Catching up to the Bow Wave?

This issue brings our 2010 to a close (albeit oozing into 2011) with the 12th issue in Volume 6 – our sixth year of publishing. Herein you'll find a few new articles, a few pieces that were published during the month, and an index of all 25 articles published online in December.

6 years. Wow. Through stealth and vigor we've somehow managed to bring you a lot of thoughtful material that has, hopefully, fueled the acceleration of creative, credible, and relevant thought out there in the halls of power and the edges of the empire. Speaking of acceleration, we continue to be blessed with plenty of great works being submitted and editor Mike Few is really moving dirt to get them to our readers. It looks to be a good 2011.

One day, not too far into the new year (fingers crossed), we'll take a step to the left to initiate the time warp that will actually put a month's issue out at the *beginning* of that month like 99.9% of the publishing world. But until then, at least there is something to be said for consistency, conformity is over-rated, and that numbering stuff is mostly semantics. So happy last year, and Happy New Year. It looks like there will be plenty to discuss....

- SWJ

Beyond FM 3-24:

Readings for the Counterinsurgency Commander

by William Marm, Bryan Martin, Christopher O'Gwin, Gabriel Szody, Joshua Thiel, Christopher Young, and Douglas Borer

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Prior to the September 11, 2001 attacks, United States (U.S.) Army Green Berets were active in the international sphere. Organized in small, twelve-man teams known as Special Forces Operational Detachment Alphas (ODA), these specially trained soldiers were primarily engaged as teachers of Counterinsurgency (COIN) to Host Nation's (HN) military forces during Foreign Internal Defense (FID) missions. They were expected to not only add value to the capacity, professionalization, and operational capabilities of the HN forces, but were also expected to be the COIN subject matter experts within the U.S. military. However, ODAs rapidly evolved from teachers of COIN to practitioners of the art during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

If one were to follow a randomly chosen ODA chronologically, the COIN techniques and methods used by that unit have changed in three general ways over the last ten years. The initial pedagogical role as teachers of COIN to foreign partners before 9-11, gave way for the first seven or so years in Iraq and Afghanistan to extreme instances of Direct Action in the new role as the "Primary Counterinsurgent." In the third phase, many ODA's have returned to a more nuanced approach today that reflects the Special Force's original call to arms, "By, With, and Through." Additionally, even as Special Forces has sought to reclaim its roots, the U.S. military as a whole, including conventional or general purpose forces, have also become much more COIN savvy over time.

Indeed, ODAs in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, the Trans-Sahel, and in Central and South America have traveled the full arc between primary teacher to primary practitioner and back again depending on the local rules of engagement. Likewise, many Army and Marine units have been assigned duties in Afghanistan and Iraq as practitioners of COIN, and Navy Seal Teams have often been assigned roles as COIN teachers in FID missions – assignments for which they have minimal formal preparation.1 In preparation for these difficult assignments, most junior officers today refer to the Army's FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency, a document which is weighted heavily towards preparing the U.S. military in the role of "Primary Counterinsurgent." What additional readings beyond FM 3-24 might be useful to help prepare junior officers for the full array of COIN challenges facing America's expeditionary units?

In the winter of 2010, six Special Forces Majors with extensive experience teaching and practicing COIN, mentored by Professor Douglas Borer at the Naval Postgraduate School,2 sought to determine which bodies of work, properly sequenced, might impart a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of multiple-COIN techniques for new counterinsurgent commanders.

During the course of this study, a wide variety of COIN theorists and practitioners were read and discussed. This essay includes the authors such as David Galula, who's book Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice is the intellectual be-

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drock for FM 3-24. Joining Galula are David Kilcullen and Seth Jones, familiar names whose current influence with senior officers helped shape the understanding of COIN within the U.S. military today. Somewhat less familiar names and works, such as Robert Taber's War of the Flea and multiple readings by Edward Luttwak, added depth to our study. Finally, often-overlooked works such as Timothy Lomperis's From People's War to People's Rule and John P. Cann's The Portuguese Way of War provided "off the beaten path" perspectives of COIN operations.

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1 In recognition of this shortcoming, Naval Special Warfare in San Diego has begun a junior officer training program to provide social, and cultural education

2 The Defense Analysis Department at the Naval Postgraduate School provides the most advanced graduate education opportunities presently available to the SOF community in areas of Special Operations, Counter-Insurgency, Counter-Terrorism, and Information Operations.

It is useful for all counterinsurgency commanders to clearly understand their operational environment in terms of two roles: either the "Primary Counterinsurgent" or the "By, With, and Through" advisor. The "Primary Counterinsurgent" is often found in early COIN efforts during which an external military force fills the void of a inept or non-existent HN security apparatus. In this role, there is minimal effective sovereignty. In the other role, the external military works "By, With, and Through" existing HN forces to indirectly counter the insurgency. In this role, the HN has a greater degree of effective sovereignty. By reading select chapters suggested below from Galula, Jones, Lomperis, Taber, Cann, and Kilcullen, new commanders will gain significant insight into the sliding scale of "By, With, and Through" to "Primary Counterinsurgent," beyond the scope provided by FM 3-24.

The other noticeable paradigm that becomes apparent during a comprehensive study of counterinsurgency is the clear division between strategic level "COIN Theory," and those techniques and procedures that seek to operationalize COIN. Most COIN literature examines challenges of insurgent warfare somewhere along the spectrum between theory and practice. We assert a well-rounded COIN commander should understand the entire spectrum; he will know where his level of command fits into the spectrum, and he will grasp how the theory and practice relate to each other.

The following figure is a visual representation of the two sliding scales and where each recommended COIN author falls among them. No single piece of literature is all inclusive; whereas, reading a composite of the works will provide the COIN commander the depth of understanding necessary to operate in a complex COIN environment.

As is evident in the figure above, the selected readings represent varying degrees of direct and indirect involvement in counterinsurgencies combined with COIN theory or operational techniques. The readings that lie closer to the "By, With, and Through" role on the horizontal axis will emphasize indirect concepts that require use of the indigenous force. On the opposite side, the primary counterinsurgent unilaterally conducts direct engagement with insurgents. On the vertical axis, the selected readings are plotted based on the degree to which they emphasize COIN theory or operational techniques. Figure 1 offers a framework for comparing content: Galula tends to emphasize more "By, With,

and Through" and COIN theory than Lomperis. *FM 3.24* is designed to inform the primary counterinsurgent compared to Seth Jones, who stresses the indirect use of indigenous forces. All counterinsurgents and especially all COIN commanders must comprehend where on the spectrum the various readings are located and how each reading relates to their specific COIN deployment. For example, the mix of readings that apply to Iraq and Afghanistan are different than those required for Columbia and the Philippines. However, within Iraq and Afghanistan the environment has shifted due to political and military dynamics. Indeed, as Iraqi forces replaced Coalition forces as primary combatants in the Summer 2010, the setting for an COIN commander has shifted significantly from the right of the diagram to the left.

A relatively small number of readings, selected from the growing expanse of COIN literature, were covered in this study. Thus, while these nine suggested readings are not all encompassing, they do represent a fair cross-section of the themes available in the literature.

