to secure oil pipelines and electrical power lines running through their tribal domains?

Some background: due to the CPA's decision to dissolve the Iraqi Army and the subsequent lack of trained Iraqi security personnel, the coalition has on a number of occasions paid tribes to secure strategic infrastructure in parts of Iraq, particularly oil pipelines and electrical power lines. However, attacks on the pipelines and power lines have continued, to the point that the vital Baiji-Kirkuk oil pipeline and sections of the national electrical grid have been shut down for extended periods. What is going on?

U.S. Government assessments have tended to focus on flaws in the incentive structure—an answer that could have been lifted straight from the pages of *Freakonomics*. According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), "the Ministry of Electricity contracts with tribal chiefs, paying them about $60-$100 per kilometer to protect transmission lines running through their areas. However, IRMO [Iraq Reconstruction Management Office] officials reported that the protection system is flawed and encourages corruption. According to U.S. and UN Development Program officials, some tribes that are paid to protect transmission lines are also selling materials from downed lines and extracting tariffs for access to repair the lines. IRMO officials stated that they want the Ministry of Electricity to change the system so that tribes are only paid when the lines remain operational for a reasonable period of time."[64]

The congressionally mandated Iraq Study Group (ISG) report echoed these findings, recommending that coalition forces improve pipeline security "by paying local tribes solely on the basis of throughput (rather than fixed amounts)."[65]

One problem with the GAO and ISG model for incentivizing the tribes is that it fails to explain how to prevent the tribes from maximizing their profits by taking money from both the insurgents and the coalition (tolerating a certain level of violence against the pipelines or power lines, though not enough to greatly reduce throughput). Clearly, a more complex model is called for here, one that recognizes that the tribes stand to make money by playing both sides of the game, and that they might not be the only relevant actors.

Moreover, the GAO/ISG solution fails to account for intra- and inter-tribal dynamics and politics and relations between tribal and non-tribal groups. There is good reason to believe that some, if not many, of the attacks on oil pipelines and electrical power lines have been undertaken by the same groups being paid to protect them. Why would they do this? Perhaps to—

- Justify their jobs.
- Extort more money from the coalition.
- Maximize profits and hedge their bets by working with both the insurgents and the coalition.
- Protest possible inequities in the distribution of funds within the tribe by their sheikh.

It is also possible that tribes not on the payroll are involved in some attacks, either to drum up business for themselves by creating a security problem that they then offer to solve, or to protest infringement of their traditional tribal domains by tribes on the coalition payroll.

In fact, it is likely that all of these factors have been in play at one time or another, and that a variety of actors—smugglers, insurgents, criminal gangs, and corrupt security officials—have also been involved. Interestingly, those Iraqis and coalition personnel who deal with this issue on a daily basis understand the complexity of the problem, even if some in Washington do not.[66] The solution to the challenge of employing tribes for infrastructure protection is not simply a matter of proper incentives; it is also a matter of understanding tribal dynamics and politics in the areas of concern. Indeed, things are *not* always what they seem.

perhaps undermine popular support for the Mahdi Army.[67] As part of this effort, the coalition has brokered a number of informal cease-fire agreements with local Sunni insurgent groups, freed detainees after extracting good-conduct pledges from tribal sheikhs, and hired tribal militias and their sheikhs as "security contractors."[68]

Several factors likely account for the Anbar Awakening, including popular revulsion against the ideology and methods of AQI, the threat that AQI poses to the autonomy of the tribes and their way of life, and the damage that AQI has done to the local economy. As General David Petraeus recently noted—perhaps half facetiously—the sheikhs in Anbar province "all have a truck company, they all have a construction company and they all have an import-export business," and the havoc that AQI has wreaked was bad for business.[69]

It remains to be seen, however, whether the Anbar Awakening can hold together, whether it will continue to work with coalition forces or eventually turn on them, whether successes in Anbar can be replicated elsewhere, or whether coalition efforts to work with the tribes and arm tribal militias are in fact paving the way for an even more violent civil war.[70]

Lessons Learned

A recent study of 1st Cavalry Division operations in Baghdad during its OIF II rotation (April 2004-February 2005) concluded that—

● Nonlethal means were the most effective method to defeat the enemy.

● Spending time with local leaders and conducting information operations and civil-military operations were the most effective ways to influence the battle.

● Successful commanders used military operations to shape the environment, but engaged the civilian population to achieve success.[71]

Despite such acknowledgements of the importance of engagement and the fact that engagement activities in Iraq frequently consume between 20 to 50 percent of a commander's time, it is remarkable how little attention has been devoted to this subject in the military professional literature.[72] Hopefully, this article will spur greater interest in what is probably the most important coalition line of operation in Iraq today.

The following engagement lessons learned—with particular emphasis on the special challenges of tribal engagement—are drawn from a review of

the military professional literature, journalistic dispatches, individual and group interviews with civilian and military personnel who have served in Iraq, and the author's own experiences.[73]

Cultural sensitivity, "hearts and minds," and shared interests. Because of the complexity of the operational environment in Iraq, particularly in tribal areas, missteps are inevitable—even by experienced individuals.[74] The local population will usually forgive such missteps if they have a vital interest in cooperating with the coalition and believe coalition personnel have fundamentally good intentions. Moreover, while winning "hearts and minds" may not be achievable in much of Iraq, neither is it necessary for success. What is important is for coalition forces to convince Iraqis that they have a shared interest in working together to achieve common goals.[75]

Building relationships. In Iraq, as elsewhere in the Arab world, persons are more trusted than institutions.[76] Personal relationships are the basis of effective professional partnerships, and a *sine qua non* for effective counterinsurgency operations.[77] These relationships, however, can only be established and maintained by engaging the civilian population.

Relationships take time to build and need constant tending.[78] "Face time" with locals is critical, even if nothing tangible comes of some meetings, since time together is an investment in a relationship whose benefits may not be immediately evident. In addition, such meetings might discourage fence sitters from going over to the insurgents.

A little knowledge of Arabic and Islam pays huge dividends, for it demonstrates the kind of respect for the local population and their traditions that helps establish rapport and build relationships. And contrary to the conventional wisdom, discussions about politics and religion need not be off-limits, although judgment and discretion are advised when dealing with such matters.[79]

Credibility is priceless; once destroyed, it is very hard to reestablish. Accordingly, it is vital to make good on promises and to avoid making commitments that cannot be kept. Broken promises undermine efforts to establish rapport and build the relationships that are essential to success.[80]

For these reasons, coalition forces should, to the extent possible, avoid practices that disrupt relationships with the local population, such as mid-tour realignments of unit boundaries or areas of operation

Military Implications of Tribal Land Tenure Practices

While a detailed discussion of how land is owned and inherited among tribal groups in rural Iraq is beyond the scope of this article, it is important to recognize the military value of such cultural knowledge. This point was driven home in a recent email from 1st Lieutenant Brendan Hagan of the 82d Airborne Division to an Army buddy, in which he described how, after stumbling across a weapons cache, his unit used knowledge of tribal land ownership patterns to discover additional weapons caches:

> One way we've used simple info to get great results was with a [weapons] cache we found in an unused orchard. We stumbled onto the largest cache ever found in our division's history, by accident. But we used simple reasoning to lead us to another of equal size. When we found the first one we grabbed the local sub-sheik and showed him what was within his area of influence, then used him to tell us who owned every piece of land from the river to a major road in the region. It turned out that the land the cache was on and numerous other tracks [sic] of land were owned by a father and series of brothers. We used this info to search other orchards owned by the brothers and found a second large cache. Seems simple, but most people would not have asked who owned all the adjacent land and put the family connections together. This allowed us to refine our searches to specific fields and orchards.[81]

The details of this account are consistent with what is known about land ownership in lineage-based (clan- or tribe-based) communities in Iraq and the Levant. Among the practical consequences of Islamic inheritance rules is that individuals frequently own multiple parcels of land scattered throughout the tribal domain. Moreover, land is often owned jointly by siblings (usually brothers), paternal cousins, or entire tribal subsections, to prevent the division of heritable land holdings into ever smaller, economically non-viable parcels among an ever-growing number of heirs.[82]

Another feature of the Iraqi rural landscape that may be militarily significant concerns the relationship between patterns of field cultivation and social relations among cultivators. Agricultural land in many parts of Iraq is divided into strip parcels (parallel strips of land worked by different cultivators). This is a widespread practice in the developing world.[83] A "virtual tour" of Iraq using Google Earth reveals that strip parcels are found in many villages around the country.[84]

Research of field patterns in iron-age Northern Europe and in contemporary East Africa has shown that strip parcels are generally associated with lineage-based communities. In such communities, the allocation of the strips often mirrors the family tree of the land-owning group and reflects the genealogical ranking of its members: older sons own strips of land (or sections of the family's strip of land) that are closer to the family dwelling than those owned by younger sons, while owners of strips on the right, when viewed from the dwelling, are senior to owners of strips on the left. Adjacent strips of land are generally owned by brothers, and adjacent plots of land are often owned by cousins (unless sold to an outsider).[85] Further investigation is required to determine whether such practices are followed in Iraq. If so, it may prove to be yet another bit of cultural knowledge that can help coalition forces locate insurgent weapons caches, and aid coalition military operations in Iraq.
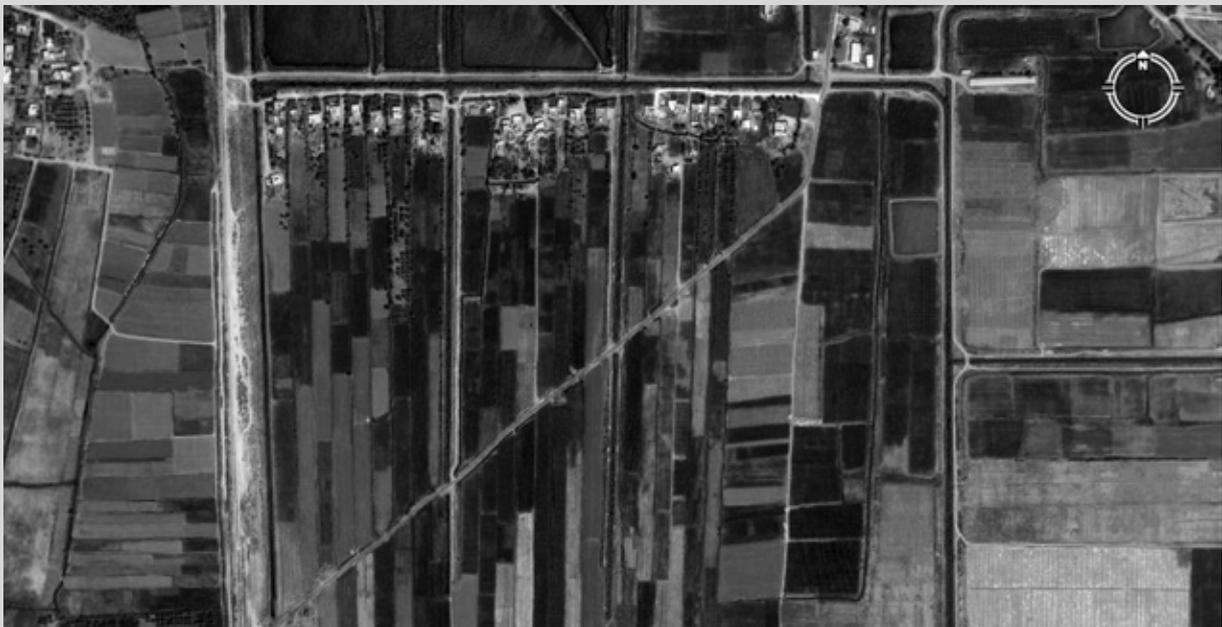
A recent aerial view of strip fields in a village near Yusufiya, central Iraq.

and gaps during unit rotations that preclude incumbent coalition personnel from introducing their successors to their Iraqi partners.

Engagement as a military activity. Engagement planning at the lower tactical echelons—which are the echelons that interact most intensively with the civilian population—is often *ad hoc,* highly informal, and done "on the fly" by the commander with little if any formal staff input. Engagement, however, is too important to be done in such a manner, and should be approached like any other essential military activity.

There should be a formal engagement planning process, with input from all relevant staff elements, to identify engagement targets, assess their motivations and interests, determine engagement goals, schedule meetings, and set agendas. Commanders and staff should hold after-action reviews to evaluate the outcomes of meetings and plan for and prepare follow-on activities.

Engagement planning would probably benefit from the creation of small, dedicated engagement cells at the battalion and brigade combat team levels, to organize and oversee the aforementioned activities. The Army's new human terrain teams and the Department of State's new embedded provincial reconstruction teams will likely bring additional assets to bear on the problem as well.[86]

Cultivating "native informants." Very few non-natives have the knowledge and expertise needed to navigate Iraqi tribal politics. While book knowledge is extremely valuable, it only goes so far. Thus, it is essential to cultivate a cadre of "native informants" who are intimately familiar with local history, personalities, and tribal politics. Translators generally serve in this role, although it is important to know how the local population perceives these individuals. A translator whom the locals look upon with suspicion because of his family or tribal background can be more of a hindrance than a help.

A top-down, interagency-led process. Because tribes often span unit boundaries and international borders, and because tribal leaders may interact with tactical as well as operational-level commanders, coalition military and civilian organizations could inadvertently find themselves working at cross-purposes.[87] Accordingly, tribal engagement should be a top-down, interagency-led process. Such an approach would help to—

● Develop a single, synchronized tribal engagement strategy that spans unit boundaries, military echelons, and international borders.

● Deconflict, and ensure synergies among, multiple engagement efforts.

● Develop a unified IO message for engagement inside and outside of Iraq.

● Coordinate kinetic targeting of high-value individuals and planned or ongoing tribal engagement efforts to ensure that former efforts do not hinder or harm the latter.

A top-down approach would also ensure that tribal engagement receives the attention and emphasis it merits, and that tactical units receive the support required to succeed in this important mission.

Understanding limitations in sheikhly authority and tribal influence. Power relationships are in flux in post-Saddam Iraq, and sheikhly authority and tribal influence may vary from place to place, depending on local conditions. Coalition forces have sometimes had unrealistic expectations concerning the authority of the sheikhs and the influence of the tribes. Nonetheless, tribal engagement has yielded important successes in places such as Anbar province, and it remains a key part of coalition strategy in Iraq.

Because of their connections, sheikhs are useful sources of information, insight, and advice. They can also influence their tribesmen, although their ability to do so often depends on their ability to dispense patronage (i.e., money, jobs, and contracts), and to otherwise secure the interests of their tribe. They generally have the greatest influence among members of their own subsection or section and their own generational cohort; thus, while they may be able to influence many of their tribesmen, they usually cannot influence them all, nor do they "control" their tribe. Additionally, just as a sheikh who agrees to work with the coalition may not be able to bring around all his tribesmen, the presence of insurgents among his tribe does not necessarily mean that he surreptitiously supports the insurgent cause—although he may hedge his bets by turning a blind eye toward insurgent activities he is aware of.

Given these limitations, while it is not unreasonable to demand 100-percent effort from the sheikhs in return for patronage and assistance, it is unrealistic to expect 100-percent results. Most sheikhs are just as vulnerable to intimidation and terror as any other Iraqi; scores, if not hundreds of sheikhs have been killed by insurgents and terrorists.

Tailored engagement strategies. Tribal engagement strategies should account for local variations in sheikhly authority and tribal influence. And because there are thousands of clans, hundreds of tribes, and about two dozen tribal confederations in Iraq, each with its own sheikh, tribal engagement is a potentially time-consuming activity. Mass meetings and "sheikhfests" may help, but these are not always appropriate—the more prominent sheikhs at these meetings will often overshadow lower- and mid-level sheikhs, who may feel slighted. On the other hand, it might not be realistic to engage all the sheikhs in a particular area of operations; here, the commander's engagement plan will determine who gets special attention.[88]

Because all tribal power is local, there is no substitute for engaging lower- and mid-level sheikhs who head tribal subsections and sections. However, engaging more prominent tribal or paramount sheikhs (of tribal confederations) may sometimes aid this effort, and may be useful for both symbolic and substantive reasons. Each tribe will require a different approach based on a detailed understanding of local conditions and the tribe's history and politics. And that kind of knowledge can only be obtained by spending time on the ground with Iraqis.

Avoiding the pitfalls of tribal politics. Working with tribes poses special challenges. Tribesmen are intensely status conscious and competitive, and rivalry and intrigue often characterize tribal politics. Thus, tribal engagement often requires a careful balancing act among sheikhs, tribes, and non-tribal groups to avoid creating or aggravating rivalries or conflicts.

There are a number of specific pitfalls associated with tribal politics:

● *Errors of ignorance.* It is easy to err due to a lack of knowledge of local and tribal history and politics. Coalition forces initially dealt with a number of sheikhs who had been appointed to their positions by the former regime and therefore lacked legitimacy in the eyes of their tribesmen. Likewise, the coalition initially appointed an unpopular sheikh as governor of Basra, a large city with a largely non-tribal population. These actions created resentment and undermined coalition credibility.[89] It is therefore essential to become intimately familiar with the history and politics of the tribes in one's area of operations and their relationships with other tribes, non-tribal elements, and the authorities, in order to avoid such missteps.

● *Rivalries and feuds.* Establishing a close relationship with a particular sheikh or tribe may often be necessary, but it may entail the risk of entanglement in their rivalries and feuds.[90] While it is usually best to stay above such frays, such situations can offer coalition personnel the opportunity to mediate local conflicts, thereby enhancing local security and the coalition's standing in the eyes of the local population.[91] Furthermore, in some circumstances it may be possible to use a relationship with one sheikh or tribe to entice a rival sheikh or tribe to work more closely with coalition forces or the local government.

● *Corruption and nepotism.* Funneling money to tribes through their sheikhs is one way to leverage tribal networks, but it can sometimes cause as many problems as it solves. Sheikhs may not disseminate funds among their tribesmen in an equitable manner, thus engendering resentment against the sheikh and the coalition. Intervening to ensure a more equitable distribution of funds—if the issue has become a problem—is risky, and requires an intimate knowledge of the politics of the tribe and a deft diplomatic touch. But if done right, intervention can help coalition commanders deepen their base of support among the tribesmen.[92]

● *Tribal vendettas.* Humiliating, injuring, or killing a tribesman can embroil the coalition in a vendetta with his family or relatives, thereby widening the circle of violence. There are many anecdotal reports about former fence sitters in Iraq opting to join the insurgency because of incidents involving coalition forces and family members or relatives. This only underscores the especially high cost of not strictly adhering to the rules of engagement in tribal areas or in societies founded on tribal values.

Tribal engagement and long-term U.S. interests. For a time after the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime in 2003, there was an ongoing debate among coalition officials about the desirability of working with the tribes. Some argued that wherever possible, the tribes should be leveraged to defeat the insurgency and create stability. Others argued that the tribes are an anachronism and an obstacle to the long-term goal of building democracy in Iraq.[93]

With the coalition now engaging the tribes as a matter of necessity, the debate has been overtaken by events. The concerns that drove the original debate, however, remain salient. The coalition cannot afford to forego the potential benefits of tribal engagement:

a modicum of stability and the weakening of AQI in large parts of Iraq. But neither can it afford to ignore the possible long-term costs of this policy: the strengthening of the tribes and tribal militias (many of which include former insurgents) at the expense of the eventual development of broad-based civil society and governmental institutions.

The challenge is to strike a balance between these two competing objectives. Tribal engagement should be part of a broader effort to engage multiple sectors of Iraqi society in order to support and strengthen not just the tribes, but civil society and governmental institutions that bring Iraqis of varied backgrounds together to work toward common goals.

Conclusions

Engagement is probably the most important coalition line of operation in Iraq today. If coalition forces eventually achieve some degree of success in stabilizing Iraq, it will be in large part because they succeeded in engaging the civilian population and leveraging Iraq's tribes and tribal networks.

Tribal engagement, however, poses unique challenges deriving from the special demands of interacting with tribal communities whose norms, values, and forms of social organization diverge, in many ways, from those of non-tribal society. To succeed in this environment, it helps to have more than just a passing familiarity with the historical and social sciences literature on tribes and tribalism in Iraq and the Arab world. But ultimately there is no substitute for time on the ground with Iraqis, learning through dialog and observation about the history, inner life, and politics of the tribes of Iraq, and establishing through trial and error what engagement techniques do and do not work.

