

Small Wars/21st Century

APPENDIX A

CIVIL MILITARY OPERATIONS

Small Wars are distinguished from large conventional conflicts in part by the degree to which the commander considers the civil dimension of military operations. Because the political dimension remains paramount in Small Wars, MAGTF and subordinate commanders must focus on civilian considerations in and around the battlespace, instead of solely orienting on the destruction of an adversary's military capacity. In fact, in many Small Wars, the main effort will focus on what are called Civil Military Operations since the civilian populace may be the center of gravity. MCDP 1 acknowledges the need to "consider maneuver in other dimensions as well."¹ In Small Wars, Civil Military Operations may be the most decisive MAGTF "maneuver" in another dimension. Civil Military Operations provide another opportunity to gain or exploit an advantage and accomplish our objectives more effectively.

Civil-Military Operations: "the activities of a commander that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relationships between military forces, governmental and nongovernmental civilian organizations and authorities, and the civilian populace in a friendly, neutral, or hostile area of operations in order to facilitate military operations, to consolidate and achieve U.S. objectives. Civil-military operations may be performed by designated civil affairs forces, by other military forces, or by a combination of civil affairs forces and other forces." Joint Pub 1-02 *DoD Dictionary of Military and*

The term Civil-Military Operations (CMO) describes all of the activities that the commander undertakes to gain, maintain, and exploit relations between the MAGTF and civilian populations, organizations, and leaders. There is normally a CMO component to each and every military operation, though the MAGTF resources devoted to CMO will vary with particular operations and even throughout the phases of operations. Whatever the mission, CMO must be a constant element throughout planning and execution of operations, and not

¹ MCDP 1, *Warfighting*, p. 72.

merely an adjunct specialty that occurs before or after hostilities. Effective CMO minimizes civilian interference with, and maximizes support across the range of military operations.

Just as the battlespace has dimensions across the surface, in the air and space, and through time, each and every operation also has a civil dimension. This civil dimension of military operations requires that commanders consider not only the actions of armed forces and irregular troops, but also how these actions effect and are affected by non-combatants in the battlespace. These actions and effects make the task of achieving objectives on the battlefield more or less easy to accomplish, both for us and for our enemies.

The term CMO does not refer merely to operations in which the MAGTF provides support or services to civilians and their governments, such as Humanitarian Assistance efforts. Sometimes, CMO is performed solely to allow the MAGTF commander to apply combat power as efficiently as possible in order to win battles and destroy the enemy's military capabilities. CMO may be employed to isolate the opposing armed force, or to accelerate the MAGTF's maneuver. Thus, CMO may be a critical shaping action designed to support a critical kinetic blow in the campaign. Similarly, CMO is not limited to post-conflict transition efforts. CMO can support every MAGTF effort in each phase of a campaign across the full range of military operations. Consequently, MAGTF staffs must be proficient in the design, conduct and execution of CMO.

Civil-Military Operations and Civil Affairs Forces

Civil Affairs (CA) is a term used only to describe designated personnel and distinct units. CA is neither a mission nor an objective, but the name of particular units that help the MAGTF commander plan, coordinate, and execute CMO. CMO is not a responsibility assigned solely to dedicated Civil Affairs units or personnel. Instead, many elements of the MAGTF should participate in the planning and execution of CMO, while CA forces bring expertise to each and every MAGTF operation.

Successful Civil-Military Operations

By creating and successfully managing relations between the MAGTF and the wide variety of civilians on the battlefield, the MAGTF commander helps to shape his battlespace. This

enables and facilitates his operations, while complicating his enemies' activities. In small wars CMO helps the commander to see, isolate, and finally negate his adversary, while meeting his legal and moral obligations to those civilians under his control. CMO is intended to help the MAGTF to win the fight. Several benefits accrue to the commander through successful CMO.

Enhanced Situational Awareness. MAGTF elements conducting CMO contribute to the commander's feel of the battlespace and generate actionable intelligence. Frequent association with civilians, NGO's, and IOs provides information that contributes to the estimate of the situation as well as active operations.

Enhanced Freedom of Action. CMO extends MAGTF operations and maximize their effectiveness to the fullest breadth and depth feasible, by minimizing political, force, and logistics constraints. It does this by making logistics lines of communication, air- and seaports available to the MAGTF, or helping the MAGTF acquire logistics support from the Host Nation. This enhances support to the force and sustains the MAGTF's desired tempo.