Galula

Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice by David Galula is the flagship book of counterinsurgency scholarship owing to its succinct yet comprehensive handling of all relevant principles involved in counterinsurgency warfare. Galula's thesis attests that the ultimate goal of a
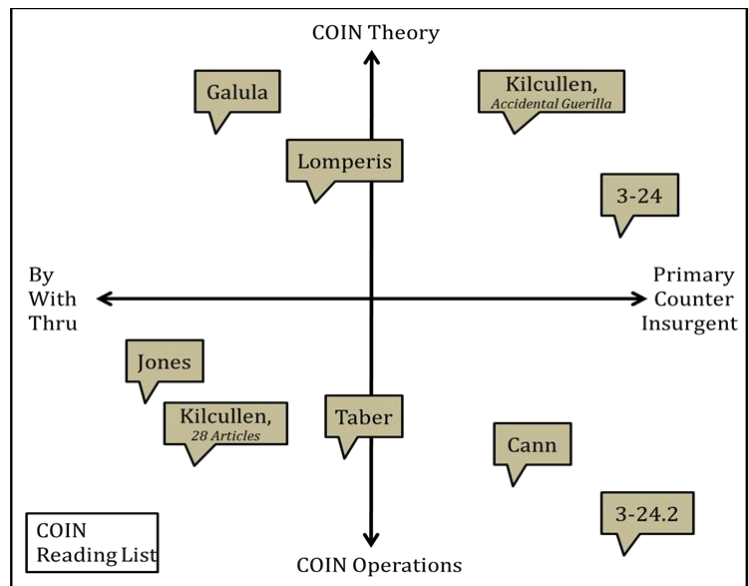
Figure 1. Key COIN readings as they express COIN Theory, COIN Operations, and Method of Implementation

counterinsurgency force is to foster the support of the affected population and not to simply control territory. Thus, Galula's work, which first appeared in 1964, is considered by many to be the canonical text of the "hearts and minds" counterinsurgency camp.

The main contribution of the book is a comprehensive list of imperatives and principles for practitioners in the COIN environment. Galula provides well conceived and supported advice for the full spectrum of counterinsurgency covering a variety of topics including: sequencing of operations, patterns of insurgency, mobilizing causes, geography, leadership, and organizational structure to name a few. Among these, his discussion on causes and sequencing represent highly pivotal issues. Galula outlines a prescriptive (if debatable) seven step process for counterinsurgents, which includes: expel insurgents, emplace static forces, control population, destroy political infrastructure, conduct elections, test local leaders, and win over remaining insurgent supporters.

Galula's impact should not be underestimated, numerous tactical operations in Iraq executed Galula's model lock step, including Colonel H.R. McMaster's command in Tal Afar.[3] While our working group acknowledges the utility of Galula's sequencing, some members have observed a variety of other sequencing methods based on the antecedent conditions.

If the working group could only prescribe one book beyond *FM 3-24* for readers interested in COIN theory, Galula's book is it. We believe every military professional should read *Counterinsurgency Warfare* before they deploy.

Lomperis

From People's War to People's Rule by Timothy Lomperis analyzes the critical factors influencing the development and outcome of insurgencies. This book should not be the first book for the counterinsurgent scholar, but should be considered for those seeking to move beyond Galula to a more advanced and analytical text. The models and graphs are informative and supported by a variety of case studies. The author provides a useful lens by which any counterinsurgent practitioner can better understand the environment.

Lomperis goes beyond Galula's "causes" of insurgency by introducing categories of legitimacy. These categories of legitimacy are a major contri-

bution to the field, specifically in regard to both understanding and influencing the population through information operations and the coordination of multiple lines of operation. When preparing for a deployment, this book will stimulate the reader and facilitate the generation of ideas on how to influence critical factors. Lomperis' fields of analysis provide excellent starting points for creating counterinsurgent metrics. If you are deploying to conduct counterinsurgency then this book should be in your library.

Taber

Robert Taber's book, *War of the Flea: The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare,* provides an insightful glance into counterinsurgency operations from the insurgent's vantage point. Like Lomperis, it is an excellent selection to read after Galula. As a journalist covering the revolutionary upheaval of Castro's Cuban insurgency in the mid-1950s, Taber makes several critical observations that are timeless and pertinent in today's operational environment. Using evidence that relies heavily upon Maoist theory, Taber demonstrates why it is critical to study the Chinese leader's principles, claiming that they are as timeless as they are universal.

Taber's definition of an insurgency is important to consider, as it provides a basis from which to understand an insurgency holistically. He observes that an insurgency is a conflict between a government and an "out-group," in which the latter uses both political resources and violence to change, to reformulate, or to undermine the legitimacy of at least one of four key foundations of government power: integrity of borders, political systems, authorities in power, and policies.

In his discussion of insurgent characteristics, Taber draws critical conclusions that help to explain why individuals and cultural "out-groups" join and support insurgencies, providing insight into the social and economic impacts of poor governance. Moreover, Taber outlines five key considerations that every insurgent organization should adhere to in order to achieve victory: an awareness of the deprivations suffered by the population and the belief that violence will work to encourage revolt; avoid strength and attack weakness where possible; consistent use of Maoist principles; the criticality of political organization in base areas; and an understanding of the government's response mechanisms. From the counterinsurgent's perspective, a reverse engineering of these principles provide opportunities to develop a strategic thought process and insights for defeating the insurgent.

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[3] George Packer, "The Lesson of Tal Afar," The New Yorker, April 10, 2006.

Although somewhat biased in favor of the insurgent, Taber's book is an excellent primer on the dilemmas of COIN. In our assessment, chapters 1, 2, 4 and 10 are the most useful.

Kilcullen

The much-acclaimed Australian Soldier-scholar David Kilcullen, provides a more focused and specialized perspective on counterinsurgency that is helpful in understanding the influence of globalization and its impacts on the contemporary Islamist insurgent. In his book, *The Accidental Guerrilla,* Kilcullen describes today's insurgent as a local who has chosen to fight against outsiders that he perceives as intruding on the physical and cultural space of his traditional society. Kilcullen asserts that local wars are primarily guerrilla conflicts within societies that are often sponsored or inspired by transnational extremists seeking to disrupt the status quo. Interaction between accidental guerrillas and ideological terrorists makes both the traditional counterterrorism and classical counterinsurgency models inadequate for developing a strategy to counter these enemies. Thus, the purpose of his book is to develop a more pertinent model.

Kilcullen's model defines the nature of the accidental guerrilla phenomenon in terms of four basic characteristics inherent to any insurgent movement: provocation – making government forces react to you, and to hopefully overreact thereby generating ill-will amongst the population; intimidation – preventing local populations from cooperating with government or coalition forces by publicly killing those who collaborate; protraction – prolonging the conflict to exhaust the opponent's resources, eroding political will, sapping public support, and avoiding losses; and finally exhaustion – imposing costs on the government, overstressing its support system and tiring its troops. Consequently, Kilcullen argues that these principles can be countered through aggressive government programs that stress population security, good governance, positive development of economic conditions, and information dominance.

In the end, Kilcullen arrives at several conclusions, considered "best practices" in counterinsurgency operations. He recommends that a political strategy be developed that builds government effectiveness. Second, he calls for a comprehensive approach that integrates civil and military efforts. Third, continuity of key personnel and policies must be maintained to provide stability and normalization. Fourth, a strategy of population-centric security needs to be enacted. Fifth, there must be a cueing and synchronization of development, governance, and security efforts. Sixth, a multilateral environment of cooperation needs to be developed, relying on a close and genuine partnership that puts the Host Nation forces in the lead. Seventh, a strong emphasis needs to be placed on building effective and legitimate local security forces. Lastly, a region wide approach that disrupts safe-havens, controls borders and frontier regions, and undermines terrorist infrastructure in neighboring countries is critical to success.

Kilcullen's book should be studied by both the military and civilian professional confronting the COIN dilemma. Despite its Islamist focus, this book is abstract enough that its application is relevant in other COIN situations. The best chapters to read, in order of importance, are 1, 5, 2, 3, and 4.

Cann

Counterinsurgency in Africa: The Portuguese Way of War by John P. Cann describes Portugal's efforts at waging three simultaneous counterinsurgencies in its African colonies of Angola, Mozambique, and Portuguese Guinea. Because the wars were fought over a considerable period (1961-1974), Portuguese policies and practices were designed to preserve its meager resources by spreading the burden of the war as widely as possible while at the same time maintaining the tempo of the war at a sustainable pace.

Cann explains how the Portuguese devoted time and effort to develop a workable strategy, a new military doctrine, and the appropriate force structure. The Portuguese developed a strategy that paralleled the guerrilla strategy of protracted war. They focused all diplomatic efforts to nullify the influence of communist adversaries and to delegitimize the anti-state terrorist organizations. In short, the Portuguese applied the lessons learned from the French in Algeria and Indochina, and the British in Malaya. They created new institutions and rapidly educated their military in the new doctrine. To synchronize their new strategy and doctrine, the Portuguese radically reorganized their military force structure to conduct counterinsurgency, and all but abandoned conventional warfare approaches. Cann explains that the Portuguese conducted continuous local patrols using small units, which produced better results than the less frequent, large scale, battalion, or brigade-sized operations.