Finally, while tribal engagement lessons learned in Iraq may apply elsewhere, this should not be assumed to be the case. Every tribal society is unique in its history, its internal dynamics and politics, and its relations with the outside world. Further research is required in Iraq and elsewhere in order to better understand the nature of this human diversity and its implications for future tribal engagement efforts. **MR**

Cultural Knowledge: "A Greater Security Than Firearms"

Czech explorer and Orientalist Alois Musil (1868-1944) is famous for his books about his travels in the Arabian Peninsula during the first decades of the 20th century. Musil faced many dangers on his journeys, not least from Bedouin raiders bent on booty and plunder who would not have thought twice about taking the life of a foreigner in the vast, empty expanses of the desert.

To defend against this threat, Musil made sure to ingratiate himself with the sheikhs of key tribes along his route of travel, and to procure from them the services of a local guide and a written pledge of safe passage through their tribal domains, which he could invoke when threatened.[94]

The guides were often able to distinguish "friendly" from hostile raiding parties at a distance through their knowledge of local personalities and customs, enabling Musil to quickly determine what kind of approach was appropriate for dealing with the raiders.[95]

When attacked by a raiding party from a "friendly" tribe (that of a sheikh who had promised him safe passage or of an allied tribe), Musil would invoke the local sheikh's name and remind the raiders that

violation of a sheikh's pledge of safe passage would dishonor the sheikh and could lead to the violator's expulsion from the tribe.[96] If this did not work or if the raiding party was from a hostile tribe, Musil would warn them that his sponsor would be honor-bound to seek revenge if any members of his party were harmed, or stolen property was not returned.[97]

Nonetheless, travel in the desert remained dangerous, even for as savvy a traveler as Musil, for as he was once warned by a friendly sheikh, there were always brigands and outlaw tribes that would not honor a pledge of safe passage.[98]

Musil's experience demonstrates the importance of knowing the cultural "rules of the road," of seeking out knowledgeable and dependable locals as guides, and of surviving by one's wits rather than by force of arms.

Musil's ability to talk his way out of many difficult situations led the anthropologist Louise Sweet to observe that, when confronted with a Bedouin raiding party, Musil's "shrewd use of the rules of intertribal relations was a greater security than firearms."[99] Or to put it in the modern Soldier's vernacular: cultural knowledge is the ultimate in force protection.

NOTES

1. LTC Kurt Wheeler, "Good News in Al Anbar?" *Marine Corps Gazette*, April 2007, 36-40; Sean D. Naylor, "Jumping the Fence: Tribal 'Awakening' Brings Troops—and Hurdles," *Army Times*, 4 June 2007, 8-11.

2. Dale F. Eickelman, *The Middle East: An Anthropological Approach* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989), 126-150; Charles F. Swagman, "Tribe and Politics: An Example from Highland Yemen," *Journal of Anthropological Research*, Vol. 44, No. 3, Autumn 1988, 251-261. In the Middle East, Arab, Kurdish, and Turkmen tribes are organized along claimed patrilineal (male) lines of descent; tribes elsewhere may be organized along claimed patrilineal, matrilineal (female), or cognatic (male and female) lines of descent. Marshall D. Sahlins, *Tribesmen* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1968), 49.

3. In late 18th- and early 19th-century Iraq, townsmen often joined the nearest tribe for purposes of protection. Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 73. Likewise, a study of the Beni Isad tribe in the early 1950s found that many lineages and clans were of "foreign" origin (i.e., they were not original members of the tribe). The usual reasons given for leaving one tribe for another were disputes over land or compensation or a desire for better protection. Shakir Moustafa Salim, *Marsh Dwellers of the Euphrates Delta* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1962), 45.

4. Batatu, 41; Lois Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 11, 23, 204.

5. Sahlins, 20-27, 48-55.

6. Samira Haj, "The Problems of Tribalism: The Case of Nineteenth-Century Iraqi History," *Social History* 16, no. 1 (January 1991): 49-52.

7. Charles Lindholm, "Kinship Structure and Political Authority: The Middle East and Central Asia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 28, no. 2 (April 1986): 334-355.

8. Salim, 44; Robert A. Fernea, *Shaykh and Effendi: Changing Patterns of Authority Among the El Shabana of Southern Iraq* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 103-105.

9. Fernea, 101-104, 105-110; Salim, 14-15, 27-29.

10. The traditional tribal status hierarchy among the Bedouin is, in descending order of rank: camel herders, sheep herders, farmers, marsh dwellers, tinkers/smiths, and gypsy tribes. Batatu, 68-70; John Glubb, *Arabian Adventures: Ten Years of Joyful Service* (London: Cassell, 1978), 37, 51.

11. For the distinctions between tribal values, processes, and organization, see Richard T. Antoun, "Civil Society, Tribal Process, And Change in Jordan: An Anthropological View," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, No. 32 (2000), 441-463.

12. As a former cavalry squadron commander who served in Iraq observed, "First and foremost, tribes will protect their own. Individuals willing to provide information about insurgents or criminals would do so about members of other tribes, but never about members of their own." Lieutenant Colonel Ross A. Brown, "Commander's Assessment: South Baghdad," *Military Review* (January-February 2007): 29.

13. William Lancaster, *The Rwala Bedouin Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 128-131.

14. Fernea, *Sheikh and Effendi*, 77; Amatzia Baram, "Victory in Iraq, One Tribe at a Time," *New York Times*, 28 October 2003, A25.

15. For more on the institution of the blood feud and mechanisms for regulating and resolving such conflicts, see Joseph Ginat, *Blood Disputes Among Bedouin and Rural Arabs in Israel: Revenge, Mediation, Outcasting and Family Honor* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987). For more on tribal warfare, see Montgomery McFate, "The 'Memory of War': Tribes and the Legitimate Use of Force in Iraq," in Jeffrey H. Norwitz (ed.) *Armed Groups: Studies in National Security, Counterterrorism, and Counterinsurgency*, forthcoming.

16. Former deputy director of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) Office of Provincial Outreach LTC Alan King claims that "the Iraqi people spoke often of tribal law, but I only witnessed its application in the most remote and rural areas of the country." By contrast, former British CPA official Rory Stewart noted, "Almost every crime in the villages [in southern Iraq] was tried and settled by the sheikhs." R. Alan King, *Twice Armed: An American Soldier's Battle for Hearts and Minds in Iraq* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2006), 178; Rory Stewart, *The Prince of the Marshes* (Orlando: Harcourt Books, 2006), 219-220.

17. King, 17.

18. This is true for both Arab and Kurdish tribes in Iraq. Fernea, 14; Salim, 44; Hosham Dawood, "The 'State-ization' of the Tribe and the Tribalization of the State: the Case of Iraq," in Faleh A. Jabar and Hosham Dawood, *Tribes and Power: Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Middle East* (London: Saqi, 2003), 115-116, 133-134; and Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London: Zed Books, 1992), 59-64.

19. See, for instance: 'Abbas al-'Azzawi, *'Asha'ir al-'Iraq* (The Tribes of Iraq) (Baghdad, 1937), three volumes; 'Abd al-Jalil al-Tahir, *al-Asha'ir al-'Iraqiyya* (The Tribes of Iraq) (Baghdad, 1972); 'Ali al-Wardi, *Lamahat Ijtima'iyya min Tarikh al-Iraq al-Hadith* (Social Aspects of the Modern History of Iraq), (Baghdad, 1972), six volumes; Thamir 'Abd al-Hassan al-'Amiri, *Mawsu'at al-'Asha'ir al-'Iraqiyya* (The Encyclopedia of Iraqi Tribes) (Baghdad, 1992-1995), nine volumes; and 'Abed 'Awn al-Rawdan, *Mawsu'at 'Asha'ir al-'Iraq: Tarikh, Ansab, Rijalat, Ma'athir* (Encyclopedia of the Tribes of Iraq: History, Lineage, Personalities, and Exploits) (Amman: Al-Ahliyya Publishing, 2003), two volumes.

20. It is interesting to note that during the occupation and Mandate (1914-1932), the British never conducted a detailed survey of the land and peoples of the area that was to become the state of Iraq. The resultant lack of empirical data was a major hindrance to the effective administration of these territories and to the formulation of effective tribal policies by the British, and it led to policies based on culturally grounded preconceptions and stereotypes about the nature of Iraqi society. Toby Dodge, *Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), xi, 43, 63.

21. King, 182-183. King relates an episode in which he was made an "honorary sheikh" by one of the larger tribes of Iraq. He states that "when word spread among the sheiks that I had accepted this honor, many expressed their animosity. One prominent sheik bluntly said to me, 'You are like a sheik-of-sheiks in this country. Why would you accept to be identified with one specific tribe over the rest?'"

22. SGT Christopher Alexander, CPT Charles Kyle, MAJ William S. McCallister, "The Iraqi Insurgent Movement," Unpublished Paper, 14 November 2003, 19-20. In one recent episode, the sheikh of the Albu Alwan tribe near Ramadi complained to a U.S. commander about a rival tribe's domination of the local council, exclaiming, "We are a bigger tribe than they are, so how can a majority be ruled by a minority? Where is democracy?" Yaroslav Trofimov, "To Find Peace in Sunni Triangle, Talk to the Sheiks," *The Wall Street Journal*, 5 November 2003, A1.

23. Lawrence noted this tendency among the tribal warriors of the Arab Revolt: "We could not mix or combine tribes, because of their distrusts; nor could we use one in the territory of another." T. E. Lawrence, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph* (New York: Doubleday, 1926), 338.

24. Dawn Chatty, *From Camel to Truck: The Bedouin in the Modern World* (New York: Vantage Press, 1986), 52. According to Chatty, "Arab life is filled with interpersonal rivalry, tribal feuds…family and village quarrels…and intergroup hostility…. Politeness is a means of maintaining enough distance to prevent aggressive tendencies from becoming actual. Hospitality and generosity are means of demonstrating friendliness while warding off expected aggression. Such measures as excessive politeness (a form of avoidance) or hospitality (a form of ingratiation in a situation where intimacy cannot be avoided) appears at times to be absolutely necessary if social life is to be maintained."

25. Michael M. Ripinsky, "Middle Eastern Kinship as an Expression of a Culture-Environment System," *The Muslim World* 58 (1968), 225-241. The Arabs—and Iraqis in particular—have among the highest rates of endogamy in the world (though rates vary by country, socioeconomic class, and religion). While reliable data is hard to come by, rates of endogamy for the entire region are believed to be between 10 to 15 percent, while in some tribal groups, they may exceed 70 percent. Eickelman, 175-178; Fernea, 181-182; Salim, 48-49; A. H. Bittles, "A Background Summary of Consanguineous Marriage," <http://consang.net/images/d/dd/01AHBWeb3.pdf>.

26. McFate, *Memory of War,* forthcoming.

27. Fernea, 88-89, 112; Salim, 51-54. In some parts of the Arab world, the payment of blood money was prolonged interminably to create an open debt, thereby perpetuating the relationship and ensuring the maintenance of peace between formerly aggrieved parties. Immediate payment of the debt would have signified the end of the relationship and the resumption of hostilities. Emrys L. Peters, "Some Structural Aspects of the Feud Among the Camel-Herding Bedouin of Cyrenaica," *Africa* 37, no. 3 (July 1967): 266-267.

28. Fernea, 90; Peters, 277-279. Not always, however. Salim reports that the entire Beni Isad tribe "rose up as one man" to participate in a war against a neighboring tribe in 1945. Salim, 43.

29. Fernea, 110-111, 119; Amatzia Baram, *Building Toward Crisis: Saddam Hussein's Strategy for Survival* (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1998), 28-29.

30. Fernea, 110-111; Salim, 43.

31. McFate, *Memory of War,* forthcoming.

32. This pattern was first noted by the medieval Arab thinker Ibn Khaldun: "The Bedouins are the least willing of the nations to subordinate themselves to each other, as they are rude, proud, ambitious, and eager to be the leaders. Their individual aspirations rarely coincide. But when there is religion (among them) through prophethood or sainthood, then they have some restraining influence in themselves. The qualities of haughtiness and jealousy leave them. It is, then, easy for them to subordinate themselves and unite." Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), 120.

33. Andrew J. Shryock, "Popular Genealogical Nationalism: History Writing and Identity among the Balqa Tribes of Jordan," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 37, no. 2 (April 1995), 346.

34. David Kilcullen, "Religion and Insurgency," *Small Wars Journal: SWJ Blog*, 12 May 2007, <www.smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2007/05/religion-and-insurgency/>.

35. The author would like to thank Montgomery McFate for this insight.

36. Batatu, 71-72; Fernea, 101. As an expression of this territoriality, Bedouins in times past would often extract tribute (*khawa*—literally 'brotherhood' money) from travelers and caravans passing through their tribal domain. Glubb, 60.

37. Chatty, 44.

38. Lars Wahlin, "Inheritance of Land in the Jordanian Hill Country," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 21, no. 1 (1994): 77-78.

39. Amatzia Baram, "Neo-Tribalism in Iraq: Saddam Hussein's Tribal Policies 1991-96," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29 (1997): 4-6.

40. Wahlin, 80.

41. Agence France Presse (AFP), "Competition for Iraq Oil Contracts Spurs Tribal Clashes," 22 January 2004.

42. Baram, "Neo-Tribalism," 1-31.

43. In the past, sheikhs were also responsible for collecting taxes, registering births and deaths, and arresting military deserters. Batatu, 63-152; Fernea, 105-117, 131, 133-136, 143-145; and Lancaster, 80-84, 87-90, 92-94, 114-115, 127-131. See also Gabriel Baer, "The Village Shaykh, 1800-1950," in *Studies in the Social History of Modern Egypt* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969), 30-61, and Paul Dresch, "The Position of Shaykhs Among the Northern Tribes of Yemen," *Man* (N.S.) 19, 31-49.

44. Batatu, 63-152; Fernea, 105-117, 133-135; Lancaster, 80-96; Baram, "Neo-Tribalism in Iraq," 3-4.

45. Lancaster, 96; Chatty, 55.

46. Glubb, 159.

47. Anthony Shadid, "In a Land Without Order, Punishment is Power," *Washington Post*, 22 October 2006, A1.

48. See, for instance, Peter Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq: Contriving King and Country* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 161-181.

49. Ken Menkhaus, *Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism,* London: IISS, 2004, Adelphi Paper 364, 28-31; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil & Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 207-208.

50. Baram, "Neo-Tribalism in Iraq," 6-7, 12-13.

51. CPT Travis Patriquin, "The Ba'ath Party and the Insurgency in Tal Afar," *Military Review* (January-February 2007): 22-24.

52. Rory Stewart, *The Prince of the Marshes* (Orlando: Harcourt Books, 2006), 219-220. For many sheikhs, coalition contracts are their lifeblood. In the words of Sheikh Hamid Rashid Mahenna of the Albu Alwan tribe from Ramadi, "A sheik has no power without contracts. If I do not provide for my people, they will not cooperate with me." Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "In a Hostile Land, Try Whatever Works," *Washington Post*, 23 December 2003, A1.

53. Shadid, A1.

54. Mark Kukis, "Turning Iraq's Tribes Against Al-Qaeda," *Time*, 26 December 2006.

55. See, for instance: Amatzia Baram, "Victory in Iraq," A25; Andrew Krepinevich, "How to Win in Iraq," *Foreign Affairs* (September-October 2005): 87-104; Kenneth Pollack, "Five Ways to Win Back Iraq," *New York Times*, 1 July 2005, A17; Montgomery McFate, "The Military Utility of Understanding Adversary Culture," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 38, 42-48; King, 178; Lieutenant Colonel Richard D. Welch, "Building Cultural Bridges: A Year in Iraq with the First Cavalry Division," Personal Experience Monograph, U.S. Army War College, 23 March 2006; McCallister et al., "The Iraqi Insurgent Movement," unpublished paper.

56. Bing West, *No True Glory: A Frontline Account of the Battle for Fallujah* (New York: Bantam Books, 2005), 33.

57. Mark Etherington, *Revolt on the Tigris: The Al-Sadr Uprising and the Governing of Iraq* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 104. Published polls are consistent with Etherington's CPA polling data. See: International Republican Institute, *Survey of Iraqi Public Opinion*, July 24-August 2, 2004, 27, 33; IRI, *Survey of Iraqi Public Opinion*, September 24-October 4, 2004, 42; IRI, *Survey of Iraqi Public Opinion*, November 24-December 5, 2004, 37, 38; IRI, *Survey of Iraqi Public Opinion*, December 26-January 7, 2005, 40, <www.iri.org/mena/iraq.asp>.

58. King, 161-166, 180; Operational Leadership Experiences Interview with LTC Paul Yingling, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 22 September 2006, and; Tulin Daloglu, "Freeing Jill Carroll: Iraqi Sheik Negotiated Behind the Scenes," *Washington Times*, 5 April 2006, 19.

59. Martin Rodriguez, Andrew Farnster, and John Bott, *Constructive Engagement: A Proven Method for Conducting Stability and Support Operations*, Association of the United States Army Institute of Land Warfare, Landpower Essay No. 07-1, February 2007, 2-3, 5; MAJ Morgan Mann, "The Power Equation: Using Tribal Politics in Counterinsurgency," *Military Review* (May-June 2007): 104, 106; Sudarsan Raghavan, "In Iraq, A Perilous Alliance with Former Enemies," *Washington Post*, 4 August 2007, A1, A12.

60. Several observers have noted the apparent generation gap between youthful insurgents and their elders. For instance, LTC Ross A. Brown, who commanded a unit south of Baghdad, stated that "a trusted sheikh told me that he could influence the perspective of those 40 years and older, but had very little influence over younger tribe members. Since the vast majority of those I was fighting were younger than 40, the sheiks couldn't help me much." LTC Ross A. Brown, "Commander's Assessment: South Baghdad": 29. Observers noted a similar loss of control over the actions of young people by their parents and elders during the first Palestinian intifada (1987-1993).

61. For more on these previous efforts, see Andrew Tilghman, "Marines Entangled in Disarming Situation in Husaybah," *Stars and Stripes*, 21 November 2005; Kirk Semple, "U.S. Forces Rely on Local Informants in Ferreting Rebels in West Iraq," *New York Times*, 10 December 2005; John Ward Anderson, "Iraqi Tribes Strike Back at Insurgents," *Washington Post*, 7 March 2006, A12; and Ann Scott Tyson, "In a Volatile Region of Iraq, U.S. Military Takes Two Paths," *Washington Post*, 15 September 2006, A1. For more on the Anbar Awakening, see Sarah Childress, "Retaking Ramadi: All the Sheik's Men; U.S. Commanders Are Hoping Tribal Levies Can Help Fill The Ranks of Anbar's Police and Tackle Al Qaeda," *Newsweek*, 18 December 2006, 43.

62. Elaine M. Grossman, "'Tribal Engagement' Has Mixed Record of Ups and Downs in Iraq," *Inside the Pentagon*, 7 June 2007.

63. Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Investigates the Hidden Side of Everything* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), xi, 13, 205.

64. Congressional testimony of David M. Walker, *Rebuilding Iraq: Governance, Security, Reconstruction, and Financing Challenges*, Government Accountability Office Report No. 06-697T, 25 April 2006, 12-13. See also *Report to Congress of the Special Inspector General for Iraq*, 30 July 2006, 27.

65. James Baker and Lee Hamilton, *The Way Forward—A New Approach: The Iraq Study Group Report*, (New York, Vintage Books: 2006), 84.

66. AFP, "The Fight for Oil Pipelines in Iraq," 12 September 2003; AFP, "Competition for Iraq Oil Contracts Spurs Tribal Clashes," 22 January 2004; Robert Collier, "Ethnically Diverse Oil Zone a Tinderbox," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 25 June 2004; Adam Handelsman, "BlastGard International, Inc. Completes Successful Oil Pipeline Test," BlastGard International Press Release, 6 December 2004, <www.blastgardintl.com/pdfs/pipeline_test_results.pdf>; Roger Brown, "Iraq's Pipeline War," *World Pipelines* 5, no. 5, (May 2005): 28-31; Samah Samad, "Tribes Accused of Iraq Oil Protection Racket," *Environment News Service*, 10 June 2005; Radio Free Iraq, "Judge Describes Corruption Case Against Lawmaker," RFE/RL Interview, 8 February 2006; and Philip Shishkin, "Pipeline Thefts Cripple Iraqi Oil Production," *Wall Street Journal*, 25 May 2007, A1, A13.

