The "New" Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Baghdad Surge

Formula for Success?

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Presentation Roadmap

- The Situation (Simplified)

- Combating Insurrections

- FM 3-24 (MCWP 3-33.5) and Counterinsurgency

- FM 3-24 (MCWP 3-33.5) and the Surge

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The Situation (Simplified)

FM 3-24:

"Insurgencies are protracted by nature. Thus COIN operations always demand considerable expenditures of time and resources . . . . The population must have confidence in the staying power of both the counterinsurgents and the HN government. Insurgents and local populations often believe that a few casualties or a few years will cause the United States to abandon a COIN effort." 1-24

"Executing COIN operations is complex, demanding, and tedious. There are no simple, quick solutions. Success often seems elusive." 5-31

- The Bush Administration: "Victory on the Cheap."

- The Opposition: "Withdrawal without Consequences."

- Catch-22: The American people _want_ to hear the opposite of what the Iraqi people and the enemy _need_ to hear.

- The reality: Whether we stay or leave, we will likely be confronted with what Sec Def Rumsfeld called a "long, hard slog."

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Strategic Options
Dominant Powers and Insurrections

The Roman Model: Massive Retaliation

- Strategy: "Rome creates a desert and calls it peace"

- Success Rate: Very High

- Examples: Britain revolt c. 60AD; Israelite revolt c. 70AD

- US Adaptability: Low. Owing to US political culture, it is unlikely the Roman model would apply, except in the most dire of circumstances

"[A]t the conclusion of Domitian's campaign against the Nasamones of North Africa, he reported to the Senate that the war had been won, and that the Nasamones had ceased to exist."

The British Model: "Flexible Response"

- Strategy: "Divide and Conquer," "Oil Spot"

- Examples: Iraq (interwar period) and Malaya

- US Adaptability: Low. Owing to US political culture, sanctioning a protracted engagement is problematic

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Strategic Options

Attrition/Exhaustion

- **Strategy:** Seeking out and destroying insurgent groups and main force elements so as erode insurgent strength more quickly than it can be regenerated, inducing over time a sense of futility among the insurgents; kill insurgent leaders and "decapitate" the enemy

- **Example:** US "search and destroy" operations in Vietnam; "Whack-a-Mole" operations in Iraq

- Low priority given to winning "hearts and minds"

- Implies an ability to persist at whatever level of conflict is necessary over a protracted period of time

- Early US operations in western Iraq ("whack a mole"/"kick in the door" operations) appear to reflect this approach

> *"[I] don't think we will put much energy into trying the old saying, 'win the hearts and minds'. I don't look at it as one of the metrics of success."*
>
> LTG Thomas F. Metz
> August 2004

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Strategic Options

Oil Spot

- Strategy: Pursue the "iron logic"—secure the population as a means of enabling reconstruction and winning over their "heart and minds."

- Examples: Templer in Malaysia and Magsaysay in the Philippines

- To priority accorded to securing the population as an indirect means of attriting insurgent strength; counterinsurgent forces are not sufficiently strong or numerous to stabilize/pacify the entire country simultaneously—therefore it must be accomplished sequentially

- Gradually expand outward from secure areas by establishing enduring security in a small area to enable reconstruction, political reform and training of indigenous security elements

  - Economic reconstruction that endures offers a better life

  - Social reform that endures offers a better life

  - Political elections at the local level

  - Enduring security wins not only the people's hearts, but their minds

> *"[T]he contest was not physical, but moral, and so battles were a mistake."*
>
> T.E. Lawrence

The "Iron Logic"

FM 3-24:

"The ultimate success in COIN is gained by protecting the populace, not the COIN force." 1-27

"Popular support allows counterinsurgents to develop the intelligence necessary to identify and defeat insurgents." 1-29

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- A war driven by intelligence . . . If we know who the enemy is, and where he is, we win—But how to obtain that intelligence?

- The local population knows who among them are insurgents, militiamen, and radical Islamists; therefore . . .

  – Does the population believe in what the US is trying to accomplish?

  – Does the population believe the Americans will emerge victorious?

  – Does the population feel secure enough to collaborate?

"Population security depends on the assumption that U.S. forces can insulate the populace from insurgents and militias. But how do you isolate the population from the population?"