Cann's book is a good case study on successful counterinsurgency that skillfully used surrogate forces. Cann describes the integration of the civil administration, the police, and the military based

on local conditions. This shows that they were highly flexible and recognized the importance of the civilian efforts in counterinsurgency. Ultimately, Cann shows that focused and committed executive leadership with deft management allowed Portugal to wage a three front war 8,000 km from home for 13 years. The book should be read in its entirety in order to glean the experiences of each of the three COIN environments and the doctrinal programs established in Portugal.

Jones

In *Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan*, Seth Jones defines the nature of the insurgency in Afghanistan and identifies the factors that contributed to its rise. Jones identifies the capabilities that the U.S. military should consider to improve its ability to wage effective counterinsurgency operations.

Jones begins with an analysis of COIN theory then operationalizes his population-centric approach with respect to Afghanistan. Demonstrated in his COIN model, Jones highlights the capacities of the indigenous security forces, local governance, and external support for insurgents are the hallmarks of success or failure of counterinsurgency efforts. Jones asserts that the U.S. should focus its resources on helping to improve the capacity of the indigenous government and its security forces, thereby improving their competency and legitimacy.

Throughout the book, Jones highlights many preferred operational and tactical techniques specifically for Afghanistan. Among them, he asserts that the Afghan National Police should be the primary focus of our training. He also identifies three factors that have undermined good governance in Afghanistan, including: warlordism, drug trade, and an ineffective justice system. To address these factors, Jones recommends that command and control be decentralized down to the smallest unit possible. Finally, he claims that the best way to win over the population and isolate the insurgents is to live among the population.

The main contribution of Jones' book is how to apply COIN theory in Afghanistan. Each chapter in *Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan* has relevance and should be required reading for all leaders due to its concise yet full description of insurgency.

FM 3-24

The U.S. Army published *FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency* to capture the lessons from Iraq and Afghanistan in a common language using classic counterinsurgency terms. Although the military was extremely rushed to publish the manual in response to conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, overall it is quite successful in providing an all-encompassing document. It should be read and understood by all leaders serving in or preparing for service in the country's counterinsurgency fight. The manual's purpose is to adjust the thinking and practices of America's maneuver centric and attrition oriented ground forces. It clearly describes COIN as a political, cultural, and sociological struggle focused on the population, rather than only the enemy combatants.

A recurrent theory throughout the manual is the "side that learns faster and adapts more rapidly- the better learning organization- usually wins,"[4] a theme clearly borrowed from John Nagl's text, *Learning to Eat Soup With a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*.[5] The introduction clearly identifies this imperative for U.S. forces in order to be successful in this low-intensity and dynamic fight. Leaders and Soldiers must study counterinsurgency prior to a deployment, and must continue learning downrange while they attempt to defeat irregular enemies. *FM 3-24* clearly articulates that a learning organization that can accurately identify the weaknesses of the external environment of war and reconfigure its own capability to exploit those weaknesses will defeat an insurgency; a bureaucratic hierarchy that is inward focused on administration and operations will not.[6]

Like David Galula and Seth Jones, *FM 3-24* concludes that the center of gravity in counterinsurgency is the people. COIN forces must provide for the people, protect the people, and convince the people that their incumbent government is legitimate. Therefore, *FM 3-24* argues that an equal amount of time must be spent gaining knowledge of the population as spent understanding insurgency. The faster COIN forces can provide legitimacy, the sooner they can end the lifeline of the insurgent, which is the population's active and passive support. Because this struggle is not just military, *FM 3-24* argues that effective COIN operations requires a balanced application between military and civic operations, and a unity of effort

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[4] *FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, December 2006, p. ix.
[5] A text which we did not formally review due to conceptual overlap with other works on this list, but it is recommended.
[6] Edward N. Luttwak, "Notes on Low-Intensity Warfare," *Parameters* XIII, no. 4 (1983) and *FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, December 2006.

between the different units and organizations which carry them out.[7]

FM 3-24 states that the primary audience for the manual is leaders and planners at the battalion level and above. Because they identify the need to "keep U.S. forces more agile and adaptive than irregular enemies," the military recently published a new manual, *FM 3-24.2 Tactics in Counterinsurgency* to fill the doctrinal gap for the tactical leader and unit.

FM 3-24.2

FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, is the offspring of the conventional military's successful large scale counterinsurgency waged in Iraq from 2006-2009. This manual evolves U.S. military doctrine from theoretical and strategic vision to the establishment of proven techniques at the operational and tactical level. Fundamentally, *FM 3-24.2* is a "best practices guide" from Iraq; however, it avoids the pitfall of doctrinalizing the solutions tailored only to Iraq, and it maintains principle-based solutions to those tactics and operations in counterinsurgency.

The most significant contribution of FM 3-24.2 is full spectrum counterinsurgency at the tactical level. Counterinsurgency practitioners can glean significant insights to the design, integration, balance and implementation of Lines of Effort relevant in the counterinsurgent environment, including: governance, services, economic development, information, offensive operations, and security to name a few.

FM 3-24.2 also prescribes techniques under the assumption that population centric counterinsurgency (winning the population) is the most effective way to defeat an insurgency and solidify the legitimacy of an incumbent government. To protect the population and remove the insurgents with minimal collateral damage, Population Resource Control (PRC) measures becomes a pivotal concept; PRC techniques are a significant contribution of this work.

The forbearer, *FM 3-24*, synchronized OIF forces by providing a common conceptual understanding and strategic vision. Similarly, *FM 3-24.2* provides a common planning framework and tools to synchronize General Purpose Forces, Special Forces, interagency elements, and non-government organizations. We expect this document to pass the test of time and serve as the primary driver of

training, planning, combined operations, and scenarios at the national training centers. We assert *FM 3-24.2* is the single most important document for counterinsurgency commanders preparing for deployment.

Conclusion

The intended scope of this study was to capture a broader range of lessons learned in COIN that would further enhance the doctrine found in *FM 3-24* for counterinsurgency commanders. Since the majority of American COIN doctrine is founded on Galula's work in *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, it seemed prudent to examine lessons learned from various authors writing on different styles of COIN models. The types of COIN models varied across two intersecting sliding scales, the first ranging from COIN theory to COIN operations. The second scale ranged from forces working "By, With, and Through" HN units to expeditionary forces acting as the "primary counterinsurgent." After reviewing various authors, Galula's place in COIN theory and practice remains firmly rooted at the theory level in a "By, With, and Through" environment. Conversely, *FM 3-24*, which is highly influenced by Galula, also belongs in the theory realm, but frames the U.S. as the "primary COIN practitioner" vice HN units. Bodies of work that operationalized COIN, ranging from working "By, With, and Through" to "primary counterinsurgent," all seemed to expound in some way on Galula's basic premises. Jones' *Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan* highlighted the importance of making sure the Afghans do the majority of work themselves while Cann illustrated the complexities maintaining control in a colonial territory. While all of these readings were different in their own right, they all connected at a certain level, and as a whole helped to frame the full spectrum of COIN.

What then do all of these readings mean for new counterinsurgency commanders? The answer depends on the environment in which the commander may find himself. Possessing a solid theoretical foundation of COIN is imperative, and for that, Galula is always a great place to start. But commanders must understand that the type of environment in which they will work will determine the practical application of the readings covered in this study. A commander ready to deploy to Columbia, Philippines, or Afghanistan for the first time would benefit by reading the bodies of work that expound on those types of operating environments – those in which external forces *must* work through the host nation to be successful. In contrast, scenarios may exist in which host nation

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[7] *FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, December 2006, p. 1-21.

forces are inept, broken, or non-existent, which requires U.S. forces to serve as the primary COIN practitioners.