67. Naylor, 8-11.

68. William H. McMichael, "Odierno: Negotiations with Insurgents Underway," *Army Times*, 11 June 2007, 10; Thomas E. Ricks, "Deals in Iraq Make Friends of Enemies," *Washington Post*, 20 July 2007, A1; Raghavan, A1.

69. Naylor, 9-10.

70. Joshua Partlow and John Ward Anderson, "Tribal Coalition in Anbar Said to Be Crumbling," *Washington Post*, 11 June 2007, A11.

71. Rodriguez et al., 1, 6. Similarly, SGT Mounir Elkhamri noted, based on observations during his time in Iraq, that "the most effective [units] were always the ones with close ties to the local community." "Dealing with the Iraqi Populace: An Arab-American Soldier's Perspective," *Military Review* (January-February 2007): 113.

72. This estimate is based on the author's interviews with several dozen Soldiers and Marines who have served in Iraq.

73. The author was responsible for engagement in a Kurdish refugee camp along the border of Turkey and Iraq during Operation Provide Comfort (1991), and it was this experience that prompted his interest in tribal engagement.

74. See, for instance, late CPA senior advisor Ambassador Hume Horan's affirmation during a meeting with a large group of sheikhs in 2003 that U.S. forces came to Iraq as "occupiers," which provoked an angry response from the audience. King, 108-109. Horan was one of the U.S. foreign service's most knowledgeable and experienced Middle East hands, and while his statement may have been an accurate characterization of the status of coalition forces under international law, he probably should have known better than to have used a term so fraught with negative associations in the Arab world.

75. Michael Eisenstadt and Jeffrey White, "Fighting the War to Win the Peace in a Post-Saddam Iraq, Washington Institute for Near East Policy," *PolicyWatch* No. 739, 2 April 2003, <www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=1617>.

76. Lawrence, 275.

77. According to a Special Forces team sergeant in Iraq: "These insurgencies are defeated by personal relationships." Ann Scott Tyson, "In a Volatile Region of Iraq, U.S. Military Takes Two Paths," *Washington Post*, 15 September 2006, A1.

78. Elkhamri, 111.

79. King, 82-83, 90-91, 121-123; Rodriguez, et al., 5.

80. Rodriguez, et al., 2.

81. Thomas E. Ricks, "Tom Ricks's Inbox," *Washington Post*, 29 April 2007, B03.

82. Fernea, 80-81, 97-104, 192-193; Wahlin, 57-84; Lars Wahlin, "How Long has Land Been Privately Held in Northern Al-Balqa', Jordan?" *Geografiska Annaler*, 76 B:1 (1994), 33-49; and A. Granott, *The Land System in Palestine: History and Structure* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1952), 185-212.

83. The strip parcel system should not be confused with strip farming, which is an anti-erosion measure. See Granott, 208-212.

84. See, for instance, the hamlet north of Yusufiya in north Babil province at 33° 00' 41.52" N by 44° 22 ' 24.47" E; the village outside of Rumaytha in al-Muthanna province at 31°28' 20.42" N by 45°19' 07.90" E; the community on the outskirts of Habbaniyah in al-Anbar province at 33°25' 37.72" N by 43°31' 33.52" E; the community just outside of Taji in Salah al-Din province at 33°38' 14.70" N by 44°21' 20.56" E; and the village just north of Balad in Salah al-Din province at 34°04' 50.98" N by 44°05' 22.28" E.

85. Wahlin, "How Long has Land been Privately Held?" 39; Mats Widgren, "Reading Property into the Landscape," *Norwegian Journal of Geography* 60: 57-64; Parker Shipton, "Lineage and Locality as Antithetical Principles in East African Systems of Land Tenure," *Ethnology* 23, no. 2 (April 1984): 125.

86. Jacob Kipp, Lester Grau, Karl Prinslow, and CPT Don Smith, "The Human Terrain System: A CORDS for the 21st Century," *Military Review* (September-October 2006): 8-15; Robert M. Perito, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq*, United States Institute of Peace, Special Report 185, March 2007.

87. COL Christopher Costa, "Phoenix Rises Again: HUMINT Lessons for Counterinsurgency Operations," *Defense Intelligence Journal* 15, no. 1 (2006): 137.

88. King, 110.

89. See, for instance, Patriquin, 22-24; and Susan B. Glasser, "Sheik's Appointment by British Triggers Protests and Accusations," *Washington Post*, 11 April 2003, A29.

90. See, for instance, Ann Scott Tyson, "In a Volatile Region of Iraq, U.S. Military Takes Two Paths," *Washington Post*, 15 September 2006, A1.

91. In Arab society, trusted and respected outsiders—even non-Arabs—may be called upon to mediate and resolve feuds. See, for instance, Ginat, 10-12, 32-37, 126-127; Wilfred Thesiger, *The Marsh Arabs* (London: Penguin, 1967), 213-219.

92. The author of an article offering guidelines for hiring Bedouin tribesmen for government conservation and development projects cautions that "it should not be assumed that an intertribal legal structure exits [sic] for allocating [jobs] fairly, or that tribal or clan leaders will decide in a just fashion which people within the kinship group should get those jobs. Indigenous leaders may not always act appropriately on behalf of their constituents, and may choose their own sons or other people to whom they owe favors. Ironically, the best arbitrator may sometimes come from outside, with project personnel in the best position to make fair decisions. This process requires careful diplomacy and explanation, especially to indigenous leaders, to ensure that local sensibilities are acknowledged. In [the case in question] a park ranger, specifically hired for the task because he had anthropological training, conducted interviews with community guard candidates, selected them, and had tribal leaders approve the choices. This process worked with few complications and had the locals' approval because they acknowledged that their own institutions could not deal fairly with the problem." Joseph J. Hobbs, "Guidelines for the Involvement of Nomadic Pastoralists in Conservation and Development Efforts," in Dawn Chatty, ed., *Nomadic Societies in the Middle East and North Africa: Entering the 21st Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 796-797.

93. For a fascinating discussion of the debate among British administrators regarding the role of the sheikhs and the tribes in Mandatory Iraq, which in many ways prefigured the contemporary debate, see Dodge, *Inventing Iraq*, 101-129. See also Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq*, 161-181.

94. Alois Musil, *Arabia Deserta* (New York: American Geographical Soiety, 1927), 22.

95. Musil, *Arabia Deserta*, 77; and Alois Musil, *The Northern Hegaz* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1926), 73-74.

96. Musil, *Arabia Deserta*, 26-29.

97. Musil, *Arabia Deserta*, 275, 299-300; Musil, *The Northern Hegaz,* 117-118.

98. Musil, *Arabia Deserta,* 120; Alois Musil, *Northern Negd* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1928), 167-168.

99. Louise E. Sweet, "Camel Raiding of North Arabian Bedouins: A Mechanism of Ecological Adaptation," *American Anthropologist* 67, no. 5, Part 1 (October 1965): 1139.
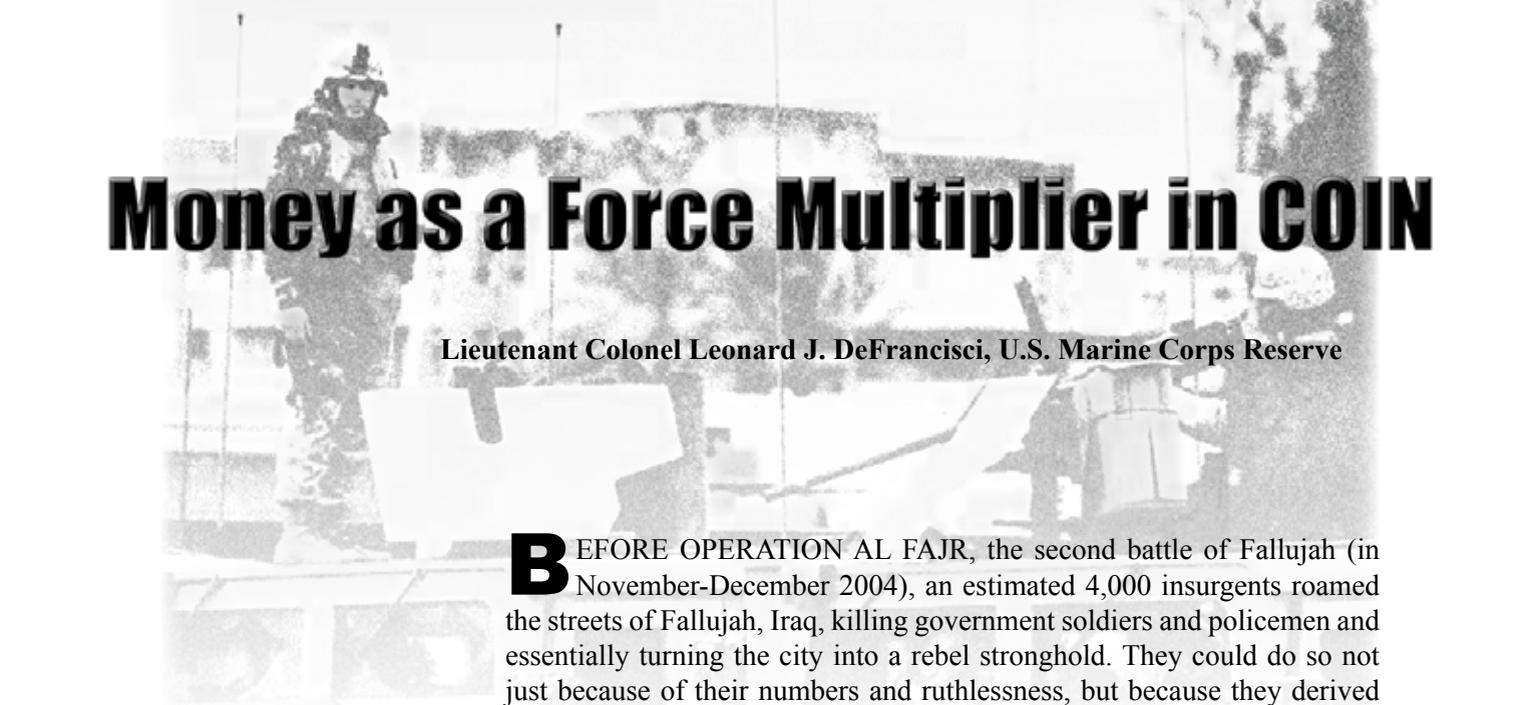
Money as a Force Multiplier in COIN

Lieutenant Colonel Leonard J. DeFrancisci, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve

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PHOTO: U.S. Marine Corps Scout Platoon, Regimental Combat Team 1 (RCT-1) Marines load their high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles (HMMWVs) at the civil military operations center in preparation for a patrol through the city of Fallujah, Al Anbar Province, Iraq, on 26 December 2004, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Marine Corps, LCPL Ryan B. Busse)

BEFORE OPERATION AL FAJR, the second battle of Fallujah (in November-December 2004), an estimated 4,000 insurgents roamed the streets of Fallujah, Iraq, killing government soldiers and policemen and essentially turning the city into a rebel stronghold. They could do so not just because of their numbers and ruthlessness, but because they derived significant strength from the local population. In essence, the people provided the insurgents with the recruits and support necessary to thrive and move freely within the battlespace.

To attack this strength, the Marine Corps' Regimental Combat Team 1 (RCT-1) would use a powerful weapon—money—to drive a wedge between the insurgents and the people and help win the second battle of Fallujah. In particular, the combat team's civil affairs units influenced the people by providing money to alleviate their immediate needs, settle grievances, and reduce frustration arising during the course of the battle. At the same time, the units developed long-term reconstruction efforts to help local Iraqi leaders gain control of the area. In this way, RCT-1 built legitimacy for coalition forces and further increased rifts between insurgents and their much-needed popular support. These actions reduced the enemy's base of operations and ability to maneuver.[1] As this article will show, RCT-1 civil affairs units wielded financial power as a combat multiplier and reduced the enemy's overall combat potential.[2]

Setting Conditions for Success

The initial program to provide money for Iraqi relief and reconstruction was strategically oriented and designed for deliberately planned, long-term reconstruction projects. A modification to the program was needed to allow the use of money in a tactical mode as a mechanism to act on the immediate needs of civilians and to respond to grievances. The change would set the conditions for operational success

Building capability. For Operation Al Fajr, RCT-1 designed a system to allow the immediate payment of money to Iraqis. The system was built around civil affairs elements that contained all the pieces necessary to approve and make on-the-spot payments in a field environment. RCT-1 civil affairs designated one Marine as a paying agent with $50,000 in cash on hand and a second Marine to execute contracts of up to $3,000 without having to use normal project-approval procedures.[3] This gave the Marines a mechanism similar to a petty cash system to make immediate, discretionary payments as the need arose.

Previously, securing funds required approval at division level or higher and, once approved, cash payments had to be made by a paying agent from the disbursing office. Redundant checks and balances and centralized fiduciary oversight at the division level had created a cumbersome, bottlenecked approval system. The process required submission of electronic documents to 1st Marine Division headquarters in Ramadi for approval and often took several days to complete.[4] This time lag between identifying a need and disbursing money was an unacceptable operational delay that made outcomes far less effective. If one views the delivery of such funds as analogous to force targeting, then identification-to-execution delays caused Marines to miss a high-profile target while they waited for permission to engage it. Such delays often nullified the money option, especially for fleeting targets of opportunity.[5]

Designated financial officers and comptrollers understandably sought tight accountability of money because of the potential for the misuse of funds in Iraq's chaotic environment. Thus, they built the funding process around centralized financial control, which included earmarking money for projects in Al Anbar province (where Fallujah is located) prior to authorizing its use. For Al Fajr, however, effective disbursement required delegating control to Marines in contact who were in the best position to influence events as they unfolded.

Decentralizing control improved disbursement timeliness and allowed Marines to make immediate transactions to influence events. This streamlined execution proved pivotal.

Delegation of authority was limited to a maximum of $3,000 per use, a sum that paid for most high-impact projects requiring rapid execution. By design, the $3,000 limit excluded long-term reconstruction programs—for such undertakings, Marines used normal approval procedures.[6] This limited approach struck a good balance between responsiveness and control; it decentralized approval for high-impact ventures needing quick execution, yet maintained centralized approval for more costly deliberate reconstruction.

Despite decentralizing controls, RCT-1 preserved accountability by having two Marines in the payment process, one letting contracts and the other dispensing money. Submitting all payment vouchers and contract records to the division on a regular basis provided additional accountability. In the end, the integrity of Marines in money-handling positions ensured the money was used properly.

Funding pipelines. In a report to the U.S. Congress, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) grouped funding sources that supported Iraq relief and reconstruction into three categories: U.S.-appropriated funds, international donor funds, and Iraqi funds. As of 30 June 2006, the combined funds totaled over $85.4 billion.[7] Each category contained subcategories of funds that were received through different means, including seized assets from the old Saddam Hussein regime, Iraqi national government budgets or grants, and pledges or accounts from coalition partners, the world community, and international governments. The various funds' sources and intended uses determined how they could be spent.

For example, in the international donor funds category, multiple non-U.S. donors pledged money for Iraq relief

Civilian contractors set up of water tanks during Operation Al Fajr, January 2005.

USMC, CWO3 Reese

and reconstruction. This money went into a trust under the auspices of the World Bank, and funds went to projects through a local staff of 800 UN representatives.[8]

In the Iraqi funds category, the money in the subcategory of development funds for Iraq (DFI) was "drawn primarily from [Iraqi] oil proceeds and repatriated funds."[9] The "CPA [Coalition Provisional Authority] established DFI with UN concurrence to serve as the primary financial vehicle for channeling revenue from Iraqi oil sales . . . and repatriated Iraqi assets to the relief and reconstruction efforts of Iraq."[10]

In the U.S.-appropriated funds category, the subcategory Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) served as a funding channel specifically for military commanders. CERP is "a program that [allows] coalition military commanders to respond rapidly to urgent humanitarian, relief, and reconstruction needs in their geographic areas of responsibility."[11] According to the SIGIR, "The aim of CERP… [is] highly visible projects that yield immediate benefits and nurture positive relations with the local populace."[12] CERP gives the coalition flexibility and accessibility to funds and so has become an important tool for the commander. Also in the U.S.-appropriated funds category is the subcategory of Iraq security force funds (ISFF), which allocates money to establish Iraqi security forces. Accordingly, the rules for ISFF limit the money's use to that purpose.

Iraqis unload humanitarian goods during Operation Al Fajr, January 2005.

The funding lines described above have supported relief and reconstruction efforts, each with its own purpose and guidelines for use. Relief and reconstruction funding involves the UN, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the U.S. Departments of State, Defense, Treasury, and Health and Human Services.[13] In the fall of 2004, the array of funding lines and agencies involved, each with a different objective, created a challenging environment. Maximizing financial power required understanding what funds were available and how to obtain them. For instance, CERP funds often dried up quickly because of their popularity and ease of use. Thus, a command that relied only on CERP ran the risk of an interrupted money flow. Establishing multiple resource lines and creating a financing cell within the command helped RCT-1 maintain a steady funding stream. RCT-1 civil affairs teams understood the system and worked multiple funding lines to avoid interruptions. The steady flow of money was essential for the unit's success on the battlefield.

Using money on the battlefield. Drawing civilian support away from insurgents was the goal, but it was a tricky endeavor. Cultural and language barriers made progress difficult. Success came slowly and required persistent, time-consuming, resource-heavy efforts, but frequently resulted in small gains, or even setbacks. Commanders had to balance the effort with competing priorities, specifically, the desire to eliminate enemy forces through kinetic means. Moreover, insurgents placed a high value on civilian support for their operations, and they did their best to undermine coalition efforts with the local population. But in the battle for legitimacy, money employed effectively against the insurgency provided RCT-1 with an economy of force measure—a cheap yet effective method for pulling community support away from the insurgents.

Selecting effective targets. RCT-1 sought targets that offered the best opportunities for financial leverage. Careful target selection proved as important as combat power. Civil affairs teams preferred to have a large number of lower-cost projects. More projects

meant wider coverage and more people involved. These projects also had better completion rates, and they got money to people quicker to attend to needs faster. Larger-scale projects were vulnerable to insurgent sabotage because they were complex, took much longer, and were more visible.

This small-project approach also created more opportunities to engage civilians constructively and promote positive perceptions. More frequent opportunities to talk with civilians under good circumstances helped build relationships that often yielded actionable intelligence.[14] Sometimes, the financial targeting's real objective was to bolster local leaders' prestige, help them build credibility, and enable them to better control their areas and constituents.[15] Local leaders were often powerful allies who were crucial to attracting people to the coalition. With their positions and status, they influenced broad audiences. Projects aimed at civil, religious, business, and tribal leaders and at town elders, technocrats, and medical and legal representatives were critical in settling intractable grievances.

The high unemployment in Al Anbar province was another target, particularly in areas the insurgents hit heaviest. Insurgents recruited those who were most disaffected by the economy: unemployed military-aged males. Short-term, labor-intensive projects were the best way to counter such recruiting.[16] When Marines evaluated project proposals, they usually chose the one that offered the most local jobs because it would have the greatest impact on reducing the insurgent recruiting pool.

Unfortunately, most reconstruction projects only generate employment that lasts for the duration of the project, after which the jobs expire. Programs that created long-term jobs would have been ideal in Al Anbar, but they were difficult to initiate due to restrictions on the use of CERP funds. (CERP cannot fund projects that enhance an individual's personal gain, e.g., funds cannot be used to help a private business).[17]

To promote the growth of long-term jobs, RCT-1 civil affairs proposed offering business grants tied to job creation. This program would have provided money to businesses that planned to grow in a way that directly added jobs. Providing assets to assist or create new businesses was also part of the proposal. For example, it would have given a welding machine or a bread-baking oven to an Iraqi to enable

him to start a new business that employed others. This approach could have had a significant benefit. By giving away equipment, not money, it would have been easy to account for its use. Unfortunately, restrictions on CERP funds remained, and Marines in the field could not act on these proposals.