Lawrence Kaplan

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Stumbling Toward Counterinsurgency

FM 3-24

"Campaign design may very well be the most important aspect of countering an insurgency . . . . Design should reflect a comprehensive approach that works across all LLOs in a manner applicable to the stage of the campaign. There should be only one campaign and therefore one design. The single campaign should bring in all players, with particular attention placed on HN participants." 4-9
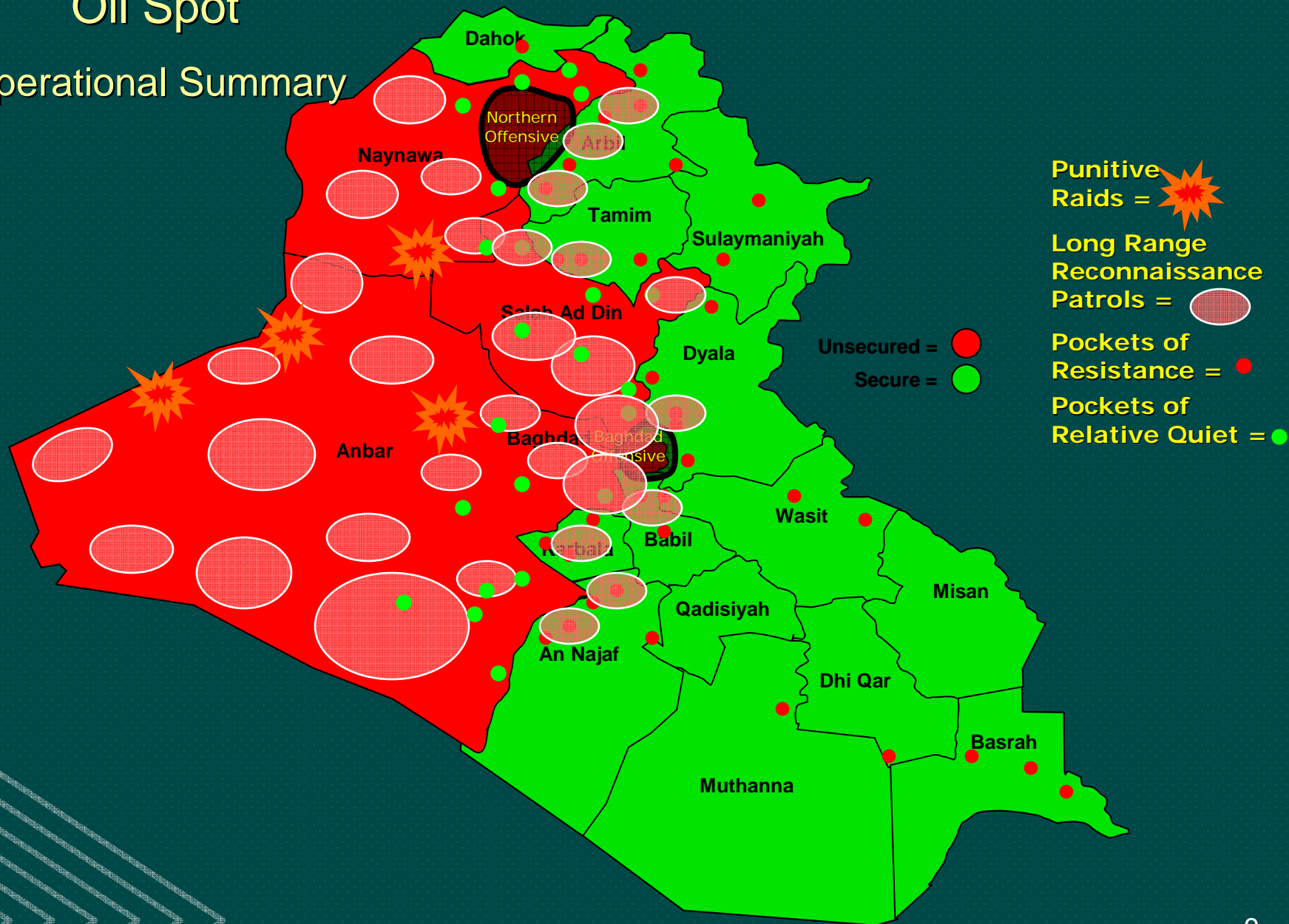