Although the authors of this essay sampled a relatively small number of readings during the course of this study, an extensive collection of material exists on the topic. Some of the more notable books and articles include Andrew Krepinevich's *The Army and Vietnam*, Nathan Leites and Charles Wolfe's "Rebellion and Authority: An Analytical Essay on Insurgent Conflicts," Bard O'Neill's *Insurgency and Terrorism*, Edward Luttwak's "Modern Warfare: COIN as Malpractice" and "Notes on Low Intensity Conflict," Alistair Horne's A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962, and Jeffrey Record's Beating Goliath: Why Insurgencies Win. Additionally, the JFK Special Warfare Center and School has published a recommended reading list for officers attending the Special Forces Qualification Course containing a number of excellent related books for future study. Areas of future professional study should include bodies of work that look through the lens of the insurgent or guerrilla unit. Understanding counterinsurgency does not translate into understanding insurgency; the two have a dichotomous relationship and each are separate fields of study that true professionals should be able to dissect.

The authors are all US Army Special Forces Officers and recent graduates of Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA. The exception, Dr. Douglas A. Borer, is Associate Professor and Associate Chair for Instruction in the Defense Analysis Department; he teaches in the SOLIC and IO curricula and writes on the politics of legitimacy in war. He is a retired bear hunter from Montana

800 Words on the Last Year in Afghanistan

by Nick Carter

The last year has seen significant change in southern Afghanistan. An uplift of over 20,000 US troops, and more importantly, a huge increase in Afghan security forces has more than doubled the number of forces in Helmand and Kandahar. When I arrived in southern Afghanistan last October there was one weak Afghan Army brigade in Helmand and one in Kandahar, the original capital of Afghanistan. When I left a year later these had increased to nearly six. The Afghan Police has also been uplifted by 30%. These reinforcements have made possible the disposition of our forces to be realigned so that our counter insurgency strategy can focus on protecting the population.

This population-centric approach recognises that counter insurgency is essentially an argument between the Government of Afghanistan and the insurgency for the support of the people. Up until now it has not been possible to offer a real alternative, but in central Helmand and in and around Kandahar City the 2 million or so Afghans who live there now have the prospect of being able to live more normal lives. They are now more likely to be able to leave their homes, tend their fields, grow a crop of their choice and take their produce to the local bazaar; their children will have access to a school; they will be able to attend community council meetings and have access to their District Governor; there will be a system of redress with the chance for basic disputes to be resolved through a process of traditional justice; they will be able to listen to a radio and will be able to use a mobile telephone. Hitherto these basic rights which we take for granted would have been denied by the insurgents.

These small steps are by no means irreversible everywhere, but traditional communities are now being rebuilt, years of mistrust are being overcome, and the elders who have been targeted by the insurgency are now starting to return and provide leadership to their villages. In Kandahar City this year the Iftar parties that mark the breaking of the fast after dark during Ramadan went on longer and were more exuberant than they had been for many years. During the last 6 weeks some 80% of reported improvised explosive device or 'IED' events have been hand-ins to the Afghan security forces rather than explosions, suggesting the population feels less intimidated and more likely to trust their forces. Work started recently on Kandahar's electricity. The majority of the 800,000 people who live there have had no access to mains electricity since the 1970s, and the lucky few who have, have been restricted to a few hours a day. This has severely restricted economic development. Capacity will be doubled this winter so that businesses can start to invest and unemployment can be reduced.

The corollary of a population-centric approach is the need to have a better understanding of one's opponent and his motivation. There are many who fight 'with' the Taliban rather than 'for' the Taliban. The former are more likely to be motivated by money or the threat of violence than genuine belief in the Taliban cause. Many are motivated simply through being excluded. As they feel more secure, as economic opportunity improves, and as more inclusive governance becomes available, so many of them will put down their weapons and return to their fields. By denying the insurgency access to the population it will be squeezed out of the spaces it needs to sustain itself. It is losing its recruits and experiencing shortfalls in weaponry and IED components, with the cost of the latter increasing tenfold during the last 3 months. Inevitably the insurgency will change its tactics as evidenced by the campaign of assassination and intimidation it has waged against Government employees in Kandahar. But if sufficient Afghan leaders can be found to govern at district level this threat can be overcome.

Our partnership with the Afghan security forces is changing the dynamics too. Partnership is not an end in itself, but a means to an end that sees the Afghans taking responsibility for the security of their people. This is having a marked effect. In the urban areas of Lashkar Gah in Helmand and Kandahar City it is the Afghan Police who have responsibility with minimal support from us. And in the rural areas they are becoming increasingly assertive with recent operations to the west of Kandahar City and to the east of Lashkar Gah being led by the Afghan Army. Security for the recent parliamentary elections was handled entirely by the Afghans, and its success did much for their confidence. Trusting Afghans to come up with Afghan solutions is a key element of our population-centric approach and is the only long term answer.

These changes are positive, but I have learned from my year in southern Afghanistan that after 30 years of war and chaos it is best to be realistic about progress. Next summer will be the time to judge it. For this is when the insurgency traditionally goes on the offensive, and if it is markedly better than last summer, we can then be sure that our approach is working.

Major General Nick Carter was ISAF Regional Commander South until November 2010. He assumed command of 6th United Kingdom Division in January 2009 and was responsible for the preparation and training of the Task Forces deploying on Operation Herrick. The Division then became a CJTF and assumed responsibility for RC-South in November of 2009. He commanded 20 Armoured Brigade, based in Germany, from January 2004 until December 2005, including a tour in Iraq in command of British Forces in Basra. After completing Term 1 of Royal College of Defence Studies, he assumed the appointment of Director of Army Resources and Plans in the Ministry of Defence. He was appointed a Member of The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in 1995, an Officer in 2000 and a Commander in 2003.

Afghan National Security Forces Literacy Program

by Michael J. Faughnan

NEW! Published online in Jan 2011

As the December review of our strategy in Afghanistan nears, one program that shows significant progress and will have a far reaching impact on this war torn nation is the Afghan National Security Force Literacy Program. This program's objective, overseen by NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A), is to provide every member of the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF), composed of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP), a third grade level of literacy. To accomplish this, we employ more than 1,000 Afghans to teach Dari and Pashto the two dominant languages in this nation.

The educational history of Afghanistan illuminates the need for such a program. The Afghan Constitution of 1964 mandated a free, public education for all children. While attendance was not universal, there were sizable numbers of children enrolled in school. In 1964, Kabul University became the first undergraduate-level institution established in Afghanistan. It was known as one of the premier institutions of higher education in Central Asia. This structure crumbled following the 1979 Russian invasion and rule of the Taliban that ended in 2002. Civil war precluded school attendance during the Russian years. The Taliban closed

all but religious madrassas during its reign. After thirty years of warfare, an entire generation of Afghan youth received no opportunity for even basic education. As of 2010, slightly more than one-half of the eligible children attend school. With the assistance of the international community the Afghan Ministry of Education is making great strides, but it will be years before the situation improves significantly.

According to UNESCO, the overall literacy rate among Afghans over the age of 15 is approximately 28%. This varies from a high of 58 percent in Kabul to a low of 12 percent in Helmand Province. The other 32 provinces range in between these with the urban areas more literate than the rural. The low literacy rate and the limited educational opportunities resulted in an Afghan society without the basic requirements for participation in the international community. This presents obvious difficulties as the size of the ANSF increases and trains to assume the lead in providing for Afghanistan's security by the end of 2014. NTM-A testing shows that fewer than 14% of the recruits entering the ANA and ANP have a first grade level of literacy.

The efficacy of providing a literacy program following so many years of conflict and educational desolation has drawn skeptics. Even the NTM-A commander, LTG William B. Caldwell, IV did not see its utility at first. When LTG Caldwell assumed command on November 21, 2009 he could not understand why teaching literacy was taking time that could have been used for training military skills. By January 2010, a scant 40 days later, he was a convert – recognizing that Afghans do not possess the basic level of literacy required of modern armies and police forces.

The Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, the U.S. contribution to NTM-A, realized several years ago that improving the level of literacy of the ANSF was an essential part of any modernization program. First, literacy is an enabler (a supporting capability). Training illiterate soldiers using memorization and repetition works well for some military tasks but is woefully deficient for others. For example, literacy is not a requirement for accurate rifle marksmanship, but it is required for scores of other specialties. Medics must be able to read the labels of a drug prior to administering it. Field Artillery fire direction specialists must be able to read and perform mathematical functions to compute accurate firing data for the guns.

The ANP present a separate but equally important challenge. Illiterate policemen cannot write

reports, retain records, or conduct basic police functions. An illiterate police officer manning a checkpoint is incapable of reading an identification card or a vehicle license plate. Community relations are hindered by the illiteracy of the force as it limits the patrolman's ability to understand his proper role within the broader society.

Literacy facilitates the expansion of the ANSF. In addition to training individual soldiers and police, specialized units cannot be developed without literate personnel. For these specialized units, like logistics charged with tracking supplies and personnel charged with tracking people, literacy is a fundamental requirement. As the ANSF grows, moves to remote areas, and engages in combat operations systems of supply and maintenance accountability become the lifeblood of the force. Literacy is a requirement to enable these systems at even a marginal level.

Second, anecdotal reports suggest that literacy instruction may serve as a recruiting incentive for both forces. After more than thirty years of warfare, Afghans are starved for education. Young Afghans in the prime recruiting age group did not have the opportunity to attend school as children. Providing literacy instruction helps them overcome this deficit and prepares them for a more productive life, whether they make the ANSF a career or move into another field.

Retention of soldiers and police is a problem well documented by the press. Literacy is one element of the NTM-A effort to mitigate poor retention. Many of Afghanistan's youth are motivated by goals and desires similar to those expressed by American youth. The educational opportunities afforded by the literacy program will cause young people to join the ANSF, just as the G.I. Bill motivates American youth to serve in our military. By reducing the retention issues of the ANSF, the ANA and ANP will more quickly realize the strength requirements to support independent operations.

Third, literacy is a force multiplier that supports other reform efforts. Two prime examples are efforts to install rule of law principles and to reduce the impact of corruption.

Development of rule of law, or a legal system that respects and protects individual rights, as a basis of civil life is hindered by the high levels of illiteracy. Literacy instruction contributes by providing police the ability to read material themselves. A policeman who cannot read the laws he is expected to enforce cannot fully understand its application, his role in society, or how he should

interact with the citizens with whom he comes in contact.

Similarly, anti-corruption measures are supported by literacy instruction. Illiterate soldiers and police do not have the capacity to know if they have been paid the proper amount. They cannot count the number of rifles on hand or account for the equipment issued to them. Providing literacy instruction frees the newly literate from dependence upon others in performing basic life functions and allows them to take control of these issues themselves. Strengthening rule of law within Afghan society and reducing corruption are help bring Afghanistan in line with the larger international community and enable the creation of a free, open society.

Literacy instruction underlies and supports every developmental program initiated by the international community in Afghanistan. Without a vast expansion of basic literacy, Afghanistan will remain unable to develop the infrastructure required of a modern nation. It will not be able to effectively address the security and corruption is-

sues so important to the international community. It will remain at the bottom of every list of national development, and its people will continue to live in abject poverty. Literacy instruction is fundamental to achieving our national objectives in Afghanistan.

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Afghanistan: Reconciliation Plans, Tribal Leaders and Civil Society

by Thomas Kirk

A reading of the Afghanistan's troubled history against recent explorations of the contemporary conflict question the wisdom and trajectory of the current peace talks for creating a lasting end to the violence. Current efforts at reconciliation should carefully pinpoint the country's powerbrokers and uncover Afghanistan's voiceless civil society.

In a recent article *The Washington Post* details the great efforts being put into secretative negotiations currently taking place with insurgent leaders in Kabul. As the Americans reportedly take pains to discern the level of power of each of the participants, optimistic analysts note that the incumbent government and its international surrogates recognise the need to involve members of Pakistan's various shuras, the importance of regional actors' participation and the necessity of defining bounda-

ries between moderate and irreconcilable elements. Furthermore, drawing lessons from previous conflicts, a growing body of commentators posit the country's tribal elders as the silver bullet with which to drive reconciliation. However, episodes from the nation's violent cyclical history, combined with an appreciation of the nature of Afghanistan's current conflict, suggest that if bypassed Afghanistan's civil society will carve its own violent path towards peace.

Before proceeding it seems important to outline what this essay means by the contested term civil society. Most observers, historical and contemporary, suggest that civil society is a sphere of peaceful activity located in the gap between the state, economic and personal realms.[1] Narratives suggest that membership of civil society has progressively

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[1] Jean, L Cohen & Andrew Arato (1994), *Civil Society and Political Theory,* Massachusetts, MIT Press.

widened from elite groups agitating for rights in 19th and 20th century Europe, to transnational networks protesting against authoritarian dictatorships, socioeconomic exclusion and human rights abuses across the globe. However, all examples share the trait of the voluntary association of individuals, and increasingly transnational actors, in pursuit of varying public socio-economic goals. Furthermore, it is commonly accepted that although distinct from the state, actors from within civil society are not prevented from interacting with politic process and policy formation. For more radical Habermasian interpretations civil society acts as a guard against capitalism's excesses, overbearing elites and the erosion of basic rights.[2] While for neoliberals civil society complements and helps the state facilitate the global spread of democracy and economic liberalisation.[3] Most definitions also allow for the existence of 'bad' elements within civil society, which it is usually suggested occupy themselves with particularistic, sectarian and violent goals.[4]

Regardless of which camp one adheres to, under functioning states, the civil sphere provides actors a safe site from within which to debate, negotiate and mobilise in support of public issues. To paraphrase London School of Economics' Professor Mary Kaldor, civil society's activity consists of 'negotiating, pressuring, bargaining and influencing the centres of economic and political power in pursuit of agreed social goals'.[5] Civil Society is the voice of forgotten publics in a world enthralled by economic and militarised power.

It seems intuitive therefore, that at its most basic and when struggling to survive in an environment such as Afghanistan, 'good' civil society would be concerned with securing a lasting peace. Unfortunately, the only formula for identifying these elements is a thorough and deep appreciation of Afghanistan's society, its history, its groupings, their interests, needs and the context within which it currently finds itself.

Conflict and Reconciliation within Afghanistan

Dubbed an 'exit conference' and accused of being designed to strategise the beginning of the end of Western engagement in Afghanistan, January's London summit laid down a set of challenges familiar to observers of histories attempts at resolving seemingly intractable conflicts with reintegration and reconciliation programmes. Utilised to provide a measure of closure to conflicts in South Africa, Kenya, Bosnia, Algeria, Cambodia and Rwanda, the concept is also invoked in debates over the resolution of conflicts in Sudan, the Middle East and Somalia.

Copying largely failed efforts in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), current reconciliation plans involve the Afghan government, supported by its international allies, negotiating an end to hostilities with insurgent groups in return for a degree of political inclusion. Historically, roughly half of the countries that have embarked on transitions of this type have reverted to conflict within a few years. Elaborating all of the reasons for this dismal record would require a lengthy study; however, it is this paper's argument that without widespread civil society buy in reconciliation will only prolong violence.

The current peace talks should be viewed as the continuation reconciliation efforts begun some years ago and first publically aired at the London conference. Previous discussions have been led by United Nation's envoys, Saudi diplomats, EU political officers, military officials and intelligence operatives. However, as the recent London conference was taking place activist's from Afghanistan's civil society groups expressed their concern that they were being sidelined. In their opinion there exists a real ''threat that the international community is about to sacrifice the rights of the Afghan people on the altar of political and military expediency''.[6] In particular, it is argued that Afghanistan's women and children will suffer the most from narrow consultations on the direction of the reconciliation plan.