Throughput of Projects and Reach of Force

Throughput was the constraining factor for the "more projects, low-cost" scheme. A civil affairs team could only manage a limited number of projects effectively at one time. RCT-1's civil affairs detachment added two additional teams, which enabled it to execute more projects and cover a larger geographical area.[18] However, only civil affairs Marines and a few Seabees were permitted to disburse money in Fallujah.[19] Allowing Marines who had daily contact with civilians to pay out money might have worked better, but doing so would have required an even more decentralized control structure—a tough sell to the comptrollers.

RCT-1 built important connections to civilians, and effective throughput over a wider area reinforced those relationships via quick responses to local needs. When the Marines made things happen, civilians saw that Americans kept their promises. The ability to resolve problems better than the insurgents gave the Marines an advantage in building legitimacy and public support.[20] Establishing relationships with civilians dovetailed with the 1st Marine Division commanding general's mantra, "Marines, no better friend, no worse enemy."[21]

Shaping the battlefield and assisting civilians. In Al Fajr, Marines gave money to displaced Iraqis to ease their hardship. This helped to expedite evacuation and shape the environment.[22] The money enabled displaced persons to purchase items from the local economy while away from Fallujah, reducing the coalition's requirement to provide humanitarian assistance at a later point. In the short term, removing civilians from contested areas helped Marines identify insurgents and limit their mobility, and it reduced the chances of unintended civilian casualties. Furthermore, dislocated civilians helped spread the coalition's message by word of mouth to other areas, adding value to the information operations (IO) campaign.

A civil affairs unit evacuates civilians from Fallujah during Operation Al Fajr, November 2004.

the Marines and the Iraqi Interim Government.[26]

Much of the success with reconstruction can be attributed to the Marines' decision to rebuild while they fought. In phase III of the battle (seize and secure the city), sewer-water pumping stations stopped functioning, contributing to significant citywide flooding.[27] Marine civil affairs teams paid Iraqi municipal workers to identify the stations' locations, which required the workers to enter the city. Initially, the workers were reluctant to go while combat operations were underway; however, money provided the necessary incentive. Afterwards, these workers were proud to say they had worked with the Marines. Indeed, they told other Iraqis that they had teamed up with the Marines to save infrastructure and houses—thereby delivering a powerful IO message from Iraqis to Iraqis.[28]

In this operation, civil affairs teams used on-hand reconstruction funds to hire Fallujan work parties to do a variety of tasks.[29] These parties helped clean up the city, alleviating the burden on the Marines to perform such activities, but more important, they provided employment and money for the economy during a critical time.

Humanitarian crises tie up military resources and force immediate responses, often with a minimal return on investment.[23] Avoiding them is also critical because insurgents exploit crises to their advantage. These situations promote instability, create fertile ground for enemy recruiting, demonstrate the local government's inability to care for its people, and bring the people closer to the insurgents by estranging them from a government unable to ensure their well-being.

Money not only helped prevent the development of humanitarian assistance problems in Fallujah, but it also provided flexible response options to contain problems. Marines used local resources to solve problems when they occurred instead of doing it themselves. During the battle, for instance, a civil affairs team purchased supplies locally, and Iraqi merchants delivered them. Marines on patrol also distributed supplies when they saw needy people in the city and in Saqlawiyah, a neighboring town.[24] In this case, money directly built goodwill with significant economy of effort.

Reconstruction. Given the extent of the damage to Fallujah, it was surprising how fast the city was rebuilt after the assault. Key infrastructure was restored within weeks, and stopgap measures to provide essential services in lieu of repaired infrastructure were established prior to the city's repopulation.[25] Reconstruction money, especially with quick project throughput, was critical to success because it fostered positive public opinion for

Iraqi municipal workers work on a generator in a sewer water lift station during Operation Al Fajr, November 2004.

Iraqi work-party morning formation in Fallujah.

Marines also provided each Iraqi head of household in the city with a $200 *solatia* (compensation) payment.[30] Over 33,000 Iraqis received this payment, which amounted to a total distribution of more than $6.6 million dollars in a one-week period.[31] The payment recalled a Marine experience in Vietnam at the Battle of Hue.[32] Such disbursements helped foster goodwill, jump-started the economy and the rebuilding effort, and focused the people's energy on reconstruction instead of trouble.[33]

During raids, civil affairs teams followed the assault elements to provide immediate payment to noncombatants who had incurred battle damage.[34] This proactive effort eliminated the requirement for civilians to make a claim at the civil military operations center (CMOC).[35] The CMOC often had long lines of claimants, and settling a solatia claim usually required multiple trips, creating delays and frustration. Immediate payment for damage after a raid eliminated grievances before the insurgents could exploit them.

The guiding principle for civil affairs during phase IV (transition) was to focus on the people, not solely on reconstruction. Using money to eliminate grievances disarmed the enemy and stifled his initiative because insurgents particularly exploited the aggrieved segments of

Marines and Iraqi soldiers provide $200 solatia payments to all heads of household during Operation Al Fajr.

the population to build support for their cause. Information operations highlighted the insurgency's destructive nature by contrasting the coalition's efforts with the insurgents' propensity to destroy.

RCT-1 civil affairs knew that to win over civilians in the end, the coalition would have to help them see the situation improving as the insurgents were eliminated. While Marines aggressively sought out insurgents, they also monetarily assisted neutral parties caught up in the conflict. By doing this, Marines helped maintain popular support for the coalition and government forces.

Do's and Don'ts

When selecting projects or spending money in Fallujah, the civil affairs teams considered it important to—

● *Avoid larger, more expensive projects involving only a few people.* Many Iraqis saw such undertakings as favoritism, because the project benefitted only a small number of people.

● *Align projects with the people's needs to achieve a desired effect.* Those who selected projects for a far-removed area rarely knew what the people there needed. In fact, enterprises that seemed like a good idea from afar were often counterproductive. For example, Baghdad officials discussed building a high-cost, state-of-the-art sewer treatment plant in Fallujah. However, the Fallujans cared little about such a project, and it would not have added value to the effort to stabilize the area or win hearts and minds. In addition, the Fallujans lacked the technical expertise to run such a facility.

● *Use the local contractors, even if they are more expensive or do lower quality work.* In Fallujah, some contractors had worked in Baghdad, and so they tended to use workers from Baghdad as well. This did not sit well with the Fallujans.

● *Watch for undue corruption or graft.* Having to deal with a certain level of graft is always a cost of doing business in Iraq, but if it is excessive, a high percentage of it probably includes pay-offs to insurgents.

● *Attempt to gain local buy-in of projects with the city council and keep them informed of progress.* The city council can either facilitate or hinder the execution of a project, and the council gains credibility with the public for implementing it.

● *Spread-load contracts to promote fairness and expand reach.* Executing contracts in the CMOC or at a central location often leads to repeated use of the same contractors and employment of the same people, and it increases the chances of such criminal activity as stealing from contractors or intimidating them.[36]

Conclusion

In Fallujah, civil affairs achieved results with money by shaping public opinion and promoting legitimacy. Money provided options to solve local problems, resolve grievances, and reduce frustration. This financial leverage shored up support for the coalition and Iraqi officials by enhancing their credibility and their capability to respond to the local population's needs. It set favorable conditions to draw civilians away from the insurgency and kept "fence-sitters on the fence." Money also exposed the insurgents by stripping away their local support and stimulating dialogue that led to usable information about the enemy. Used wisely, money weakened the insurgency by countering its ability to promote its cause or exploit a situation.

In Iraq, units must be able to spend money in a timely manner. This is especially important when many relief organizations are not willing to enter an area due to security concerns or because they do not understand the local dynamics well enough to operate successfully in the region.[37]

Commanders asked much of their junior leaders in Fallujah, so arming them properly was important. These "strategic corporals" interacting with civilians on a daily basis needed more constructive and decisive methods to build relationships and engage the local population effectively. Passing out soccer balls and sunglasses was good, but making something useful happen that created a real difference in the life of Iraqis was a far better approach to winning hearts and minds. Money provided that ability. *MR*

NOTES

1. The author commanded Detachment 4-4, 4th Civil Affairs Group. Detachment 4-4 was assigned to Regimental Combat Team 1 (RCT-1) from August 2004 to March 2005, a period that included Operation Al Fajr, the second battle of Fallujah. Al Fajr, or "New Dawn," was the name of the November 2004 offensive to seize control of Fallujah. Originally, the name was Operation Phantom Fury, but it was changed early in the operation. The first battle to rid Fallujah of insurgents occurred as part of Operation Vigilant Resolve, in April 2004.

2. In a nonpermissive environment, civil affairs teams were usually the link between the "pots of money" designated for relief and reconstruction and the actual on-the-ground spending of money in a combat environment. This was especially important because most relief organizations outside the military, including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), did not operate in nonpermissive environments.

3. First Marine Division promulgated this policy through Fragmentary Order 0364-04 during Operation Al Fajr. The order authorized civil affairs teams to conduct rapid funding of projects. After spending $50,000, the civil affairs team received a new allocation of money. This ensured that a steady flow of money was available and accessible in a field environment.

4. 1st Marine Division was located at Camp Blue Diamond in Ramadi, the capital of Al Anbar province.

5. The supporting arms field commonly used "targets of opportunity" to refer to lucrative opportunities that present themselves on the battlefield, usually unexpectedly, and which were typically perishable if not acted on quickly. As an example of using money in an unplanned but effective way, the RCT-1 commander gave $20.00 to an old Iraqi woman carrying groceries down the street of Fallujah, and he hailed a cab for her. He stated at the daily operations and intelligence brief that he had won a friend for life that day.

6. Marines used the normal funding approval process for long-term reconstruction projects not requiring immediate implementation, such as building a school.

7. Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGIR), *July 2006 Quarterly and Semiannual Report to Congress* (30 July 2006), 90. Congress created SIGIR to provide independent oversight of the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund, one of the major U.S.-appropriated funds for Iraqi relief and reconstruction. The $85.4 billion included $36.2 billion of U.S. appropriated funds, $14.6 billion of international donor funds, and $34.6 billion of Iraqi funds.

8. Ibid., 93.

9. Ibid., 90.

10. Ibid., E2. Established shortly after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, the Coalition Provisional Authority served as an interim governing body for Iraq during the early stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

11. Ibid., C4.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., C1, 22.

14. The reasons for this are beyond the scope of this paper. However, civil affairs teams operating in Fallujah repeatedly noticed a direct correlation between money exchanged with civilians and information received. Actionable intelligence included information about the location of improvised explosive devices, weapons caches, or persons intimidating others that led to the commander taking action based on information.

15. Civil affairs teams and unit commanders who were familiar with the local area and understood the atmospherics (see note below) knew which leaders to empower: the ones capable of swaying the people away from the insurgency and most likely to promote stability and local control. Marines felt that using civilian leaders became particularly important when trying to maintain an Iraqi "face" (message delivered by an Iraqi) in an area with respect to civil administration, public safety, and law enforcement. In the long run, this was consistent with the overall objective of gaining local support and the desired end state of transferring local control to the Iraqis. Note: "atmospherics" was a popular term used in OIF to describe the general, collective feel in an area in terms of civilian sentiment towards coalition forces or any issue involving the Iraqi national government. It was critical for the unit commanders to understand the atmospherics in their assigned zones. Indeed, it was often a matter of life and death to understand how the civilians felt about the coalition in a particular area and to know the degree of support that local Fallujans provided to the insurgents.

16. This does not include rebuilding critical infrastructure or improving force protection. These projects had priority and were based on other factors, such as quality of work and time to complete.

17. The inability to use Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds for assisting businesses was a major complaint of the civil affairs teams in Fallujah and limitations on CERP severely hampered economic development.

18. RCT-1's civil affairs detachment had five teams in the city of Fallujah and two in the surrounding areas. A civil affairs team in Fallujah consisted of four to eight Marines specially trained in civil affairs activities, with additional personnel attached or supporting. All teams were HMMWV-mobile, except for one at the civil-military operations center. The number of projects or initiatives a civil affairs team could effectively manage depended on both the operating environment (permissive/nonpermissive) and the size and complexity of the projects. Generally, a nonpermissive environment greatly limited the civil affairs teams' ability to manage projects. Indeed, the environment had much more of an impact on project management than project size or complexity.

19. Other than civil affairs Marines and a contracting cell from the Seabees of the Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) Engineering Group, few Marines spent money on relief and reconstruction in Fallujah. Select senior Marines (battalion commanders

and higher) were authorized to make on-the-spot payments. Staff judge advocates made *solatia* payments (see note 30 below for a description of solatia). In addition, a few Marines spent money to establish police, but the civil affairs teams generally let even these contracts.

20. Distributing projects to other units allowed for civil affairs assets to support other projects in an area. In a counterinsurgency, civil affairs assets are a high-demand, low-density force. The tight schedule in Al Fajr meant civil affairs forces often cut short valuable dialogue and relationship-building with civilians associated with a particular project. The demands of supporting numerous other projects left them limited time. This was unfortunate, since positive interaction with civilians can be more important than a project itself.

21. Major General James N. Mattis promulgated the slogan "Marines, no better friend, no worse enemy" in "1st Marine Division Standard Operating Procedures for Stability and Support Operations," dated 15 November 2003.

22. Because it provided the ability to obtain commercial transportation and a place to stay in another area, money made it easier for civilians to leave an area. During Al Fajr, many Fallujans went to the neighboring town of Saqlawiyah.

23. In OIF, humanitarian crises have significantly affected the planning factors of time, force, and space in operations; thus, a commander is well justified in taking preventive measures to avoid such situations.

24. Team 4, Detachment 4, 4th Civil Affairs Group, Command Chronology for January 2005 (Camp Baharia, Iraq, 11 February 2005), 4; and Team 4, Detachment 4, 4th Civil Affairs Group, Command Chronology for February 2005 (Camp Baharia, Iraq, 8 March 2005), 5.

25. 4th Civil Affairs Group, Command Chronology 2005 (Washington, DC, 15 July 2006), 9-10. The speed at which Fallujah restored itself became a powerful theater-wide information operations message that focused on the Iraqi Interim Government's and the coalition's concern for the local population.

26. The Iraqi Interim Government governed Iraq prior to the official elections in January 2005.

27. A number of causes led to massive flooding in Fallujah, including an inoperative sewer system, broken water lines, and high water from a nearly closed sluice gate on a dam on the Euphrates River.

28. Prior to the battle, RCT-1 civil affairs did not know that there was a sewer system for rainwater with nine powered lift stations in Fallujah. Continuous de-flooding became important because many parts of Fallujah were below the Euphrates River water table. The main purpose of the sewer system was to pump water from the Euphrates out of Fallujah, particularly when the river ran high. Employees from the water treatment plant outside the city provided the information and guides to find all nine lift stations. The flooding in the streets created a natural obstacle and caused major problems for the RCT-1 commander to maneuver his forces. It became a major focus and significant issue to resolve for the division commander. Standing water also created a health issue because of dead bodies and the black-water sewage that washed up from septic tanks located throughout the city. The flooding also caused additional damage to civilian homes.

29. Each civil affairs team managed work parties of from 10 to 200 Fallujans. An Iraqi foreman paid these parties daily and served as a point of contact for paying the other workers. Because the work parties consisted of all military-aged males, the Marines jokingly referred to them as "Muj working parties" ("Muj" was short for Mujahideen).

30. During OIF, military commanders used *solatia* to compensate a neutral party (a civilian not affiliated with the enemy) whose house or business had sustained collateral damage or whose family member had been killed or seriously injured. However, providing a solatia payment was not an admission of guilt by the U.S. Government.

31. 4th Civil Affairs Group, Command Chronology 2005, 12.

32. Jack Shulimson et al., *U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968*, Marine Corps History and Museums Division (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1997), 604. After the Battle for Hue, the South Vietnamese government launched Operation Recovery, where "each displaced person was entitled to . . . $85.00 [and rebuilding materials] . . . More then 830 families received reconstruction material and all the displaced received a temporary relief payment."

33. The author of this paper was in Fallujah and saw the repairs to the city begin and the local economy come back to life. Shulimson et al. note that some early improvements were seen in and around Hue during Operation Recovery after the "[South Vietnamese government] had begun reconstruction, resettlement, and economic revival programs" (605).

34. Visiting an area immediately after a raid or other coalition action to pay for battle damage or initiate a contract to fix damage affecting neutral parties became standard operating procedure (SOP) for RCT-1 civil affairs. The SOP called for the civil affairs team to follow "in trace" or directly behind the assault element. Any houses harboring insurgents or weapons caches were not eligible for battle damage remuneration.

35. Fallujah had a civil-military operations center, or CMOC, called the Fallujah Liaison Team about one kilometer to the east of the city. It established another CMOC in late November 2004 during Operation Al Fajr. This second CMOC was called the "Fallujah Help Center," and it was located in the center of the city at the "mayor's complex" or governmental center. Among their numerous functions, CMOCs were places where civilians went to broach issues or get assistance (such as with a battle damage claim.) The CMOCs were often busy places with long lines.

36. In Fallujah, insurgents and thieves monitored activity in the CMOC. Marines at the CMOC frequently distributed large sums of cash to the locals.

37. Relief organizations outside the military included NGOs and IGOs, such as the International Committee of the Red Crescent and the UN World Food Program.

Stabilizing Influence: Micro-Financial Services Capability

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PHOTO: An interpreter helps an Iraqi businessman understand the application process for micro-grants at the governance center in Arab Jabour, Iraq, 24 January 2008. (U.S. Army, SGT Kevin Stabinsky)

AN ORGANIC MICRO-FINANCIAL SERVICES (MFS) capability in U.S. military units should be formally established as a key mission enhancer or "force multiplier" to support stability and reconstruction operations (SRO). Both FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency,* and the Marine Corps manual *Countering Irregular Threats: A Comprehensive Approach* specifically note the need for MFS. However, neither manual goes into any detail on what MFS actually involves or how commanders in SRO environments should use them. This article aims to fill that gap.

Prior to the recent update of U.S. Army counterinsurgency doctrine, veterans of SROs and humanitarian interventions recognized that stability ultimately hinges on the restoration and promotion of economic viability. The recent update of Army and Marine Corps counterinsurgency doctrine has since acknowledged economic development as a key component of stability operations.

At the heart of current counterinsurgency doctrine is the notion that the people are the key "terrain" in SRO. Thus, Soldiers must influence the indigenous people favorably to win their approbation. To do this, they have to understand how to affect "the social, ethnographic, cultural, economic, and political elements of the people among whom a force is operating" and apply specific tailored measures derived from that understanding.[1] Consequently, in operating environments where non-coercive skills are at least as important as coercive ones, Soldiers must bring more than mere force into play.

Close analysis of how to succeed within an insurgency framework suggests that providing immediate economic opportunities to the population is second only to providing physical security; thus, among the tools needed to cope with insurgencies is a bottom-up economic strategy linked to security measures. Such a strategy has to create the conditions for economic opportunity while also encouraging the population to participate in generating overall economic recovery.[2]

Unfortunately, all too often these efforts to encourage economic opportunity and participation focus on large-scale economic activities such as building power or manufacturing plants. Such projects require detailed planning, take time, and often are hampered by politics and bureaucracy. Meanwhile, as the projects move ponderously along, insurgents exploit the perceived lack of economic opportunity and progress. They feed off the unmet and perhaps unrealistic expectations of the populace.

Given the above, it seems that a more effective means of dealing with the close-in economic fight is with time-sensitive, small loans to micro-businesses.

Delivery of micro-financial services to small-scale entrepreneurs during SRO can quickly stimulate economic activity, serving to undercut insurgent exploitation of economic instability. Quick, tangible results at low levels of commerce can create local buy-in and commitment from the populace. Such community investment can then serve to help garner support for government efforts to reestablish sovereignty and governance. Often underutilized or misunderstood by military forces, MFS is actually a simple but sophisticated tool that, when used properly, can deliver economic benefits to a target population at a comparatively cheap cost. Compared to grander projects that may take months and years to develop, small businesses realize economic benefit fast enough to improve stability.