- (2003-2004) The "Jazz" Era: "As You Like It"

- (2005) The "Red Team": Oil spot "offensives" and the "Cities Strategy"

- (2006) The "False Start": Operation Together Forward

- (2007) A "Serious Effort": "The Surge"

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Oil Spot
Operational Summary

Dahok
Northern Offensive
Naynawa
Arbil
Tamim
Sulaymaniyah
Salah Ad Din
Dyala
Anbar
Baghdad
Baghdad Offensive
Wasit
Babil
Karbala
Misan
Qadisiyah
An Najaf
Dhi Qar
Basrah
Muthanna

Punitive Raids =
Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols =
Unsecured =
Secure =
Pockets of Resistance =
Pockets of Relative Quiet =

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Stumbling toward Counterinsurgency

- Petraeus in Mosul (2004)

- McMaster in Tall Afar (2005)

- McFarland in Ramadi (2006)

- Odierno in Baghdad (2007)???

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The Surge
Tying our Shoelaces Together

- Unity of Command

- All-Stars in the Game

- Advisor Effort

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Unity of Command

FM3-24

"Unity of effort must be present at every echelon of a COIN operation . . . . Ideally, a single counterinsurgent leader has authority over all government agencies involved in COIN operations." 1-22

"Counterinsurgency (COIN) operations require synchronized application of military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions." 5-1

"All organizations contributing to a COIN operation should strive, or be persuaded to strive, for maximum unity of effort." 2-3

"The country team determines how the United States can effectively apply interagency capabilities to assist a HN government in creating a complementary institutional capacity to deal with an insurgency." 2-12

- No unity of command in Baghdad—or in Washington

All-Stars in the Game

FM 3-24

"[C]ommanders and staffs [must] devote at least as much effort to understanding the people they support as they do understanding the enemy." 3-35

- Sweeping the Command Clean (or "Would you relieve Marshall, Ike, Patton and Bradley in May of 1944?")

- Stars on the bench (or "Where have you gone, Gens Mattis? Barno? Chiarelli? Olson?")

- Footnote: No senior officer/official has been fired, despite the failure to produce results for four years.

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The Advisors

FM 3-24

"Effective advisors are an enormous force enhancer." 6-17

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- Army not structured with thousands of "excess" officers and NCOs.

- Little incentive for officers and NCOs to serve with HN forces.

- Commanders reluctant to give up their "star" players to the advisory effort.

- Not clear whether Army is resolving this difficult problem.

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The Surge: Execution

FM 3-24

"US and HN military commanders and the HN government together must devise the plan for attacking the insurgents' strategy and focusing the collective effort to bolster or restore government legitimacy." 5-1

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- Level of Iraqi government "buy-in" is unclear

- Level of trust that can be invested in the HN forces is uncertain

- Iraqi government's legitimacy is linked to a political solution involving

    - Shared power

    - Shared wealth

    - Belief that hanging together is preferable to hanging alone

    - Enduring US presence

- Not clear the "National Compact" is doable

- Architect (Khalilzad) is being replaced (Crocker)

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The Surge: Execution

FM 3-24

"HN forces and other counterinsurgents must establish control of one or more areas from which to operate. HN forces must secure the people continuously within these areas." 5-1

"Operations should be initiated from the HN government's areas of strength against areas under insurgent control." 5-1

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- The Baghdad "Surge" is consistent with the plan advocated by Amb Khalilzad in the summer of 2005, and with COIN doctrine.

- Government must be able to protect itself if it is to convince the people it can protect them.

- Unclear whether ISF or Iraqi Police units can (or are willing) to provide security as the "oil spot" expands.

- Unclear whether the American public will invest the time necessary to permit "success" to be achieved.

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The Surge: Execution

FM 3-24

"Regaining control of insurgent areas requires the HN government to expand operations to secure and support the population." 5-1

- Success can be linked to progress made in Ramadi under Colonel McFarland.