Greater Isolation of the Enemy. CMO works to limit the enemy's freedom of action, by turning support of civilian populations away from their cause. CMO minimizes the support given to the enemy by solving problems first, and by helping to win the information fight and the "battle for ideas" that underlies most Small Wars. Our Combined Action Program in Vietnam is an example of a CMO that worked to advantage by eliminating a resource base and sanctuary site in rural villages.²

Force Augmentation. Effective CMO adds additional capabilities to the MAGTF commander's toolbox, including those provided by the host nation, other government agencies and NGOs.

Contribution to Decisive Operations. CMO demands the enemy commander consider the relationship between his force and the civil population and may influence his

² On assessments of the Combined Arms Program, see also Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, pp. 172-177. The program could have been more effective if cultural training was increased.

operations. As an enemy force loses the support of the civilian population, they begin to doubt their purpose and lose momentum. As we make the environment less supportive of his actions and objectives, we shape the battlespace and contribute to the "turbulent and deteriorating situation with which he cannot cope."³

Types of CMO. The following types of CMO are most often performed by the MAGTF that are relevant to Small Wars:

Populace and Resources Control (PRC). PRC involves providing security for the civilian population, denying personnel and materiel to the enemy, mobilizing civil materiel resources, and detecting and reducing the effectiveness of enemy agents. Populace controls include curfews, movement restrictions, travel permits, registration cards, and resettlement of villagers. Resources control measures include licensing, regulations or guidelines, checkpoints, ration controls, amnesty programs, and inspection of facilities.

Foreign Humanitarian Assistance (HA). HA encompasses short-range programs aimed at ending or alleviating human suffering. HA is usually conducted in response to natural or man-made disasters, including combat. HA is designed to complement the efforts of the HN civilian authorities or international agencies that have primary responsibilities for providing relief.

Military Civic Action (MCA). MCA involves activities intended to win the support of the local population for the local government. MCA use preponderantly indigenous military forces on projects useful to the local population in such fields as education, training, public works, agriculture, transportation, health and sanitation that contribute to social development.

Nation Assistance Operations (NAO). Nation assistance is civil or military assistance (other than FHA) rendered to a nation by U.S. forces within that nation's territory during peacetime, crises or emergencies, or war, based on mutual agreement. Nation Assistance Operations promote sustainable development and growth of responsive institutions. NAO include, but are not limited to, security assistance, Foreign Internal Defense, and MCA.

Civil Administration. Civil administration support consists of planning, coordinating,

³ MCDP 1, *Warfighting*, p. 73.

advising, or assisting those activities that reinforce or restore a civil administration in friendly or hostile territory. Civil Administration may be undertaken by agreement with a HN which has lost the capacity to carry out its own affairs, or when the MAGTF is directed by higher authority.

The organization for interagency involvement in CMO can take several forms at each level in the chain of command. A MAGTF may establish a civil-military operations center (CMOC) to assist in the coordination of activities between engaged military forces and the other participants. Establishing CMOCs can be a valuable technique as a focal point for coordination and planning between the MAGTF and a wide variety of external organizations, though it is not where the CA element plans MAGTF CMO. A CMOC is a conduit for the MAGTF, relaying information and recommendations; it is not a command center.

The Commander may elect to task organize his major elements into combined arms teams or Civil Military Operations Task Forces (CMOTFs). When other government assets are available, CMO Interagency Task Forces at the Company or Battalion level may be more appropriate to bring the right assets to bear at the appropriate scale. In recent operations, the employment of Provincial Reconstruction Teams, composed of interagency assets within assigned geographic areas of responsibility has been beneficial for ensuring unity of effort. Once again, organizational agility is a requirement and commanders should encourage innovative approaches in this regard.

In sum, CMO are a component of the MAGTF commander's "single battle," they are not a separate activity. The planning and synchronization of these activities, and the integration within an overall campaign effort, is critical to the successful conduct of Small Wars. Conventional conflicts place a premium on the MAGTF's destructive capabilities. Small wars place increased value on the *constructive* capabilities generated by the conduct of CMO.