Financial Problems

Challenges facing countries during SRO campaigns are similar to the problems non-governmental organizations (NGO) have handled for decades when working with large, poor populations in stressed environments. Consequently, NGO experiences provide many lessons. Among the more important that the intervening organization must understand is the limitations indigenous financial institutions may have in straitened conditions. For example, many unstable countries have long established banking institutions, such as those that currently exist in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, experience has shown that many such institutions have neither the infrastructure nor capital to meet extensive borrower needs broadly across society. They cannot handle the administrative costs of dealing with the vast numbers of small-scale borrowers upon whom economic stability actually depends. Interest returns on small-scale loans don't cover the time and resources required to process them

This is especially true in conflict or post-conflict zones, when a bank's survival can depend on high-yield clients. Granting loans to large numbers of small-scale entrepreneurs becomes economically unfeasible when continuing violence is a constant threat looming over both the entrepreneur's business and the bank's investment. Thus, a nagging shortage of capital, combined with great insurgency-related risk, often results in banks choosing to deal with only well-connected clients in safe areas where returns on investment are likely. This unfortunate

set of circumstances stunts overall economic development and usually precludes investment in areas and among populations that may be most in need of the stabilizing influence economic opportunity and development provides.

Consequently, small-scale borrowers—usually from the poorer classes—often have no other recourse but to turn to pawnshops and neighborhood moneylenders to acquire needed finances. Such lenders often lend money only as long as borrowers have a commodity to leverage. Moreover, they usually charge crippling interest fees for their services, especially in times of shortage and risk like those prevailing during insurgency conflicts. The above combination of factors compounds the economic damage that an insurgency causes by quickly depleting the cash reserves of the most underprivileged segment of a population. Disaffection, stemming from a loss of economic security compounded by insecurity and a declining quality of life, often increases sympathy for insurgent activities.

At the same time, such conditions undermine support for or confidence in the government. Straitened conditions nullify any attempts at broader SRO civic and security efforts as local populations frequently come to see SRO forces, rather than insurgents, as the source of social instability and personal misfortune and misery. The problem is complicated when insurgent groups position themselves as alternate sources of services, becoming in effect shadow governments. Such services often include economic relief for a population living in desperate circumstances. Insurgents' perceived economic successes increase popular estrangement from the government by undermining its legitimacy. This estrangement also helps to create an insurgent recruiting pool that may potentially encompass an entire local population.

For the above reasons, establishing economic opportunity must be a key component to any SRO
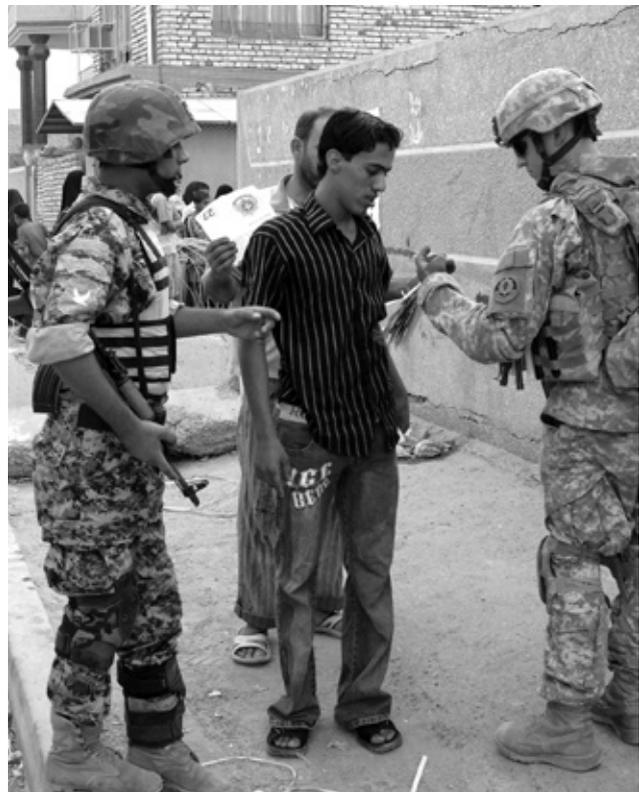
> *…populations frequently come to see SRO forces, rather than insurgents, as the source of social instability and personal misfortune and misery.*

strategy. As entrepreneurs establish small businesses and create jobs, economic opportunity spreads and leads to viable, self-sustaining stability. Micro-financial services is one tool commanders at all levels can use to promote the essential economic development and opportunity at the local level.

History of MFS

The concept of MFS is not new. It can trace its roots to activities by medieval guilds and village social clubs, which provided low- or no-interest loans to their members in ways we would view today as micro-credit. Societies whose membership was reserved for those practicing similar occupations, or groups having an interest in promoting a specific trade for the common good of local communities, would pool their resources to help individual members establish themselves as viable businesspersons. Larger, more formal institutions developed in Ireland in the 1700s and Germany in the 1800s as altruistic organizations to help their poor escape abject poverty and the crushing debt of moneylenders. Similarly, in the 1900s, government-led institutions began providing targeted loans to protect small agricultural interests.[3]

The modern incarnation of such micro-credit practices began in the 1970s via pioneering work by ACCION International, Self-Employed Women's Association Bank, and Grameen Bank, the last of which became the model for modern micro-financial institutions. Grameen Bank's founder, Dr. Muhammad Yunus, won the Nobel Prize in 2006 for his work there. Yunus, a classically trained economist who taught in Bangladesh in the 1970s, confronted poverty as he commuted to and from work and decided to investigate why economic practices were not dealing with it. He and his students interviewed 42 local women and discovered that the women relied on frequent loans from moneylenders to meet their supply needs to run their businesses. After paying off the interest on their loans, they had little profit left to reinvest into their businesses. Yunus found that with as little as $27 each, business owners could bypass the moneylenders and deal directly with their suppliers. He supplied $27 to each of the 42 women, and they repaid him in several weeks with each owner

Iraqi National Police provide security and other assistance to U.S. Army Soldiers holding a financial-grant signing for business members in Baghdad, Iraq, 20 October 2007.

U.S. Navy, Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class David R. Quillen

having enough left over to do business without the moneylenders. Yunus sought government support to establish the first Grameen Bank, which still operates today. It serves 5 million customers with a loan recovery rate of 98.9 percent.[4] Grameen was unique because it created a sense of collective responsibility among its borrowers. Each member's loan repayment increased available credit for the remaining borrowers, which created a powerful incentive for all of them to make prompt loan payments.

After the success of the micro-financial institutions of the 1970s, many NGOs have developed similar MFS capabilities and practices. Over the past three decades, the success of these efforts has demonstrated MFS effectiveness in dealing with the economic needs of disadvantaged populations. However, an understanding of the various dynamics associated with poverty, the obstacles to economic development, and how micro-credit could be best applied has taken years to develop and adjust.

In the 1980s, it became evident that micro-credit was inadequate to deal with all of the poor's problems because it did not address the complex

situations they faced. Aid agencies recognized that the poor needed a full-service financial approach. With proliferation of micro-credit services in the mid-1990s, a shift occurred from solely focusing on micro-credit to providing MFS more broadly. This led modern micro-financial institutions to become full-service banks.[5] Institutions providing loans and savings services advanced to other basic financial services. In concept and practice, they now offer the same services provided by banks in developed nations. The difference lies in the amount of funds in play. Micro-financial institutions address financial needs in a given locality, and loans that some might regard as miniscule are common.

Micro-Financial Expertise

Military planners should study the lessons of NGOs and adopt their methods for coping with similar economic situations in financially unstable countries. U.S. military units have two organizations that deal directly with the economic conditions in unstable areas where micro-financial institutions might be effective: the civil-military operations center (CMOC) and the specialized civil affairs team (CAT).

Civil-military operations centers are ad hoc organizations that coordinate and unify the capabilities of military and civilian agencies in an area to address SRO's human dimension. Specialized CATs work out of the CMOC and provide physical security, humanitarian help, civil administration, public institution development assistance, and economic rehabilitation and development to meet the needs of the local population.

Each CMOC has an economics officer, but CATs often outsource the delivery of financial services. Partly because of reliance on outsourcing, the military has not leveraged the benefits of providing financial services to their maximum potential.

The outsourcing habit grew from a decision the U.S. military made in the 1990s when it faced increasing SRO missions and the constraints of a shrinking budget. Consequently, the military developed doctrine calling for extensive use of outside support and expertise in a joint task force structure. Such support came from agencies both

U.S. Army, SPC Gabriel Reza

A Soldier from the civil-military operations center meets with a local business owner to discuss a micro-grant program and distribute applications in Diwaniyah, Iraq, 4 November 2007.

inside and outside of government.[6] However, the doctrine neither addressed the method and extent of military-civilian integration nor defined specific local economic-development approaches (such as MFS).[7] This nebulous doctrine remains in effect today. Government agencies outside the military have extensive experience with MFS; the military just needs to figure out how to leverage it.

The U.S. government's primary knowledge base for MFS expertise is in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), which has 30 years of experience serving micro-enterprises around the world.[8] It normally funds local micro-financial institutes run by NGOs or charity. But there are problems with this approach. According to retired colonel Joseph J. Collins, former deputy assistant secretary of defense for stability operations—

> While there have been significant exceptions, State and USAID personnel have generally been restricted to relatively secure compounds in Afghanistan and Iraq. This fact is often attributed to the 'tyranny' of the local regional security officers (RSOs), who appear determined to apply peacetime rules to conflict situations. RSOs will likely blame the rules that come down from Washington. In any case, too few Foreign Service officers and USAID professionals [work] in field locations. The personnel strength of State and USAID is clearly inadequate to meet their expanded roles in the War on Terror.[9]

Consequently, MFS does not currently reach effectively out to areas where it might actually have the greatest impact on stabilization.

For example, USAID channels its MFS activities in Iraq through the Izdihar (Prosperity) Organization, which is responsible for a wide variety of financial-development activities. Izdihar issues grants to local micro-financial institutions and conducts training seminars.[10] However, because of the RSO limitations on USAID, only a handful of such institutions have been established in Iraq. These have the capability of disbursing loans of $3,000 to $5,000.[11]

While Izdihar's work benefits the Iraqi people, several problems plague the current situation:

● Distance between the local micro-financial institution distributing Izdihar funds and the local Soldier on patrol helps cause a huge synchronization gap that no CMOC can surmount. The distance makes it difficult for Soldiers to target and coordinate needed funds effectively.

● No mechanism exists to guarantee that funds are distributed in a way that will help improve the local economy and to ensure that they are not misappropriated.

● The $3,000 to $5,000 range limit denies services to the entrepreneurs most in need of help and the most susceptible to insurgent influence.

● The goodwill created by MFS is not associated with the stabilization forces (which is related to the synchronization gap).

Building an MFS Team

A better approach would be to build and enable a military MFS team that could operate in outlying areas and extend the reach of USAID efforts. As charity groups and NGOs have shown, with MFS the poor can build an asset base and decrease their vulnerability to economic stress. A military tailor-made team would allow commanders to build a plan that fits the specific situation and environment and use MFS to mitigate certain situations. Such a plan would complement a CMOC vision by requiring a statement of how the team expected to deliver their services in coordination with the CMOC.

Thus empowered, the military commander could identify the work force and resources necessary to make the plan work and bring them to bear on the situation immediately if needed. Determining what specific services the local community needs, and in what priority, would be the most important factor in developing such a plan. This identification would come to depend upon military planners who clearly understood who needs MFS and how they would use economic support. For example, needs vary greatly among farmers, shopkeepers, and mechanics; as a result, MFS plans would vary accordingly. In addition, since start-ups as opposed to mature businesses looking for capital have different needs and goals, a nuanced understanding of the area would be necessary.

A better approach would be to build and enable a military MFS team…

Three Key MFS Services

The three most important services an MFS could provide are micro-credit, micro-savings, and micro-insurance. Each service can help a local population obtain a measure of financial stability in the face of a physically threatening environment.

● **Micro-credit.** Micro-sized loans are the premier offering of a standard micro-financial institution. Loan sizes can vary from $5 to $25,000. Though the lower amount may sound miniscule, such seemingly small amounts of money can be life-altering fortunes in underdeveloped countries. The simple fact is that many businesses in countries like Iraq do not actually need the large amounts of capital that Americans might expect.

● **Micro-savings institutions.** Many poor people in unstable and developing countries have no way to store their currency safely. They often hide their savings in their dwellings, sometimes converting their cash to something regarded as a stable commodity, such as jewelry. Such situations are not conducive to economic growth and are often dangerous. Unfortunately, in such cases, the poor are more likely to become victims of looting by criminal and terrorist gangs. Moreover, the victims of theft will often turn their anger against the security force they expected to protect them.

By offering a secure place for citizens to store money safely, and even potentially earn interest on it, a micro-financial institution team can give residents a chance to safely accumulate wealth. Such conditions create goodwill for the stabilization force.

● **Micro-insurance.** In an unstable environment, insurance has utility. Terrorist attacks and criminal violence common to insurgencies, such as bombings in community markets, increase the difficulty of normalizing everyday life. Uncertainty drains the willpower of a local population. Insurance at any level works not only as a hedge against risk, but also helps the policyholder feel protected from the effects of possible unfortunate incidents. With property insurance, a policyholder can at least create a plan, knowing that if a valuable possession (e.g., house, car, donkey) is destroyed, he will be able to replace it. Life insurance can also help the policyholder take greater risks by giving him the peace of mind that family members will be taken care of. Offering any kind of insurance, however, would be risky and should involve trained profes-

sionals with enough capital to cover the expenses of a worst-case scenario.

Shaping MFS Teams

Often commanders in destabilized areas will not have the resources to build a large MFS team, but a well-targeted effort can go a long way to help in the reconstruction effort. Whatever service a team offers, the scope of the plan and customer base will dictate the resource and labor requirements the team needs. Military units ranging from battalion to division size can create and use MFS teams. A team can consist of a single reservist (perhaps a bank teller in civilian life) armed only with $250, a lockbox, a calculator, a pen, and some paper. On the other hand, a team can be a group of Soldiers with banking and financial service training operating a bricks-and-mortar bank with a vault, an information technology system, and millions in currency. It depends on the situation.

For example, an applicable model for Iraq might be the "mobile banker" prototype developed in West Africa. To meet marketplace vendor needs in West African towns, bankers travel to the vendors' sites, often daily, to collect deposits or deliver loans. This practice provides the vendor convenient access to financial services and allows the MFS team to monitor the vendor's business and develop personal contacts with the community.[12]

Similarly, Soldiers on patrol might be tasked to engage with local vendors or needy inhabitants on the street and identify them for the mobile MFS team. The goodwill generated by the initiative of military forces in helping to provide financial hope can feed the recipient's pride as well as his stomach and those of his family members.

The Way Ahead

Micro-financial services are not a panacea for dealing with the poor's economic needs. These services require at least a rudimentary level of economic activity.[13] In situations where the local economy has been completely destroyed, food relief, grants, employment and training programs, and infrastructure improvements will be necessary before MFS can be effective. An MFS team works best in an environment where economic activity is already taking place and is capable of expanding. Electricity projects can make power available to a micro-loan customer's storefront. Healthcare

> *An MFS team works best in an environment where economic activity is already taking place and is capable of expanding.*

services can help prevent depletion of one's cash reserves during illnesses.[14] Soldiers who hire locals to work on forward operating bases or public works projects can indirectly increase micro-loan recipients' businesses, and MFS can produce synergies in economic development activities.

Nevertheless, the increasing potential for U.S. forces to be involved in insurgencies should pro-

vide impetus to make an MFS capability organic to CATs and available to area commanders. This organic structural capability should be possible. Funds for economic reconstruction already exist for MFS use. A reach-back capability for advice from USAID specialists is also available, and a body of free online literature already provides education on how to make MFS work. Together, these resources provide military forces a great deal of guidance on what they might need to integrate MFS successfully into their stabilization and reconstruction plan.

For the foreseeable future, U.S. forces will be conducting SRO in unstable nations. Military units should have an organic MFS capability so that they have the most effective tools available to develop financial stability in these countries. *MR*

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From Enduring Strife to Enduring Peace in the Philippines

Major Gary J. Morea, U.S. Army

WITH THE EXCEPTION of a brief period of American control in the first half of the twentieth century, conflict has persisted in the Mindanao, the southern island group of the Philippines, for 500 years, since the first acts of resistance towards Spanish colonization in the sixteenth century. In fact, this conflict is the second longest internal conflict in history.[1]

The population of the Philippines is a mosaic of diverse ideologies, religions, and cultures that have coalesced into three distinct regions of the archipelago. At times, these regions have been at odds with each other. While several attempts at conflict resolution have been made over the years through many different forms of government, the conflict has not yet been resolved and groups continue to struggle against the central government for political consideration, concessions, and/or autonomy. Those living in the Mindanao, for whom resistance is central to identity, still writhe against the forces that wish to control them.

The contemporary struggle between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and Islamic separatists in the Mindanao is the latest evolution of resistance in the Philippines. The social system in the southern region of the archipelago is a complex blend of cultural, nationalistic, and religious consciousness that appeals to various social groups and organizations vying for political legitimacy and control. These groups are struggling against the centralized government of the Philippines for recognition and autonomy. They have organized political elements and have access to and influence over armed fighters ready to carry out subversive acts of violence against government facilities, people, and organizations perceived to be sympathetic to the GRP. The result of this ongoing violence has been an economic stagnation in the Mindanao that has adversely affected the economy of the entire archipelago.

The conflict in the Mindanao has at least three interrelated dimensions: political, security, and economic. The point at which these three dimensions converge is marked by tension, but it also holds the potential for cooperation. It is towards this point that efforts for peace, in the form of amnesty, reintegration, and reconciliation (AR2), should be directed.[2] AR2, a multi-staged and multidimensional approach to healing a fractured society, is fundamental to achieving a sustained peace. While there have been many attempts to pacify the Mindanao via AR2, these overtures have mostly been short-lived and narrowly focused. Hence, the conflict persists, and it will continue to do so until the GRP expands the breadth of its proposed AR2 solutions.

A broader offer of amnesty coupled with an energetic and productive reintegration program would be a testament to the GRP's sincerity and likely

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Jolo, Sulu, Philippines, 11–15 June 1913. Moro resistance to a central Philippine government included resisting American colonial rule long before the Japanese occupation.

commonly referred to as the Bangsamoro, or Moros, a label dating back to an early Spanish pejorative linking the Muslims in the Mindanao with the Moors of Morocco.[5]

In April 1946, following its time as an American Commonwealth and Japanese occupied territory, the Philippines held its first free and independent elections. The United States turned sovereignty over to the Independent Republic of the Philippines on 4 July 1946, and Manuel Roxas became the republic's first president.[6] The newly created GRP got off to a difficult start trying to recover from the physical damage inflicted by the Japanese occupation. Economic dependence on the United States after the war exacerbated the difficulties of reconstruction and recovery.[7]

Political turmoil culminated under the presidency of Ferdinand Marcos. Elected in 1965, Marcos initially had overwhelming success in advancing public works projects and executing effective tax collection measures. After he was reelected in 1969, political opposition to his presidency increased, slowing governmental projects and the economy. Due to increased social unrest and the growing risk of a communist insurgency, Marcos declared martial law on 21 September 1972. During this same year, he also created the "Presidential Task Force for the Reconstruction and Development of Mindanao." Despite his efforts, by 1974, fighting between the rebel Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) had escalated into large-scale, conventional war.

The conflict reached a stalemate in 1976. Prior to the signing of an agreement in Tripoli, Libya (the Tripoli Agreement), Marcos offered amnesty to key rebel leaders. Negotiations soon broke down, however, due to Marcos's alteration of the Tripoli Agreement's provincial autonomy outline, and conflict between the MNLF and AFP resumed. As the fighting worsened, Marcos's policies toward the Mindanao turned increasingly violent. When further attempts at diplomatic resolution were aborted, his authoritarian power began to wane. In 1981, under pressure from Pope John Paul II, Marcos lifted martial law. Five years later he was ousted by a popular revolution.[8] The next two decades saw the GRP cycle through four presidential administrations, each of which took a slightly different approach to conflict resolution.

pave the path toward full reintegration and reconciliation for all sides. Properly applied, AR2 can assuage the secessionist movements, stabilize the political structure, increase security, and improve the economic posture of the Philippines. AR2 can give the Philippine government the construct it needs to proceed toward conflict resolution.

Roots of Conflict

The Philippine archipelago comprises over 7,000 islands, islets, and atolls covering an area of over 500,000 square miles.[3] It divides into three major groupings: to the north, Luzon, which is the largest and most populous of the groupings and where the capital, Manila, resides; in the center, the Visayas; and in the south, the Mindanao group, which extends all the way to Borneo.[4] Muslim traders from Indonesia made contact with the people of the Mindanao long before Spanish missionaries and traders colonized the Philippines. As a result, most people in Mindanao are Muslim. They are

…AR2 can assuage the secessionist movements, stabilize the political structure, increase security, and improve the economic posture of the Philippines.