Within Afghanistan reintegration and reconciliation has historically been pursued under the Program Tahkim-e-Solh (PTS), which has enjoyed support from the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) since 2007. However, suffering from a leader lacking in political capital amongst anti government elements and, in

[2] Habermas, J. (1996) *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

[3] Kamal Pasha, M (2002) 'Savage Capitalism and Civil Society in Pakistan'. In: Wiess, A and Gilani, S (2002) *Power and Civil Society in Pakistan,* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

[4] Keane, J (1998). *Civil Society, Old Images, New Visions.* Cambridge, Polity Press.

[5] Kaldor, M. (2003). *Global Civil Society: An Answer to War*. Cambridge, Polity Press.

[6] Sam Zarifi, Amnesty International Asia-Pacific Director. http://www.undispatch.com/node/9515 (22/03/10)

the case of Musa Qala, shown unable to protect former insurgents from reprisals, the programme has met with little success to date and been accused of misreporting its own progress. Furthermore, past attempts failed to cultivate widespread endorsement from the international community, regional players and Afghanistan's civil society.[7]

It is apparent that the process has two distinct elements; reconciliation and reintegration. Successfully reintegrating insurgents poses a unique set of problems for policy makers that have been examined in depth by Eric Jardine writing for the *Small Wars Journal.*[8] They include the creation of perverse incentives for ordinary Afghans wishing to access the programme's opportunities and the difficulty of protecting inductees from reprisal attacks; incidentally, the obstacles experienced to date. Yet, as it will be argued, to stand a good chance of succeeding, in both the short and long term, it is crucial that reintegration comes second to a reconciliation plan supported by the majority of Afghanistan's population.

History illustrates that within Afghanistan 'conflicts considered to have been resolved can reappear and jolt the social climate in the national and international arena'.[9] Both the Soviet's support of the Najibullah government following their withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 and the Western coalition's partnerships with warlords following the Bonn Agreement in 2001 created the conditions for a return to violence. The former episode witnessed the *Mujahedeen* seize power from the Soviet's puppet regime only to be ousted by a grass roots movement rallying against persistent infighting, corruption and human rights violations several years later. The movement, contemporarily known as the Taliban, mobilised a mix of students, teachers, tribesmen, Pashtun nationalists and foreign jihadists to wrestle power from Afghanistan's rulers. In hindsight, it is arguable that in all but name the Taliban were a creation of Afghanistan's exhausted civil society.

The later episode allowed the same group to rebuild its support base over 2002-5 by once again

promising an alternative to a corrupt, foreign installed, government comprised of re-empowered warlords.[10] The irony of the reason for the Taliban's initial rise and subsequent rebirth is not lost on Afghanistan expert Michael Semple who describes elements of the contemporary insurgency as working at "cross purposes" to international forces.[11] Furthermore, contemporary indications that warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami may be accommodated by any reconciliation process suggest policy makers have not learnt their lesson from history.[12] Within this context, the fears of civil society groups over the place of human rights and the future role of women in any post-conflict settlement should be taken to sound the county's prospects of long term stability.

Simultaneous Surges

Paraphrased into something akin to *clear, hold, protect, build and negotiate (and perhaps quietly leave),* the international community's current strategy for Afghanistan has borrowed heavily from historical sources: Obama's commitment of 30,000 extra troops over the course of 2010 invited numerous comparisons to the trajectory of Iraq's troop surge. This is further evidenced with the current belief that the extra boots on the ground and the sharp rise in drone attacks in Pakistan have put the insurgent leadership on the back foot. The strategy also mirrors that used to in Northern Ireland to bring insurgents to the negotiating table in 1994; a military presence designed to prevent anti government forces from reaching the population, complemented with an offer of a role in any proposed political settlement. However, it will be argued that although expressed in vastly differing ways, in both Northern Ireland and Iraq the authorities' strategies enjoyed a broad amount of popular support. Disillusioned by the inability of violence to effect change, civil society was intimately involved in bringing about the conditions for stability and delineating who was eligible for a seat at the negotiating table.

In Ireland's case this is denotable in the creation of Initiative 92 which described itself as a citizens' inquiry comprised of civil activists that collected opinions from the community and political

[7] Page, J, Giustozzi, A & Masadykov T, [2009], 'Negotiating with the Taliban: Towards a solution to the Afghan Conflict', *Crisis States Research Centre,* DESTIN LSE, Working paper no. 66, January.

[8] Jardien, E, [2010], 'Buying the Enemy: Demobilisation Programmes in the Midst of Counterinsurgency', *Small Wars Journal,* March 10. http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/384-jardine.pdf (18/03/10)

[9] Nets-Zehngut, R, [2007], 'Analyzing the reconciliation process', *International Journal on World Peace*, 24.

[10] Human Rights Watch [2002], 'Afghanistan's Boon Agreement One Year On: A catalogue of missed opportunities', Briefing Paper, December. http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2002/12/04/afghanistans-bonn-agreement-one-year-later

[11] Michael Semple, speaking on the future of Afghanistan at LSE's 'Brahimi Panels', 9/03/10.

parties. They were joined later by a dialogue facilitating coalition of business leaders known as the G7. Civil society's desire for an end to violence was also evident in the construction of the multi party Forum for Peace and Reconciliation in 1994 and in the establishment of the Northern Ireland Forum in 1996, both of which contributed to the Good Friday Agreement. Although these bodies were not responsible for the technical challenges posed by negotiations and operated alongside backchannel talks, they included public representatives and involved ordinary people in the negotiations in an indirect and sometimes direct way. It is also noteworthy that the electoral process for selecting the representatives to take part in negotiations provided an opportunity for over ninety percent of the electorate to choose the actors who took part.[13]

Within Iraq's far more militarised and violent context, 2005 witnessed the emergence of Sheik Abdul Sattar Buzaigh al-Rishawi's 'Anbar Awakening Council'. It provided a localised pacification model that eventually spread throughout the country. Although outside support and foreign money proved pivotal, this localised civil society movement heralded a sea change in ordinary Iraqi's appetite for continued insurgency. By 2008 the America military was in a position to hand over the running of the Awakening's militias to the national government and the following year 62 per cent of the population voted in the Iraq's second election since the fall of Saddam.

Sceptics contend that it was simply case of replacing the monopoly of violence by one section of society in favour of another and that bloodshed only dropped once Shia militiamen had achieved the sectarian cleansing of Iraqi cities. However, by choosing not to capitalise on their strength of arms and impose their will on a beleaguered population the militiamen can be viewed as extensions of the people's desire to see a return to ordinary politics. Moreover, although the preferred option, it is surely fanciful for commentators to expect populations overtly familiar with violence, used to the absence of the rule of law and living under comprised civil institutions, to trust in the ability of central authorities to counter the extremists that plagued Iraq's society in 2005.

In both cases it has been shown that a military surge met a secondary, and most likely simultaneous, surge from a civilian population united in

their opposition to continued violence. Viewed against Afghanistan's cyclical history and the willingness of the population to independently remove unpopular overlords by arms, it is clear that civil society must be partners to any serious attempt at reconciliation. Many believe the west has found its partners in Afghanistan's tribal society.

Afghanistan's Tribes and New Wars

In recognition of the need for a large measure of popular buy in, much attention has been given to the inclusion of tribal leaders in any peace talks. Premised on the belief that tribesmen living in the Pashtun belt make up the majority of the insurgency's recruits, the tribal elder is posited as Afghanistan's equivalent of an Irish civil society spokesperson or awakened Iraqi chieftain. It is to him that policy makers will turn when looking to consult ordinary Afghans on plans for reconciliation. A diverse range of figures such as British Foreign Secretary David Miliband at the international level, Afghan President Hamind Kazai domestically, US Special Forces Major Jim Carter tactically and historian Steven Pressfield academically support versions of this idea.[14]

Afghanistan's current conflict manifests itself in a myriad of different ways across the country's thirty fours provinces, multiple ethnic groupings and varied landscapes. As outlined earlier, violence has roots in events before the coalition's invasion in 2001 and has since spread across the countries porous borders into neighbouring Pakistan. Globalisation has internationalised and intensified Afghanistan's conflicts, with a variety of actors contributing to the turmoil. Viewing Afghanistan as an arena in which to conduct proxy wars, garner profits and set up base, outsiders provide ideologies, funding, arms and manpower.