- Overall effect is to support "Cities Strategy"

- Might be able to show significant success in Baghdad and Ramadi by mid-2008

- Major problem remains the absence of a political solution to support the campaign plan—the "National Compact"

- One fundamental problem is the lack of faith in the United States' willingness to persist

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The Surge: Execution

FM 3-24

"Information operations (IO) must be aggressively employed . . . ." 5-1

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- Not clear US is in the game in a competitive way

- US: We are here to bring peace, stability, prosperity, democracy

- Iraqis: US is here to undermine our religion, steal our oil, colonize our lands

- The Home Front: the administration has lost control of the narrative, and lost popular confidence—who can/should explain the war to the American people?

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The Surge
Tying our Shoes Together (II)

FM 3-24

"The primary frontline COIN force is often the police—not the military." 6-19

"Few military units can match a good police unit in developing an accurate human intelligence picture of their AO. Because of their frequent contact with populace, police often are the best force for countering small insurgent bands supported by the local populace." 6-19

"A successful COIN effort establishes HN institutions that can sustain government legitimacy." 6-22

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- 2006 to be the "Year of the Police"—but the police remain corrupt, ineffective and penetrated by the enemy

- Makes it difficult to see how short-term success in Baghdad can be quickly or easily translated into long-term success

- Government institutions being run by tribes in some cases, or factions, rather than those loyal to the government

- State Department requesting DoD personnel to support its efforts to build institutions

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Bottom Line

"Defeating [the insurgents] requires counterinsurgents to develop the ability to learn and adapt rapidly and continuously." 1-29

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The USG has been consistently slow to adapt in this war—wasting precious time and resources. It has been slow to . . .

- Recognize the insurgency, the rise of militias to fill security vacuums, and the potential for sectarian violence

- Effectively mobilize the nation's human and material resources

- Train indigenous forces and work to build effective government institutions

- Realize the importance of, and develop a capability to, engage effectively in "the war of ideas"

- Develop a coherent, integrated campaign plan to win the war

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The Thin Green Line

- 92,000 force structure increase (65,000 Army and 27,000 Marine Corps)

- Army Recruitment/Retention Costs are Up and Numbers Are Down

    – Retention Bonuses: $735 million (2006) v. $85 million (2003)

    – Cost per troop: $120,000 (2006) v. $75,000 (2001)

    – Shortages: 3,000 officers (2006); 3,700 (2008); 7,500 Guard and Reserve (2006)

- . . . And quality is down, too

    – 8,500 moral waivers (2006) v. 2,260 (1996)

    – Basic Training Graduation Rate: 94% (2006) v. 82% (2005)

    – More high school dropouts (~82 \% for 2006 v. 90% benchmark; lowest since 1981 rate of 80%)

    – Lower aptitude test scores (61% over 50th percentile lowest since 1985)

    – Felony waivers up over 30 percent (2005-2006)

    – Lowered age and weight limits

- Hired Guns: The Roman and Halliburton Options

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Building Partner Capacity

- Army not structured for . . .

  - "MAAG-like" organizations

  - "CORDS-like" organizations

  - Sizeable advisory efforts

  - Stability Operations

- Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps are much the same . . . nor are the Services inclined to move much toward creating the capabilities to build partner capacity

- . . . and DoD is being tapped to address other exec. branch shortfalls

- No stockpiles of equipment ("SSTR POMCUS") exist to support the effort

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Conclusions

- FM 3-24 provides a classic method of coping effectively with insurgency—the Roman Model is ruled out, yet it's not clear the "classic" model prescribed here can work for the US, either

- The history of US COIN in Iraq is characterized by a number of significant failures to follow the doctrine prescribed in FM 3-24

- Particularly worrisome is the sluggish pace of adaptation—in some critical aspects, the war is still being conducted on a "business-as-usual" approach

- The Surge—originally proposed in 2005—might have worked in 2004; barring exceptional leadership and more than a little luck, it's is perhaps the last, best hope to turn things around, but it is far more of a long shot than it need have been

- The Surge confronts two critical—and perhaps insurmountable—barriers to success: Uncertain support from the Iraqi government and its security forces; and demands on the Home Front for quick results in a war that is protracted in nature

- We have not worked through the consequences of "Plan C" (Withdrawal); nor have we developed a way for dealing with these kinds of conflicts in the future

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Questions?