Ferdinand Marcos and Mrs. Marcos with President Lyndon B. Johnson, 23 October 1966.

- Building consensus and empowerment for peace through continuous consultation at the national and local levels.

- Negotiating peace with armed groups.

- Implementing measures for reintegration and reconciliation of former combatants and rehabilitation of those affected by the conflict.

- Taking measures to manage conflict and protect civilians.

- Building, nurturing, and enhancing a positive climate for peace.[14]

This executive framework remained the core of the GRP's peace plan, and it continues as such today. While the intent was to pursue the six paths simultaneously (to ensure complete coverage of the problem), this broad approach is not comprehensive enough and has neglected or ignored several key anti-government groups.

In 1994, Ramos issued Proclamation 347, which created a National Amnesty Commission and granted amnesty to rebels.[15] Ramos's ambitious peace initiatives culminated in September 1996 with the signing of the "Final Peace Agreement."[16] This agreement proved not to be so final, however, mostly because some key antagonists decided not to sign it. One of these groups was the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), an offshoot of the MNLF. Another was a new and sinister player: Abu Sayyaf.

Following the Marcos family's departure in 1986, Corazon Aquino took over as president of the Philippines. One of her first acts was to appoint a commission to draft a new constitution, which included the establishment of an autonomous Mindanao. GRP and MNLF panels met one year later, but could not come to an agreement on language describing the autonomy mandate in the draft constitution. Despite this obstacle, Aquino briefed Islamic diplomats that the Tripoli Agreement was being implemented through constitutional processes.[9] In August 1989, a draft autonomy bill was submitted to both houses and the congress passed Republic Act 6734, creating the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).[10] Regional elections gave the ARMM a new governor and a new legislative assembly. Aquino signed executive orders outlining and defining the relationship between the central government and the ARMM.

In May 1992, Fidel V. Ramos was elected president of the Philippines. One of his first official acts was to call for peace. Two months after swearing in as president, Ramos appointed the National Unification Commission (NUC) to formulate an amnesty program.[11] In 1993, he created the Office of the Presidential Advisor on the Peace Process to continue the NUC's work.[12] The high-water mark of Ramos's presidency was his attempt at AR2 in September 1993, when he issued an executive order entitled "Defining the Approach and Administrative Structure for Government's Comprehensive Peace Efforts," also known as the "Six Paths to Peace."[13] The six paths were—

- Instituting social, economic, and political reforms aimed at addressing the root causes of armed struggle and social unrest.

Because of the incomplete resolution, fighting renewed and, toward the end of Ramos's term, escalated. In 1998, Joseph Estrada became president. His ascent ushered in a period of intensified fighting and intra-governmental debates on the peace agreement. By 2000, the fighting between the AFP and the MILF had intensified, and Abu Sayyaf had begun kidnapping tourists for ransom.[17] In October 2000, allegations of corruption emerged that brought

Joseph Estrada at Malacanang Palace, Manila, 3 August 1998.

an early end to Estrada's administration. As part of his swan song, Estrada held a ceremonial amnesty in which the GRP persuaded approximately 800 MILF fighters to exchange weapons for money and a pardon.[18]

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took the oath of the presidency in January 2001. During her inaugural address, Arroyo proclaimed an "all-out-peace" policy.[19] Like most of her predecessors, Arroyo took great strides toward peace in the initial months of her tenure. She appointed members of the GRP to negotiate with the MILF and suspended military operations.[20] As a result, Arroyo achieved an important milestone in peace efforts: a meeting in Kuala Lumpur between GRP members and MNLF and MILF representatives during which a "General Framework of Agreement and Intent" was signed. With these groups' representatives involved in constructive negotiations, the GRP launched an "all-out-war" against Abu Sayyaf.

Since the initial negotiations with MILF and MNLF, there has been further progress toward a negotiated peace agreement. However, independent MILF fighters have continued to skirmish with the AFP and have launched attacks throughout the Mindanao. Conflict with Abu Sayyaf and elements of the MILF persists.

Societal Framework

The GRP's attempts at conflict resolution follow, to some degree, the amnesty, reintegration, and reconciliation process employed to heal fractured societal frameworks. AR2 is normally initiated from the political dimension, but all the dimensions in the framework are interrelated. Therefore, to understand the AR2 process with regard to the Philippines, we must first explore the political, security, and economic dimensions of the framework to identify the links between the dimensions. Specifically, which organizations are involved in shaping the political decisions that affect the people and provinces of the Mindanao, how do they interact, and how does their interaction affect the society's economic dimension?

Political dimension. The political dimension of the conflict in the Mindanao is a function of the cultural-religious identity of the ancestral inhabitants of these southern Philippine Islands, people who refuse to accept a centralized governance that

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines Hilario Davide swears President Macapagal-Arroyo into office during a ceremony held at the Cebu Provincial Capitol, 30 June 2004.

ignores their distinct social structure and belief system. The key players in this dimension are the central Philippine government, external political/religious organizations, and emergent leaders who claim to represent the interests of the Mindanao people. The main actors are—

● *The GRP*. The make up of the Philippine government today is the result of extensive reform, re-structuring, and constitutional revision along Western lines in the wake of the Marcos regime. Comprised of executive, legislative, and judicial departments, the governmental structure separates, checks, and balances power much as Western democracies do. The president is elected by direct vote of the people for a period of six years and is not eligible for reelection. While the president may offer amnesty and enter into negotiations and treaties, such agreements must be ratified by a two-thirds vote in the Philippine Senate.[21]

● *The Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers* (ICFM). This political organization is comprised of volunteer members of the Islamic international community. It first met in Rabat, Morocco, in September 1969, after an arson attack against Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque in August that year. Since then, the ICFM has met every year to evaluate progress on the implementation of decisions it made to further Islamic causes. The first international organization to officially recognize the MNLF, the conference was instrumental in initiating dialogue between the MNLF and the GRP. It continues to wield influence over the MNLF, the other Islamic separatist movements, and the GRP.

● *The MNLF*. In the late 1960s, increasing suspicion of Manila, the migration of Christians from the north into the Mindanao, and Christian marginalization of native Muslims stimulated the formation of a number of Islamic separatist movements. After martial law was declared in 1972 and all citizens were ordered to surrender their weapons, the Moros spontaneously rebelled.[22] Their rebellion consisted of mostly uncoordinated uprisings throughout the Mindanao. Led by Nur Misuari, the MNLF managed to unite the far-flung pockets of resistance, and, in 1972, the organization openly declared its leadership of the Moro secessionist movement. By 1973, at the height of the conflict, the MNLF fielded 30,000 armed fighters. The contest between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the MNLF raged for three years and culminated in the Tripoli Agreement. Signed by Misuari and Defense Under-Secretary Carmelo Barbero, this agreement allowed for some autonomy in 13 provinces of the southern Philippines.[23] Fractious political infighting weakened the MNLF by the early 1980s, but persistent skirmishes marked the decade and kept the AFP occupied in the Mindanao. By 1984, the MNLF was no longer the sole representative for Islamic separatists, although the GRP continued to reach out to it as the only officially recognized voice among the various Muslim movements.

● *The Moro Islamic Liberation Front*. A splinter element of the MNLF, the MILF declared itself active in March 1984, with the intent of following a religious as well as a nationalist agenda (hence the organization's substitution of "Islamic" for "National"). It was born as the result of an ideological schism between the chairman and vice-chairman of the MNLF. The latter, Hashim Salamat, founded the MILF and moved his headquarters to Lahore, Pakistan, where he successfully promoted his ideas to international Islamic organizations.[24] The main political difference between his organization and the MNLF was the MILF's declared determination to establish Islamic law in Muslim Mindanao, as opposed to the MNLF, which emphasized political autonomy.

● *Abu Sayyaf*. In the political dimension, Abu Sayyaf stands out as an anomaly. Although a relatively small group of radical Islamist terrorists with no real political arm, the organization currently represents perhaps the greatest threat to Philippine security. It has therefore become the target of an all-out Philippine military offensive. The group, whose name translates from Arabic as "Bearers of the Sword," was first mobilized in 1991 by Abdurajak Janjalani, a Philippine Muslim scholar who had fought as a mujahedeen against the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan. His group has connections to Al-Qaeda in the Middle East and apparent aspirations to mimic the Arab organization. Although Abu Sayyaf initially purported to be a political group and courted Islamic sympathies, it has deteriorated into nothing more than a gang of bandits, corroding the political process and spurring disruptions in the political landscape.

Security dimension. The security dimension of the societal framework of the Mindanao is significant in that it is a means of discourse between the GRP and the fractious separatist movements. When negotiations and dialogue between the political actors break down, the frequency and violence of attacks in the Mindanao typically increase until the parties reconvene in the negotiation process. The key actors in this dimension are

Armed Muslim rebels of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) display their AK-47 assault rifles and a Soviet made B-40 anti-tank rocket launcher at an undisclosed location, 19 February 1988.

AFP, Romeo Gacad

AFP, Romeo Gacad

Guerrillas of the Muslim separatist group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) at Camp Abubakar, the MILF main headquarters, in southern Maguindanao Province, 10 September 1996.

the armed elements that act on behalf of their parent political organizations. The AFP acts on behalf of the GRP, while the armed elements of the MNLF and MILF act on behalf of, although not always in concert with, their parent political organizations.

The main obstacle to stability in the security dimension has been the pseudo-political Abu Sayyaf. This group introduced itself to the world in August 1991 by bombing a ship in Zamboanga harbor and killing two American evangelists in a grenade attack.[25] Their established ties with Al-Qaeda (under Janjalani's leadership) led to connections with the Saudi Arabian businessman Mohammad Jamal Khalifa, Osama bin-Laden's brother-in-law. Khalifa controlled a large financial network of charities and a university in Zamboanga, all of which he used to bankroll Islamic extremists. (His flagship charity was the International Islamic Relief Organization, or IIRO, with an office in Zamboanga.) Abu Sayyaf received money funneled through Khalifa's network to arm and equip its members while it laid plans for its most insidious attacks, among them a plot to assassinate Pope John Paul II during his 1995 visit to the Philippines.[26]

The security situation in the Mindanao began to change in 1998, when Janjalani was killed in a fire-fight with Philippine national policemen.

He was succeeded by his younger brother, Khadaffy Janjalani, who led the group until 2006. Under Khadaffy's leadership, the group changed its focus from Islamist ideology to fundraising by means of kidnapping. This move had an adverse affect on the organization's character. Many of the members became drug users more inclined to crime than politics. In recent years, as a result of a U.S.-backed effort in the southern Philippines, Abu Sayyaf has suffered major leadership losses. Khadaffy was killed by Philippine troops in September 2006, and his likely successor, Abu Salalman, was killed in January 2007. These two leaders had the strongest ties to Middle Eastern donors. Now the reins are held by the one-armed, 70-year-old Radullan Sahiron, who demonstrated his belligerence in an August 2007 clash with the Philippine military that left approximately 52 dead (25 soldiers and 27 militants).[27]

The main convergence between the security and political dimensions of the Mindanao conflict occurs where organizations possess the potential to act in both. In order to be considered credible and worthy of engaging in dialogue, actors have to possess both a recognized political organization and military power. An organization with only political actors and no means of armed resistance is viewed as a toothless pariah; armed fighters without a recognized or effective political parent

The main convergence between the security and political dimensions of the Mindanao conflict occurs where organizations possess the potential to act in both.

Abu Sabaya (left) and Khadaffy Janjalani (right), leaders of the Abu Sayyaf Muslim extremist gang, pose for a photo in Basilan, Philippines, July 2000.

are seen as criminal and not worth the serious consideration of negotiated settlement. The effect of this dynamic on the overall societal framework is enormous. Activity within the security dimension, either positive or negative, has the greatest affect on dimensional convergence. This is especially true for the economic dimension.

Economic dimension. In the Mindanao, some economic costs are easily quantifiable, such as the lost productivity of those killed as a result of the fighting (approximately 120,000 since 1970) or sent fleeing–legally and illegally—to neighboring countries; the number of ghettos that exist; the percentage of the population living in poverty (71.3 percent in 2000); and the average income per family.[28] These quantifiable variables serve as scalable indicators for other dimensions of the societal framework, such as political and social programs and security efforts in the region.

What is more difficult to quantify, however, are the indirect costs of conflict. The perception of

instability and insecurity fostered by the strife has deflected investment in the entire Philippine archipelago. From an investment banking perspective, the country is simply not investor friendly. The resulting scarcity of capital has had adverse trickle-down effects, such as disintegration of agricultural capabilities due to a lack of funds for equipment replacement, irrigation improvement, and marketing mechanisms.[29] Sadly, this downward economic spiral feeds the instability and insecurity that have helped cause it: for military-aged males, joining a political cause or an armed militia has become the main alternative to legitimate, productive employment. Economic options for military-aged males have been a key node in which the political, economic, and security dimensions converge.

Transitioning to Enduring Peace

All conflicts are inherently different, from their root causes, to the actors involved, to the techniques employed. While there is no template or checklist for conflict resolution, conceptual constructs provide tools for the initiation and implementation of change and dialogue. One of these conceptual constructs is AR2. This construct provides conflicting parties with three tools for working at conflict resolution. These tools have distinct characteristics and, based on the context in which they are to be used, require unique consideration with regard to the order, timing, and methods used.

In breaking down AR2 into its constituent parts, we see that *amnesty* is an event; *reintegration* is a combination of the framework and processes required for the parties to become more mutually dependent and cohesive*; and reconciliation* is the desired outcome, goal, or aim of the entire process. In the end, the entire process of conflict resolution is a psychological one. How the problem is conceived, the demonization of opposing forces, and the belief in a limited number of options must all be changed. Successful application of AR2 identifies the true heart or source of the conflict, enables better understanding of the opposing parties, and develops options and paths that are acceptable to all parties and that lead to the conflict's peaceful resolution.

Amnesty. Often used as the first step in restoring or mending a fractured polity, amnesty serves as the gateway to inclusion and the invitation to

Often used as the first step in restoring or mending a fractured polity, amnesty serves as the gateway to inclusion and the invitation to rapprochement between conflicting groups.

rapprochement between conflicting groups. It encompasses more than a simple governmental pardon, which is its legalistic aspect. Amnesty is granted, and therefore the crimes are "forgotten" before prosecution occurs. (Conversely, pardons are typically granted after parties are prosecuted.) The concept of amnesty is broader and implies more a promise of societal amnesia about the crimes and offenses committed during a period of struggle, civil war, or social unrest. It completely exonerates former combatants who volunteer to participate in the restoration of civility and work towards the resumption of peace.

History is full of examples of amnesty used for political or diplomatic purposes. Some of the earliest were recorded by Thucydides (e.g., the Samians offered amnesty to members of an oligarchic coup and to the general Alcibiades during the Peloponnesian War).[30] More recently, as it transitioned to democracy, South Africa granted amnesty in return for truthful talk about political proscriptions and other crimes. In 1997, U.S. President Jimmy Carter offered amnesty to Vietnam War draft evaders as one of his first acts in office.[31] Carter clarified that the grant was not intended to forgive the draft evaders, but rather to allow the nation to forget their transgressions and the discontent that stirred in their wake. It was his way of initiating the healing process at the national level, by removing a festering source of divisiveness.

Amnesty is a political tool intended to initiate healing and compromise. But while the practical purpose for granting it is to assuage both sides of a conflict and get them to the negotiating table, amnesty can stir up emotions and dissent in those victims who will be denied justice by its offering. Careful consideration must be given to the context in which it will be offered. Specifically, great consideration must be given to the nature of the offenses

that are to be "forgotten." If the amnesty is being offered to perpetrators of victimless crimes, it will meet with less public opposition than if it is offered to offenders whose actions have created victims and circles of victims who still bear grudges. In the latter situation, amnesty can still work, but it will have to be conducted very judiciously and, perhaps, as part of a social record program, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa.[32]

Blanket amnesties have been offered in Chile, Zimbabwe, and Argentina, but the danger of such amnesties is that they can trivialize the crimes and marginalize the victims. Furthermore, blanket amnesties can create the perception that the government is incapable of dealing with offenders, therefore removing the government's most important pillar of legitimacy—its role as arbiter of justice.

The other side of the coin is the important psychological impact amnesty has upon the rebel and criminal. Amnesty provides these offenders a reason to negotiate and an alternative to continued conflict. But there must also be an opportunity for the ex-combatant, or the combatant considering the amnesty proposal, to transform himself into a contributing member of the society. A successful amnesty program must consider the dignity of everyone involved in a conflict, both victim and offender. There must then be a next step by which those on both sides of a conflict can be included in society in a meaningful way. This involves a plan and program for reintegration.

Reintegration. Simply stated, reintegration describes the efforts made to bring the ex-combatants in a fractured polity and society back into the folds of that society as the society seeks to mend itself. Reintegration typically occurs after an offer of amnesty, although it must be enticing enough for the combatants to accept the amnesty in the first place. Reintegration can come in a variety of forms, but it essentially involves a plan for transitioning formerly armed and disenfranchised combatants into amenable, income-generating civilians.

According to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), many different activities should be conducted during reintegration. The first step is to disarm and settle ex-combatants into demobilization camps. These reintegrating members can then participate in temporary work involving the construction of facilities and the repair of damaged

schools, clinics, and other infrastructure. But to be effective, a reintegration program needs to ensure that reintegrating members receive education and training that will facilitate their permanent transition to civilian life and peaceful pursuits. Training and education offer the reintegrating members hope and encourage a sense of trust in the government that will aid in achieving the follow-on goal of reconciliation.

It is important to note that simply paying ex-combatants as part of a reintegration plan is neither effective nor sustainable—although it might be a good idea to offer stipends to reintegrating members during their periods of education and formal training. Another caveat is that reintegration programs need to be offered to all members of the fractured society in order to "avoid creating a new class of privileged citizens and rewarding people who resorted to violence."[33]

In the Philippines, the USAID Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) worked with the government to develop and implement a plan to reintegrate the

A former combatant of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) uses his cell phone from a remote island in the southern Philippines to check on the market price for seaweed. He is one of 28,000 former MNLF fighters whom USAID helped to make the successful transition to productive enterprise.

MNLF from 1997 to 2000. The OTI contributed agricultural machinery, such as rice threshers and solar dryers, while the GRP and local communities provided labor, material, and training. By offering the opportunity to learn profitable skills while simultaneously providing for the welfare and needs of the community, this program strengthened communal bonds among the participants.[34] At its core, any reintegration program should focus not just on satisfying immediate needs, but also on providing hope for a more permanent transition. This is a critical component for successful reconciliation.

Reconciliation. Reconciliation is the process of restoring a civil relationship between parties in conflict, usually with the goal of achieving a peaceful, even amicable, relationship. The process is fundamentally a psychological one in which groups come to change their beliefs (which can be well-entrenched) about each other through dialogue and mutual cooperation and respect. Reconciliation can entail slow, drawn-out negotiations to reach needed compromises.

True reconciliation cannot be achieved without all parties acknowledging responsibility for past actions, as was the goal of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. According to Mari Fitzduff and Chris Stout, authors of *The Psychology of Resolving Global Conflicts: From War to Peace*, "Any attempt at restoration after a period of alienation that ignores questions of justice could not be considered true reconciliation and would not be sustainable."[35] This direct link between reconciliation and a sense of justice tends to complicate the reconciliation process, mostly because the people on opposite sides of a conflict have different opinions about what constitutes justice.

Fitzduff and Stout describe five different kinds of justice:

● *Distributive* justice: justice distributed equally to every person regardless of rank, status, wealth, position, etc.

● *Political and social* justice: all have equal access to power and its benefits.

● *Procedural* justice: the particular legal process(es) by which justice is administered.

● *Historical* justice: the historical record is set straight; past injustices are acknowledged, perhaps apologized for; and compensation may be offered to victims.

● *Compensatory* justice: reparations are paid for historical injustices.[36]

All of these must be taken fully into account to keep the reconciliation process moving forward.

Healing usually involves discomfort. The same is true in the reconciliation process. When seeking a justice commensurate with the goal of reconciliation, the parties involved will experience uneasiness and even pain in settling their differences and acknowledging the events that transpired during the conflict.