The war economy that has built up over thirty years of conflict has blurred easy distinctions between farmer, opportunist, petty criminal, smuggler, narcotics dealer, mercenary, warlord, insurgent and transnational jihadist. Moreover, the contemporary insurgency is indescribable as a homogenous phenomenon and must be carefully examined in each locality it arises. Combatants

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[13] Clem McCartney [1999], 'The Role of Civil Society', *Accord*, Conciliation Resources, December. http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-ireland/contents.php (19/10/03)

[14] David Miliband - http://www.maximsnews.com/news20100311UKDavid MilibandaddressAfghanistan11003110101.htm (22/03/10)
Major Jim Carter, 'One Tribe At a Time' - http://blog.stevenpressfield.com/wpcontent/themes/stevenpressfield/one_tribe_at_a_time.pdf (22/03/10)
Steven Pressfield - http://blog.stevenpressfield.com

fight for reasons as different as adventure and revenge, economics and honour codes. This complexity, captured in Mary Kaldor's concept of 'new wars', lends weight to the argument that the label of Taliban is something of a misnomer when applied universally to anti government elements within Afghanistan.[15]

Although ethnographic concerns remain over the wisdom of a Pashtun centred approach, it is David Kilcullen's extensive experience of the insurgency throughout the Islamic world which is most problematic for proponents of the tribal thesis.[16] Kicullen's analysis suggests that tribal society has been severely ruptured by the 'hybrid' nature of Afghanistan's new war. His depiction of the exogenous factors operating upon tribes in insurgencies explains his 'accidental guerrilla' thesis and subsequent assertion that 90 per cent of insurgents within such conflicts are reconcilable. For Kicullen, the tribal elders' positioning as a civil society spokesperson has been comprised by the nature of the challenge posed by *Takfiri* inspired global insurgency and the presence of Western forces.

On one hand traditional tribal society has been broken by the infiltration of a virulent extremist ideology peddled by emboldened local *mullahs* and foreign jihadists promising adventure, an end to corrupt local officials and a semblance of basic governance. This manifests itself in the establishment of law courts and rudimentary dispute resolution utilising principles of *Sharia* law. Dissenters, unable to protect themselves with force, money or appeals to local authorities, face the prospect of extreme brutality. On the other hand, socialised by years of warfare, tribal leaders have to contend with a collateral damage prone International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) trumpeting a corrupt central government and a circus of intrusive development projects. Engagements with such actors must be checked against an inherited value system based on principles of *Ghayrat* (honour), *Dodpasbani* (cultural autonomy) and *badal* (revenge).

Appreciating the oscillation of Afghanistan's tribal leaders between the Afghan central government (backed by coalition forces), their own interest and extremists should give pause to those designing consultations for Afghanistan's reintegration and reconciliation programme.

Furthermore, the difficulty of utilising a tribal focus in reconciliation discussions has also been

illuminated by a US spy chief authored report stating that the intelligence apparatus in Afghanistan "could barely scrape together enough information to formulate rudimentary assessments of pivotal Afghan districts" and was "only marginally relevant" to NATO's overall plan. It continues by citing a US officer's assertion that the international community is ''no more than fingernail deep in our (*its*) understanding of the (*Afghan*) environment''.[17] The establishment by the US military of two dedicated 'Afghan Hands' units to increase understanding of the operational context Western forces find themselves in also points to a large gap in knowledge.[18] As highlighted in Bob Woodward's new book, evidently, the West is playing catch up with regards to its understanding of the social and political environment in Afghanistan.

Crying 'It's the Tribes Stupid' and trawling history for counter insurgency templates applicable to tribal societies has it benefits.[19] It suggests centralised authority is unlikely to be accepted in the near future and that insurgents know they simply have not to lose to win. However, it cannot account for the interplay of globalisation, new wars and *takfiri* ideology on the tribal system. It also fails to acknowledge that the aspirations, grievances and needs of Afghanistan's civil society exist within the same space. As Kicullen points out, the Pashtun belt is the ancestral home of the 'accidental guerrilla' and, unlike in Iraq, the region's tribes have a long history of interacting with outsiders advocating violence against central authorities. Moreover, tribal leaders have not proven averse to throwing their lot in with a variety of foreign elements when the situation suits them. Criminals, smugglers, spies, rebels, insurgents and even Kicullen's irreconcilable 10 per cent have all found allies among the elders. The failure of the current insurgency to fully unite Afghanistan's tribes under the banner of opposition to Western forces should not be taken to signify a rejection of violence and a desire for a holistic reconciliation plan. Instead it should merely serve as a reminder that elders are willing to accommodate the wishes of whoever fits their interests at any given moment in time.

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[15] Mary Kaldor [1999], *New and Old Wars: Organised Violence in a Global Era',* Cambridge, Polity.
[16] David Kilcullen [2009], *The Accidental Guerrilla,* Hurst and Co, London.

[17] Major General Michael T. Flynn, Captain Matt Pottinger, Paul D. Batchelor, 'Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for making intelligence relevant in Afghanistan', *Centre for a New American Security.*
http://www.cnas.org/node/3924 (22/01/09)
[18]http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125479517717366539.html (22/03/09)
[19] http://blog.stevenpressfield.com/ep-1/ (23/03/10)

Conclusion

In the rush towards a negotiated reconciliation and international drawdown an intelligence community unfit for purpose, coupled with an idealised view of tribal elders' ability to act as enlightened powerbrokers, must not be allowed to dash chances for a lasting peace in Afghanistan. The necessity of understanding Afghanistan's social context and canvassing ordinary Afghans' opinions at the sub tribal, at the very least sub *loya jigra*, level is revealed in light of examples from similar conflicts. Encouragingly, such work is already being conducted by a variety of organisations and researchers interested in locating Afghanistan's civil society. A failure to peal back the complex layers of Afghanistan's new war and engage beyond men with guns not only risks the subordination of civil society's voice and a return to warlordism, but the potential of historical repetition and many more years of violent instability.

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How Afghanistan Ends:

A Political-Military Path to Peace

by Linda Robinson

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This paper presents a scenario for resolution of the Afghan conflict in a manner that achieves U.S. objectives in Afghanistan.[1] This scenario takes the current U.S. approach as the starting point and adds 1) a more detailed theory of the conflict that highlights the political effects that must be achieved; 2) emphasis on bottom-up measures that can produce momentum in the short term, and 3) a political diplomatic strategy embraced and pursued in concert by the Afghan government, the United States and key international partners. Finally, the paper identifies requirements for a smaller follow-on military force to pave the way for a long-term advisory and assistance effort.

At the NATO summit in Lisbon in November, the United States and the rest of NATO achieved an important consensus with Afghanistan on the way ahead. All parties agreed on the goal of Afghan forces taking the lead for security by the end of 2014, with the transition beginning in 2011. NATO also formally committed to a long-term partnership with Afghanistan beyond 2014.[2]

For this transition to succeed, Afghanistan and its partners need to agree on the political requirements for a successful drawdown. A significant degree of consensus has been forged regarding the "bottom-up" measures, and their implementation has begun. There is far less agreement on the "top-down" political diplomatic strategy to be pursued. While the U.S. administration has voiced general support for the Afghan government's reconciliation policy and its declared "redlines" that the Taliban sever its ties with Al Qaeda, abandon armed struggle and support the constitutional order, it has not forged a more detailed consensus with the Afghan government and the other partners supporting Afghanistan. This paper argues that an internationally supported process will assist Afghanistan in achieving an enduring resolution of the conflict, and that such a resolution is the best means to ensure that the country does not once again become a terrorist safe haven. In his book *How Wars End*

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[1] For the U.S. objectives and supporting objectives, as well as the administration's most recent quarterly assessment mandated by the U.S. Congress, see http://www.fas.org/man/eprint/wh-afpak.pdf

[2] In his statement on November 20, 2010, in Lisbon, President Obama said: "Here in Lisbon we agreed that early 2011 will mark the beginning of a transition to Afghan responsibility, and we adopted the goal of Afghan forces taking the lead for security across the country by the end of 2014. This is a goal that President Karzai has put forward. I've made it clear that even as Americans transition and troop reductions will begin in July, we will also forge a long-term partnership with the Afghan people. And today, NATO has done the same. So this leaves no doubt that as Afghans stand up and take the lead they will not be standing alone." See http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2010/11/20/president-obama-nato-and-today-we-stand-united-afghanistan

Gideon Rose notes that the United States has historically devoted scant attention to planning and implementation of the conflict termination phase of wars and has borne the attendant costs and risks as a result.[3]

Most insurgencies end through negotiations and agreed political measures rather than through military action alone.[4] The complex nature of Afghanistan's conflict means that the best process for resolving it is also likely to be complex. Rather than positing a grand bargain to be achieved by all participants sitting at one table, this paper outlines a multilayered process to address the various drivers of the conflict at the appropriate level.