Tension and Opportunity

The Philippine government's enduring struggle with Islamic separatists has progressed through the fits and starts of unsatisfactory attempts to arrive at negotiated settlements. Regardless of how it happened, the fact remains that Christians occupy over 80 percent of the Mindanao.[37] For the Islamist autonomy movement to achieve any political credibility, it must account for the existing secular status quo. It would be near physically impossible, and certainly socially reckless, to grant independence to the southern Philippines. What remains, then, is how to incorporate the customary laws and practices that the Muslim population wants to retain and use as the basis of law without creating a double standard in the Philippine legislative and judicial systems. Furthermore, since many Muslim practices stem from religiously based Sharia law, there is the potential for fundamental disconnection from secular society. Democracy provides for religious freedom, but religion and religious-based edicts are not necessarily consistent with democratic freedoms. On the other hand, democratic constructs like the regional governments within the Autonomous Regions of Muslim Mindanao that do not provide real legislative autonomy or reasonable operating budgets are just hollow bureaucracies that widen the divide and deepen the distrust between the Bangsamoro people and the GRP. So, the AR2 process in the Philippines faces significant cultural challenges.

Nevertheless, the Philippine government has made great strides towards resolving this long struggle. It is arguably closer than it has ever been to achieving a real and lasting peace within its borders. While the process of reconciling its differences with the MNLF and MILF has been long and arduous, the GRP has learned valuable lessons about the delicate combinations of force, diplomacy,

> ***Healing usually involves discomfort. The same is true in the reconciliation process.***

and economic programs that are necessary to initiate and sustain peace. With Abu Sayyaf effectively leaderless and scattered, the GRP has an opportunity now to increase its military pressure on these quasi-insurgents while simultaneously attacking the criminal financial networks that sustain them. Most important, however, the GRP needs to provide a release valve, in the form of amnesty and eventual reintegration, from all of this pressure.

The Philippines will hold its next presidential election in 2010. As history has shown, the first few months of the new presidency will be critical because they will set the tone and pace for conflict resolution. The GRP, MNLF, and MILF, and external organizations such as USAID and the Organization of Islamic Conferences, should prepare now for that window of opportunity by drafting a new amnesty offering, developing a new reintegration program, and building a financial stockpile to fund it all. In addition, constitutional concessions and considerations must be given to the Bangsamoro population if the GRP is going to have any hope of achieving a lasting settlement with the MNLF and MILF while staving off the potential for future secessionist groups to emerge. Once the philosophical and cultural divisions are bridged and the armed combatants are effectively reintegrated into the social fabric, reconciliation will occur in the Philippines.

Conclusion

The first step toward resolving the enduring rivalry between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Bangsamoro people residing in the Mindanao is for the government to offer amnesty. The GRP must understand that through the sincerity of its actions and the rapid execution of its social programs of reintegration, it will in turn receive amnesty from those who feel disenfranchised from the GRP and distrust it. After all, reconciliation cannot be fully achieved until both sides in an argument forget the other's transgressions and move on.

While the elements of AR2 have been exercised in the Philippines, they have not been implemented as part of a cohesive construct. In two years, the GRP will have the opportunity to inject new energy and resources into solving the current dilemma. A new initiative for peace pursued within the framework of AR2 can succeed if it is undertaken with sincerity and energy.

There is no easy answer to the Mindanao problem, and responsibility lies on all sides of the negotiation table to ensure that words and deeds are matched. Overtures of amnesty are the necessary first step, but a wider net must be cast to avoid excluding potential future adversaries. Finally, the reintegration and reconciliation efforts need to follow amnesty quickly, and they ought to be linked to economic incentives that can serve as tangible proof of the change that has taken place. Peace can only be achieved when the AR2 process is carried to its fruition. The Philippine government possesses a great administrative framework, a strong desire for peace, and the tools necessary to carry out its program of AR2. Proper application of AR2 can change the dynamic of Philippine society from one of enduring rivalry to one of enduring peace wherein spirited, sincere, structured negotiation replaces the kinetic dialogue of bullets. ***MR***

NOTES

1. Salvatore Schiavo-Campo and Mary Judd, "The Mindanao Conflict in the Philippines: Roots, Costs, and Potential Peace Dividend," *Social Development Papers: Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2005). Interestingly and perhaps not surprisingly, the longest conflict is another religion-based affair, that between North and South Sudan, which dates back to the 10th century.

2. In earlier articles on amnesty published in *Military Review*, the acronym "AR2" stood for amnesty, reconciliation, and reintegration, in that order. After further discussion among those who formulated the AR2 concept, it was decided that reconciliation and reintegration should be reversed, since reintegration really becomes a means to reconciliation.

3. Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 14.

4. Ibid., 14.

5. Thomas M. McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 80-81. McKenna goes into a good amount of background regarding the roots of the "Moro" label, outlining its pejorative beginnings and underscoring the myths that have evolved among the Moros themselves in regards to their origins and ancestry.

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8. Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines, "History of the Philippines," ed. Department of Foreign Affairs (Philippine Embassy, Washington, DC).

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11. Miriam Coronel Ferrer, "Philippines National Unification Commission: National Consultation and the "Six Paths to Peace," in *Conciliation Resources* (2002), 1.

12. Ibid., 3.

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16. Casambre, 4.

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19. Schiavo-Campo and Judd, 3.

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21. *Philippines: A Country Study*, ed. Ronald E. Dolan, 4th ed., Area Handbook Series (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1993).

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23. ConciliationResources.org, 7.

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27. Emily Clark, "Combating Terrorism in the Philippines: Abu Sayyaf History," United Stated Pacific Command, <www.pacom.mil/piupdates/abusayyafhist.shtml> (25 March 2008).

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29. Associated Press, "Officials: 57 Killed in Clash with Al Qaeda-Linked Militants in Philippines," *FoxNews.com*, 10 August 2007, 1.

30. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, ed. Robert B. Strassler (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 522-27.

31. "Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Jimmy Carter," ed. General Services Administration Office of the Federal Register National Archives and Records Service (U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, DC, 1977), 6.

32. John Darby and Roger MacGinty, ed., *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 228.

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34. Ibid., 1.

35. Mari Fitzduff and Chris E. Stout, *Nature Vs. Nurture*, 3 vols., *The Psychology of Resolving Global Conflicts: From War to Peace* vol. 1 (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Security International, 2006), 89.

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Protection of Arts and Antiquities during Wartime: Examining the Past and Preparing for the Future

Major James B. Cogbill, U.S. Army

Shortly we will be fighting our way across the Continent of Europe in battles designed to preserve our civilization. Inevitably, in the path of our advance will be found historical monuments and cultural centers that symbolize to the world all that we are fighting to preserve. It is the responsibility of every commander to protect and respect these symbols whenever possible.

—General Dwight D. Eisenhower, in a message to troops on the eve of the Normandy Invasion

O N 10 APRIL 2003, one day after the toppling of the Saddam Hussein statue in Firdaus Square, representing the fall of Baghdad to U.S. forces, looters plundered Iraq's National Museum. By taking advantage of the rapid collapse of the state's security apparatus and the chaos that ensued, thieves were free to take what they wished. While initial reports that 170,000 artifacts were stolen have turned out to be wildly exaggerated, experts generally agree that at least 15,000 objects, representing priceless treasures and an integral part of Iraq's cultural heritage, were carried off without significant intervention by the U.S. military. The U.S. failure to prevent this disaster raises questions about the extent to which the military integrates cultural considerations into its planning. Historical examples from World War II demonstrate that in the past, planning for protection of arts and antiquities was an important part of U.S. military planning. Since World War II, broader cultural considerations such as language and customs have been and continue to be incorporated into military planning, but specific planning for protecting cultural objects has been conducted only on an ad hoc basis. Although there have been some recent successes in safeguarding cultural treasures during wartime, the failure to protect the National Museum of Iraq clearly demonstrates the need for a more permanent and capable mechanism to effectively integrate cultural protection measures into U.S. military campaign planning.

Protection of Cultural Treasures: World War II

After the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, America totally mobilized for war. All instruments of national power, both public and private, joined forces to contribute to the war effort. One example of this was the university-government cooperation that occurred with the goal of protecting arts and antiquities.[1] In 1942, George Stout, of Harvard's Fogg Art Museum, raised the issue of vulnerable cultural sites in wartime Europe, and in January 1943, the American Council of Learned Societies convened a committee to discuss it. The committee incorporated noted intellectuals such

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PHOTO: A U.S. Soldier stands on a howitzer that guards the main entrance of the National Museum in Baghdad, 21 June 2003. The Museum was looted after law and order broke down. (AFP, Ramzi Haidar)

as Columbia's William Dinsmoor, president of the Archaeological Institute; Francis Henry Taylor of New York's Metropolitan Museum; David Finley of the National Gallery; and Paul Sachs of Harvard. Responding to this group of academic and artistic scholars, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt created the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas, and appointed Dinsmoor and Supreme Court Justice Owen Roberts to lead it. The military then created its own organization—the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Service (MFA&A)—which would be responsible for limiting war damage to cultural artifacts and sites and returning any looted objects found during the course of military activities.

Officers from the MFA&A were integrated into the force as early as the invasion of Italy, in September 1943, and were successful at minimizing damage to Italy's artistic treasures. For instance, MFA&A members persuaded allied commanders to avoid combat inside Florence, a city that many consider to be the cultural capital of Italy. In addition, MFA&A personnel were present for the invasion of Normandy on D-Day to ensure that cultural treasures would be safeguarded, sorted, cleaned, and restored. Later, at the direction of President Harry Truman, the United States repatriated these cultural treasures to their rightful country of origin.

After the war, General Lucius Clay, High Commissioner of Germany during the U.S. occupation, was instrumental in restoring German art treasures. When members of the U.S. Third Army rescued pieces of the Kaiser Friedrich collection, to include 10 works by Rembrandt, from the salt mines in Merkers, Germany, Clay had the collection shipped back to the U.S. National Gallery of Art for restoration.[2] He then thwarted an attempt by members of Congress to appropriate the paintings as war reparations. (He did, however, allow the works to be displayed during a major exposition in 1948 which toured 13 U.S. cities and raised $2 million for German child relief.) In 1950, the U.S. Government returned all the paintings to Berlin, where they became part of the Prussian State Collection. Clay summed up the success of these efforts to protect and restore Germany's cultural heritage: "Perhaps never in the history of the world has a conquering army sought so little for its own and worked so faithfully to preserve the treasures of others."[3]

All of these actions clearly demonstrate the commitment U.S. leaders had to preserving cultural heritage during World War II. This dedication manifested itself in the way America deliberately planned, prepared for, and ably executed the mission of protecting priceless objects of culture.

Looting of the Baghdad Museum

In stark contrast to the successful efforts to protect art and antiquities during World War II, the plundering of the National Museum in Baghdad represented a failure to adequately plan and prepare for protecting cultural sites during combat operations. The story of the planning that did occur provides insight into where the process fell short and why a permanent structure for safeguarding cultural treasures during wartime is necessary.

In late November 2002, following in the tradition of George Stout, who six decades earlier had raised the issue of protecting cultural sites in wartime Europe, Dr. Maxwell Anderson and Dr. Ashton Hawkins published an op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* entitled "Preserving Iraq's Past."[4] At the time, Anderson was president of the Association of Art Museum Directors and Hawkins was president of the American Council for Cultural Policy. Their article called on U.S. leaders to conduct systematic, government-wide planning to protect Iraq's religious and cultural sites. In support of this call, they argued that the land of Iraq, formerly ancient Mesopotamia, represented the cradle of civilization and therefore included not just the cultural heritage of Iraq, but of the entire world. They urged that steps be taken to protect Iraq's religious and cultural sites and monuments. They specifically called for the prevention of looting and destruction. Finally, they pointed out that scholars in the United States familiar with Mesopotamian and Islamic archaeology would be willing to help identify vulnerable sites. Shortly after publication of the article, Anderson received a phone call from an official at the Pentagon requesting a meeting.

On 24 January 2003, Anderson, Hawkins, and Dr. McGuire Gibson, a professor at the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago and an expert on Near East archaeology and antiquity, met with Dr. Joseph J. Collins, deputy assistant secretary of defense for stability operations, and three other members of Collins's staff, at the Pentagon.[5] During

the meeting, the three art historians discussed their concerns about the vulnerable cultural sites within Iraq, going over many of the same issues Anderson and Hawkins had raised in their article. They were primarily concerned about the threat of tanks or bombs destroying monuments, religious structures, and other cultural and archaeological sites. However, they also addressed the threat of looting and noted their concerns about the National Museum in Baghdad, which they said was a repository of everything that had been excavated in Iraq since 1921, and was therefore the most important cultural institution in Iraq.

According to Anderson's recollection of the meeting, the Pentagon officials stated that they had a plan addressing these concerns and were aware of a few dozen potentially vulnerable cultural sites. Gibson responded that the actual number of sites was closer to a few thousand. Based on this discrepancy, the Defense officials agreed to meet later with Gibson to refine their list of cultural and archaeological sites.

After their meeting with Collins and his staff, Anderson and Hawkins visited the State Department to give a similar briefing. Officials at State seemed much more attuned to the threat facing Iraq's cultural heritage. Their ability to take action, however, was constrained by the fact that the Defense Department had the lead for all invasion planning. By many accounts, the Pentagon tightly controlled the reins of pre-war planning and did not successfully integrate the efforts of the government's civilian agencies. For example, at approximately the same time as these meetings, in January 2003, the Pentagon was just beginning to stand up its Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), which was supposed to integrate civilian capabilities into the post-war planning effort.

Former under secretary of defense for policy Douglas J. Feith, who along with National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley wrote the charter for ORHA, has stated that ORHA would have been a much more successful venture had it been created 20 or 30 years earlier, and not on an ad hoc basis immediately prior to the invasion.[6] Feith rightly argues that the U.S. Government needs to have a *permanent* mechanism for integrating civilian capabilities into military efforts. Likewise, avoiding destruction of

cultural heritage sites during wartime hinges on institutionalizing the planning to protect them.

As a result of ORHA's inexperience and inefficiency, the office never integrated well with Central Command and had only limited success. Illustrative of this problem, ORHA apparently sent a letter to senior U.S. military officials in late March warning of the threat to the National Museum. The letter reportedly stated that after the national bank, the museum was the number two priority for protection from looters.[7] Unfortunately, later events clearly demonstrated that military commanders did not heed the letter's warnings.

After the initial meeting at the Pentagon, Dr. Gibson stayed behind to share his extensive knowledge of Iraq's archaeological sites. The next day, he gave Defense officials a disk containing information on all the known sites. A week and a half later Gibson met with Dr. John J. Kautz, division chief, Operational and Environmental Analysis Division at the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). At this meeting, DIA officials sought more information about the locations of archaeological digs. In Gibson's opinion, the analysts wanted the information not to ensure that the sites would be protected, but to ensure that targeting planners could distinguish dig sites from dug-in air defense artillery sites on imagery.

As U.S. forces began to converge on Baghdad in March 2003, Dr. Gibson sent emails to Defense officials warning them again about the potential threats to the National Museum. He was shocked when they responded by asking, "Where is the museum?" (they wanted specific coordinates) and other questions that Gibson had previously addressed and whose answers he had thought were already incorporated into the war plan.

Despite this last-minute confusion, it does appear that the list of cultural sites was successfully incorporated into military planners' no-strike lists or no-fire areas. Indeed, according to Dr. Collins, the minimal destruction of cultural sites by direct U.S. military action is an underreported success story. In his words, the extensive "target deconfliction activities that made sure the ziggurats were not hit by a JDAM [Joint Direct Attack Munitions] even if there were snipers in the upper spires was an incredible accomplishment."[8]

According to most sources, initial plans for the siege of Baghdad called for U.S. Army mechanized

infantry and armor forces to surround the city while light infantry forces cleared the city block by block. Instead, an armor brigade from the 3d Infantry Division conducted its famous "thunder run," an armed reconnaissance mission into the center of Baghdad, on 7 April 2003. This violent, decisive action led directly to the collapse of Saddam's defenses and the fall of Baghdad in just two days.[9]

Unfortunately, the speed of the victory contributed to the virtual security vacuum that ensued. Local Iraqis began looting former government ministries and, from approximately 10 to 12 April, the National Museum. Without enough troops in Baghdad to deal with remaining pockets of resistance and simultaneously control the looting, the U.S. Army initially allowed the looting to continue unchecked. Furthermore, according to an Army spokesman, U.S. forces in Baghdad had orders to secure presidential palaces and potential WMD sites, but there were no specific orders to secure cultural sites.[10]

Despite pleas from National Museum administrators, U.S. troops did nothing to stop the theft of at least 15,000 objects. The list of treasures lost is a long one: Abbasid wooden doors; Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hatraean statues; 5,000 cylinder seals from different periods; gold and silver material, necklaces, and pendants; ancient ceramics;[11] the Sacred Vase of Warka, the world's oldest carved-stone ritual vessel; the Mask of Warka, the first naturalistic sculpture of the human face; a gold bull's head that had adorned Queen Shub-Ad's Golden Harp of Ur; the Bassetki Statue; the Lioness Attacking a Nubian ivory; and the twin copper Ninhursag bulls.[12]

Responding to an immediate outcry from the international press, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard Myers stated, "It's as much as anything else a matter of priorities." According to Myers, the need to counter ongoing enemy combat operations overrode the need to protect the museum.[13] Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was blunter. When asked about the rampant looting, he memorably replied: "Stuff happens." One of the prominent criticisms emerging from the press was that the U.S. military managed to guard the Oil Ministry in Baghdad but left the other ministries and the museum to the mercy of the looters.

Finally, on the morning of 16 April 2003, an American tank platoon arrived at the museum and set up guard. Shortly thereafter, Colonel Matthew Bogdanos, of the U.S. Marine Corps, led a joint interagency coordination group consisting of civilian representatives from the FBI, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the New York Police Department to the museum to begin an official investigation into the looting and to initiate the process of recovering lost artifacts. With assistance from Interpol, the UN Educational, Science, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and other international groups, U.S. efforts to recover the stolen antiquities have been quite successful. So far, over 5,500 of the 15,000 or so missing artifacts have been located and returned to the museum. Most of approximately 9,500 artifacts still missing are smaller, easier-to-conceal items such as cylinder seals, gems, and jewelry.

U.S. Air Force, MSGT James M. Bowman

Dr. Jabir Khalil Ibrahim (left), State Board of Antiquities, and Colonel Safa Adeen Mahdi Salih, Iraqi Police, hold the Warka Mask, a marble sculpture dating from 3100 BC, 23 September 2003. The recovered Warka Mask had been missing from the Iraqi Museum since the liberation of Iraq.

U.S. Marine Colonel Matthew Bogdanos, lead investigator in finding looted treasures taken from the Baghdad Archeological Museum, directs a presentation to the press in Baghdad, 16 May 2003.

In addition, through American assistance (including $2 million from the State Department and the Packard Humanities Institute of Los Altos, California), the museum has been restored and even modernized.[14] For instance, a new state-of-the-art electronic security system with guardhouses, fences, and surveillance cameras has been installed.

What Went Wrong?

Why does the failure to protect Iraqi art and antiquities from looting in 2003 seem to stand in such stark contrast to the successes of World War II? And how could planning for the protection of cultural heritage during wartime be improved in the future? To be fair, the U.S. mobilization for World War II was markedly different from U.S. preparations for the invasion of Iraq. In World War II, the entire country truly mobilized for war. Families cultivated victory gardens, the government issued war bonds, and the military-industrial complex went into overdrive; in short, all instruments of national power engaged in the war effort. This general mobilization helps explain why an esteemed panel of experts from the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) convened in 1943 to determine how they could contribute to the war effort (thus leading the President to create a commission and the military to form the MFA&A).

In contrast, prior to the invasion of Iraq, the military mobilized, but the government's other agencies and the private sector conducted business more or less as usual. While Anderson, Hawkins, and Gibson's exertions were noble and in keeping with the precedent set by the ACLS, they did not match the scale or carry the same weight as the academic effort that occurred during World War II.

Furthermore, in terms of timing, the ACLS prepared its assessment a full eight months before the invasion of Italy and over a year and a half before the invasion of France, whereas the meetings at the Pentagon in 2003 occurred less than three months prior to the invasion. The relative lack of preparation time for Iraq undoubtedly hindered the integration of cultural-site protection into the planning process.

Finally, the force sent into Iraq was only a fraction of the size of the one that invaded Europe. The relatively small size of the 2003 force is probably the principal reason the U.S. military failed to protect the National Museum. According to Dr. Collins, there were not even enough troops to guard ammunition dumps and weapons caches that U.S. forces knew about, let alone cultural sites.[15] None of these things excuse the U.S. military's unpreparedness to guard Iraq's cultural treasures after the fall of Baghdad, but they do provide some mitigating factors.

There are several areas where planning to protect cultural sites could have been enhanced. First, the planning should have been conducted much sooner, and with much greater involvement from civilian agencies. If ORHA could have been created even two to three months earlier, there would have been a much greater chance of capitalizing on expertise in the State Department, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and intergovernmental entities such as UNESCO. As reported by Dr. Anderson, officials at the State Department seemed to have a better understanding of the risks to cultural sites within Iraq, but they were relegated to a secondary and perhaps undervalued planning role.

Another problematic aspect of the planning for Iraq was the delegation of responsibility for protecting cultural sites to the deputy assistant secretary

Iraqi employees display recovered artifacts at the Iraq National Museum, 10 November 2003.

manders to halt the looting of the museum, Collins responded, "We are a policy shop… We are not in the business of guiding military operations."[17]

The final major factor contributing to the failure to protect the museum was that, once again, the mechanism for overseeing the mission was thrown together ad hoc. Currently, no permanent structure in the Department of Defense or the government's civilian agencies is charged with overseeing the protection of art and antiquities during wartime. As previously noted, during World War II the president created the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas, and the military created the MFA&A, but these institutions did not endure much beyond the war's end. The lack of an enduring structure virtually ensures that cultural site protection will continue to be ad hoc, making future destruction of art and antiquities during wartime a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Planning to Protect Arts and Antiquities

Through examination of the problems noted above, it is possible to formulate a prescription for improving planning to protect arts and antiquities. First, the role of cultural experts in developing plans for protecting cultural sites and coordinating those plans with operational plans should be enhanced and formalized. This step will ensure that cultural-protection planning occurs on more than just an informal basis. We should not expect our military personnel to be experts on the location and significance of art and culture in countries around the world. That knowledge resides in the civilian agencies of the U.S. Government, in academia, NGOs, and intergovernmental organizations. The military's relationship with these organizations should be formalized so that experts can play an active role in integrating cultural considerations into military planning.

The U.S. Government has already recognized the need to enhance civilian capabilities for the type of military operations it confronts today. To that end, it has created the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), which the President has tasked to coordinate and lead all efforts to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities.

of defense for stability operations. In the words of Dr. Collins, who held the position prior to the war, this office was basically "the junk drawer of OSD policy," taking on missions and responsibilities that other agencies and directorates preferred not to deal with.[16] At the time of the invasion, that assessment was probably accurate.

Furthermore, this office was responsible primarily for *stability operations*—in other words, for operations that are commonly understood to occur *after* the conclusion of combat operations. In essence, protection of cultural sites was not viewed as an aspect of the operation's combat phases. Instead, it was relegated to what the military calls "phase IV," the stability and reconstruction phase of an operation. This could certainly explain why security of the National Museum did not become a priority until after major combat operations in the city had ceased. When asked after the war why he did not order com-

U.S. Air Force, SSG Reynaldo Ramon

A complementary mission of the S/CRS is to create the Civilian Reserve Corps (based on the U.S. military's reserve) to capitalize on civilian expertise in both the public and private sectors. The S/CRS and the Civilian Reserve Corps could each contribute to building U.S. Government capacity to plan for protecting cultural sites during wartime.

The U.S. Government should create a permanent, dedicated structure within the Department of Defense that, at a minimum, ensures that appropriate cultural planning occurs and is disseminated to all levels of command. This organization should be fully integrated into the operations and policy directorates—not marginalized as an afterthought in the "junk drawer" of the Pentagon. It would also be responsible for coordinating directly with whatever civilian agency has overall responsibility for protecting cultural arts and antiquities. Perhaps most importantly, cultural planning should not be relegated to the periphery as part of "phase IV" operations. Unless such planning is a formal aspect of all phases of the operation, it will not be executed properly.

Conclusion

Over 60 years ago, General Eisenhower stated that it was "the responsibility of every commander to protect and respect" symbols of cultural heritage during wartime. That responsibility continues today. As wars of the past attest, once lost or destroyed, cultural heritage can never be rebuilt. For the present, the treasures of Iraq's National Museum represent the collective cultural heritage of the strife-riven Sunni and Shi'a sects in Iraq. Indeed, these treasures represent the unifying heritage of the whole world. For these reasons, the importance of protecting these sites cannot be understated. By ensuring their safekeeping and the safekeeping of art and artifacts during future wars, we will give our own cultural heritage a much better chance of remaining secure and available to posterity. *MR*

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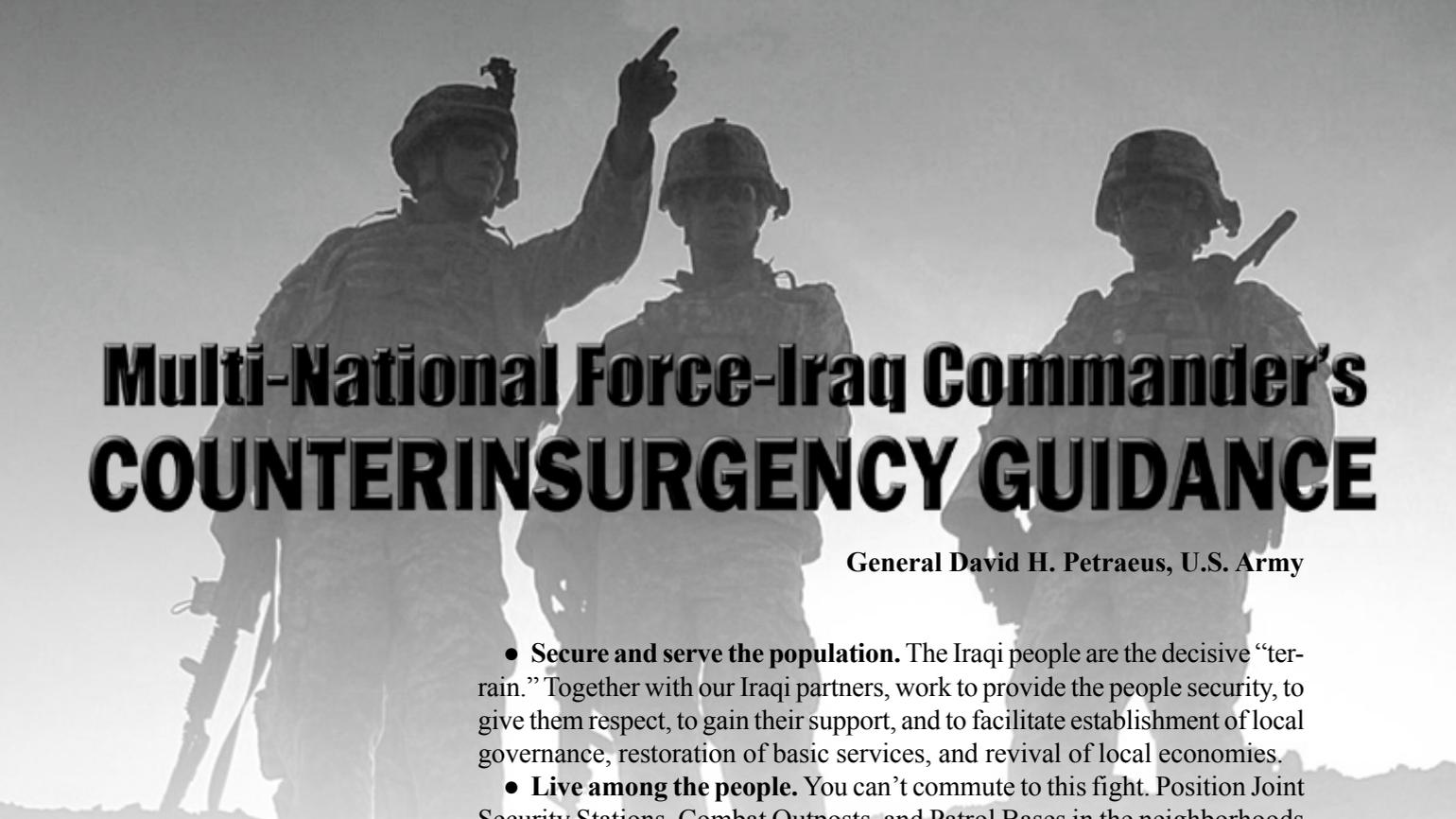13. Douglas Jehl and Elizabeth Becker, "'Experts' Pleas to Pentagon Didn't Save Museum," *New York Times*, 16 April 2003, B5.
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Multi-National Force-Iraq Commander's
COUNTERINSURGENCY GUIDANCE

General David H. Petraeus, U.S. Army

General David H. Petraeus is the commanding general of the Multi-National Force-Iraq. He is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and has an MPA and Ph.D. in international relations from Princeton University. General Petraeus has been nominated for and confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the next commander for the U.S. Central Command and will take command in October.

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PHOTO: U.S. Soldiers stand atop a bridge being constructed over a canal between routes Bismarck and Aggies to improve traffic on Forward Operating Base Kaslu, Iraq, 21 May 2008. (U.S. Army, SGT Kevin Stabinsky)

● **Secure and serve the population.** The Iraqi people are the decisive "terrain." Together with our Iraqi partners, work to provide the people security, to give them respect, to gain their support, and to facilitate establishment of local governance, restoration of basic services, and revival of local economies.

● **Live among the people.** You can't commute to this fight. Position Joint Security Stations, Combat Outposts, and Patrol Bases in the neighborhoods we intend to secure. Living among the people is essential to securing them and defeating the insurgents.

● **Hold areas that have been secured.** Once we clear an area, we must retain it. Develop the plan for holding an area before starting to clear it. The people need to know that we and our Iraqi partners will not abandon them. When reducing forces, gradually thin our presence rather than handing off or withdrawing completely. Ensure situational awareness even after transfer of responsibility to Iraqi forces.

● **Pursue the enemy relentlessly.** Identify and pursue Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and other extremist elements tenaciously. Do not let them retain support areas or sanctuaries. Force the enemy to respond to us. Deny the enemy the ability to plan and conduct deliberate operations.

● **Employ all assets to isolate and defeat the terrorists and insurgents.** Counter-terrorist forces alone cannot defeat Al-Qaeda and the other extremists. Success requires a comprehensive approach that employs all forces and all means at our disposal—non-kinetic as well as kinetic. Employ coalition and Iraqi conventional and special operations forces, Sons of Iraq, and all other available non-military multipliers in accordance with the attached "Anaconda Strategy." (See figure.)

● **Generate unity of effort.** Coordinate operations and initiatives with our embassy and interagency partners, our Iraqi counterparts, local governmental leaders, and non-governmental organizations to ensure all are working to achieve a common purpose.

● **Promote reconciliation.** We cannot kill our way out of this endeavor. We and our Iraqi partners must identify and separate the "irreconcilables" from the "reconcilables" through thorough intelligence work, population control measures, information operations, kinetic operations, and political initiatives. We must strive to make the reconcilables part of the solution,

Work with
Source Countries

Syria
Engagement

Strategic
Communications

Interagency

Border Ports of Entry
Improvements

Information
Operations

Kinetics

Counter-Terrorist
Force Ops

Internet

Conventional
Force Ops

Religious
Engagement

Iraqi Conventional
& Special Force Ops

Education

Jobs Programs

Sons of Iraq

Services

Non-kinetics

Counter Ethno-Sectarian
Pressures

Counterinsurgency
in Detention Facilities

Tribal
Awakenings

Detainee
Releases

**Detainee
Ops**

Politics

Political
Reconciliation
(Laws/policies)

Intel Fusion

Intel, Surveillance
and Recon Platforms

Armed Unmanned
Aerial Vehicles

Intelligence

AQI NEEDS

Weapons

AQ Senior Leader
Guidance

Money

Ansar
al Sunna

AQI

Foreign
Fighters

Command
and Control

Other
Groups

Ideology

Safe
Havens

Popular
Support

Anaconda Strategy vs. AQI

even as we identify, pursue, and kill, capture, or drive out the irreconcilables.

● **Defeat the network, not just the attack.** Focus to the "left" of the explosion. Employ intelligence assets to identify the network behind an attack, and go after its leaders, explosives experts, financiers, suppliers, and operators.

● **Foster Iraqi legitimacy.** Encourage Iraqi leadership and initiative; recognize that their success is our success. Partner in all that we do and support local involvement in security, governance, economic revival, and provision of basic services. Find the right balance between coalition forces leading and the Iraqis exercising their leadership and initiative, and encourage the latter. Legitimacy of Iraqi actions in the eyes of the Iraqi people is essential to overall success.

● **Punch above your weight class.** Strive to be "bigger than you actually are." Partner in operations with Iraqi units and police, and employ Sons of Iraq, contractors, and local Iraqis to perform routine tasks in and around Forward Operating Bases, Patrol Bases, and Joint Security Stations, thereby freeing up our troopers to focus on tasks "outside the wire."

● **Employ money as a weapon system.** Money can be "ammunition" as the security situation

improves. Use a targeting board process to ensure the greatest effect for each "round" expended and to ensure that each engagement using money contributes to the achievement of the unit's overall objectives. Ensure contracting activities support the security effort, employing locals wherever possible. Employ a "matching fund" concept when feasible in order to ensure Iraqi involvement and commitment.

● **Fight for intelligence.** A nuanced understanding of the situation is everything. Analyze the intelligence that is gathered, share it, and fight for more. Every patrol should have tasks designed to augment understanding of the area of operations and the enemy. Operate on a "need to share" rather than a "need to know" basis. Disseminate intelligence as soon as possible to all who can benefit from it.

● **Walk.** Move mounted, work dismounted. Stop by, don't drive by. Patrol on foot and engage the population. Situational awareness can only be gained by interacting with the people face-to-face, not separated by ballistic glass.

● **Understand the neighborhood.** Map the human terrain and study it in detail. Understand the local culture and history. Learn about the tribes, formal and informal leaders, governmental structures, religious elements, and local security forces. Understand how

local systems and structures—including governance, provision of basic services, maintenance of infrastructure, and economic elements— are supposed to function and how they really function.

● **Build relationships.** Relationships are a critical component of counterinsurgency operations. Together with our Iraqi counterparts, strive to establish productive links with local leaders, tribal sheikhs, governmental officials, religious leaders, and interagency partners.

● **Look for sustainable solutions.** Build mechanisms by which the Iraqi Security Forces, Iraqi community leaders, and local Iraqis under the control of governmental institutions can continue to secure local areas and sustain governance and economic gains in their communities as the coalition force presence is reduced. Figure out the Iraqi systems and help Iraqis make them work.

● **Maintain continuity and tempo through transitions.** Start to build the information you'll provide to your successors on the day you take over. Allow those who will follow you to "virtually look over your shoulder" while they're still at home station by giving them access to your daily updates and other items on SIPRNET. Deploy planners and intel analysts ahead of time. Encourage extra time on the ground during transition periods, and strive to maintain operational tempo and local relationships to avoid giving the enemy respite.

● **Manage expectations.** Be cautious and measured in announcing progress. Note what has been accomplished, but also acknowledge what still needs to be done. Avoid premature declarations of success. Ensure our troopers and our partners are aware of our assessments and recognize that any counterinsurgency operation has innumerable challenges, that enemies get a vote, and that progress is likely to be slow.

● **Be first with the truth.** Get accurate information of significant activities to the chain of command, to Iraqi leaders, and to the press as soon as is possible. Beat the insurgents, extremists, and criminals to the headlines, and pre-empt rumors. Integrity is critical to this fight. Don't put lipstick on pigs. Acknowledge setbacks and failures, and then state what we've learned and how we'll respond. Hold the press (and ourselves) accountable for accuracy, characterization, and context. Avoid spin, and let facts speak for themselves. Challenge enemy disinformation. Turn our enemies' bankrupt messages, extremist ideologies, oppressive practices, and indiscriminate violence against them.

● **Fight the information war relentlessly.** Realize that we are in a struggle for legitimacy that will be won or lost in the perception of the Iraqi people. Every action taken by the enemy and our forces has implications in the public arena. Develop and sustain a narrative that works, and continually drive the themes home through all forms of media.

● **Live our values.** Do not hesitate to kill or capture the enemy, but stay true to the values we hold dear. Living our values distinguishes us from our enemies. There is no tougher endeavor than the one in which we are engaged. It is often brutal, physically demanding, and frustrating. All of us experience moments of anger, but we can neither give in to dark impulses nor tolerate unacceptable actions by others.

● **Exercise initiative.** In the absence of guidance or orders, determine what they should be and execute aggressively. Higher level leaders will provide a broad vision and paint "white lines on the road," but it will be up to those at tactical levels to turn "big ideas" into specific actions.

● **Empower subordinates.** Resource to enable decentralized action. Push assets and authorities down to those who most need them and can actually use them. Flatten reporting chains. Identify the level to which you would naturally plan and resource, and go one further—generally looking three levels down, vice the two levels down that is traditional in major combat operations.
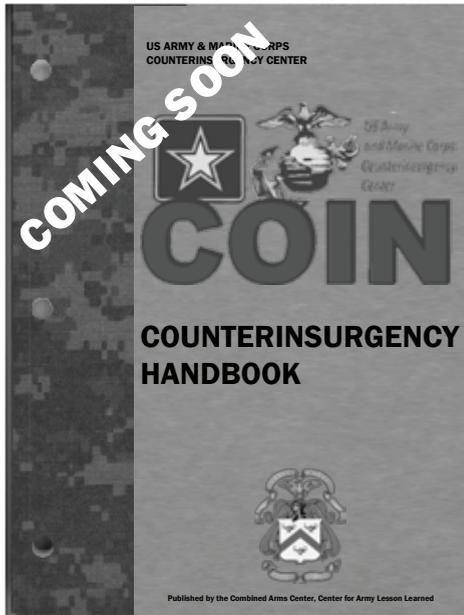
● **Prepare for and exploit opportunities.** "Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity" (Seneca the Younger). Develop concepts (such as that of "reconcilables" and "irreconcilables") in anticipation of possible opportunities, and be prepared to take risk as necessary to take advantage of them.

● **Learn and adapt.** Continually assess the situation and adjust tactics, policies, and programs as required. Share good ideas. Avoid mental or physical complacency. Never forget that what works in an area today may not work there tomorrow, and that what works in one area may not work in another. Strive to ensure that our units are learning organizations. In counterinsurgency, the side that learns and adapts the fastest gains important advantages. ***MR***

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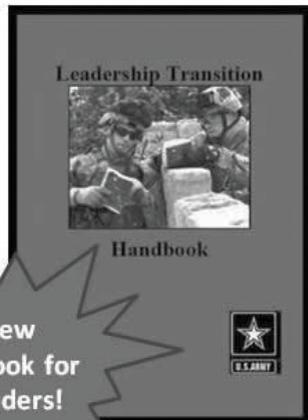
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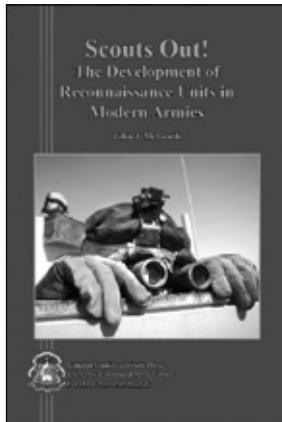CAL Public Website
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"Arms are instruments of ill omen, not the instruments of the gentleman. When one is compelled to use them, it is best to do so without relish. There is no glory in victory, and so to glorify it despite this is to exult in the killing of men. One who exults in the killing of men will never have his way in the empire. On occasions of rejoicing precedence is given to the left; On occasions of mourning precedence is given to the right. A lieutenant's place is on the left; The general's place is on the right. This means that it is mourning rites that are observed. When great numbers of people are killed, one should weep over them with sorrow. When victorious in war, one should observe the rites of mourning."

— Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching, 31, circa 6th century B.C. (translated by D.C. Lau)

PHOTO: U.S. Soldiers stand atop a bridge being constructed over a canal between route Bismarck and Aggies to improve traffic on Forward Operating Base Kaslu, Iraq, 21 May 2008. (U.S. Army, SGT Kevin Stabinsky)