A Theory of the Conflict

A dominant theory of Afghanistan's conflict holds that the government's corruption and abuses are central drivers of the insurgency.[5] This paper does not dispute that assertion but notes that there are other drivers as well. Moreover, combating corruption is a long term process. What the policy should aim for is steady improvement by the Afghan government. A cooperative approach with the Afghan government is required to make progress on all four of these drivers.

A second and equally significant driver of conflict is local disputes among tribes, sub-tribes and other factions, exacerbated by the lack of effective dispute resolution mechanisms. The marginalization of some groups by others has been a chronic source of conflict. Inclusivity is the operative principle for conflict resolution at the local level.

Third, the Taliban insurgency feeds on and derives some degree of support from conservative, largely rural Pashtuns in the south and east of the country where the conflict is concentrated. The underrepresentation of southern Pashtuns in the security forces and the perception that they are dominated by Tajiks increase tensions among the two ethnic groups. While public opinion polls show no more than 15 percent support for the Taliban nationwide, there is nonetheless a need to understand who the insurgents represent and what they want in order to enable them to join the political process.[6]

Fourth, Pakistan's insecurities lead it to provide sanctuary and support to insurgent groups. This driver is often reduced to its primary physical manifestation, i.e., the sanctuary that Afghan insurgents enjoy in neighboring Pakistan, but the enduring solution lies in addressing the motivations for the provision of that sanctuary.

The conflict in Afghanistan thus has local, national and regional dimensions that must be addressed to resolve the conflict and prevent the country from reemerging as a terrorist safe haven. One of the key unknowns to be discovered in the negotiating process is the degree to which the Taliban insurgency has a coherent posture or is a disparate franchise motivated by discrete issues. The Taliban insurgency is historically focused in southern Afghanistan and its senior leaders are largely based in Quetta. Two other component parts of the insurgency have distinct characteristics: the Hezb-i-Islami faction led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyr, which has already offered to negotiate and is viewed as the most opportunistic element, and the Haqqani network, based largely in Pakistan's North Waziristan agency.

Gaining Momentum from "Bottom up" Measures

Emphasizing "bottom up" measures can generate significant momentum that will in turn propel progress on the broader political diplomatic front. Such measures are likely to have the most rapid and direct impact due to the rural nature of the insurgency and the currently limited reach of the government. They are culturally appropriate measures that reflect the historical forms of social organization in Afghanistan.

This is not an argument for expedient measures in lieu of long-term solutions, but rather for clarity regarding what results may be achieved relatively quickly and which require longer term effort, such

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[3]*How Wars End*, by Gideon Rose (NY: Simon & Schuster, 2010).

[4] See for example the tabulation in the monograph *How Insurgencies End*, by Ben Connable and Martin C. Libicki, RAND, 2010, pp. 180-181. Forty of 73 insurgencies have been settled through negotiations that resulted in some combination of power-sharing arrangements, elections or referenda; 61 of 73 settled insurgencies as well as three quarters of ongoing insurgencies included some combination of those measures, ceasefires or amnesties.

[5] Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan, November 2010, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181), as amended, p. 62. The International Security Assistance Force has formed CJIATF Shafafiyat ("Transparency") to lead anti-corruption efforts. The degree to which ISAF is at odds with the Afghan government over this issue is detailed in the report, pp. 63-64.

[6] In 2002, Lakhdar Brahimi, the special representative of the U.N. Secretary General for Afghanistan from October 2001 through December 2004, suggested outreach to Taliban members who were potentially willing to join the political process. He wrote later that he regretted bitterly not arguing for this more forcefully, as the means to forestall renewed war. "A New Path for Afghanistan," *Washington Post,* December 7, 2008.

as anti-corruption or most state-building efforts. The bottom up measures must be designed and implemented in manner compatible with the long term goals and programs.

Military operations are essential to set the conditions for the political diplomatic strategy to work by persuading the insurgents that they cannot win militarily. The manner in which military operations are carried out must be precise to minimize the counterproductive effects. Capture of insurgents is preferable to killing them, not only because bloodshed can lead to more recruits to the insurgent ranks, but because captured insurgents provide valuable intelligence. Captured insurgents, including insurgent leaders, may also prove to be "reconcilable" and may lead significant numbers of insurgents to lay down their arms. A blend of enemy-centric and population-centric measures can create significant pressure in a relatively short time.[7]

Local defense forces are needed to provide security in rural areas, where 76 percent of the population lives, given the currently limited numbers of both Afghan and coalition forces. The current program for local defense forces is called Afghan Local Police (ALP). Afghanistan's centralized security forces have never reached down to the local level. As the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) grow toward their planned end strength of 300,000, these local forces fill a critical gap. The Afghan government has approved the formation of 68 ALP units of 250 to 350 personnel each, 25-30 of which are to be in place by year's end.[8] These local forces have a defensive rather than offensive mandate and function as community watch groups to extend security to Afghanistan's isolated clusters of mud-walled compounds. The program is overseen by the Ministry of Interior (MOI), with training and mentoring provided by U.S. troops (in this initial phase by special operations forces). Their leaders and members are vetted and confirmed by local leaders convened in shuras. The ALP is also intended as a feeder program to increase and broaden the recruitment base for the permanent security forces. In addition, 72 Afghan Special Forces teams are being trained by year's end to provide additional village level security and protection for governance and development programs.

The ALP program subsumes an earlier pilot effort called the Afghan Public Protection Force and improves upon earlier experiments with such local security forces. Some earlier incarnations pitted one tribe or sub-tribe against another and/or employed them as offensive strike forces. The community based groups in the current program are defensive in nature, vetted by local leaders, and overseen by Afghan government officials. Safeguards such as ongoing oversight and mentoring, biometric registry, and their incorporation into institutionalized police forces or dissolution within five years are intended to ensure they do not become wayward militias controlled by warlords. While the program is still nascent, communities have embraced the ALP in the eight locations where it has been introduced, and some have spontaneously formed groups to defend against insurgent attacks.[9]

For this initiative to be effective, these small and lightly armed defensive forces must be able to call on Afghan and coalition units for protection and quick reaction forces as needed. A concentric scheme of layered security will enable these units to survive and provide grassroots level security; their first line of security is the coalition and Afghan units they are partnered with, augmented by Afghan National Police (ANP), Afghan National Army (ANA), and other ISAF coalition units located in the area. If the program produces the intended results with the first 68 units in key areas, the Afghan government will be more likely to expand it as security conditions require. If an adequate protective mantle is provided for these local defense forces, this initiative may play a major role in securing the countryside and providing protection for fighters who abandon the insurgency, as such programs have done in other rural insurgencies.

Reintegration initiatives, which commonly refer to the effort to incorporate low to mid-level insurgents into society, have to date been marked by a high level of recidivism.[10] In order to be successful, reintegration programs must protect those who abandon the fight and provide them the means to earn a livelihood. The international

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[7] The approach applied in Iraq in 2007-08 was a blend of population- and enemy-centric measures. See summary of tactics, pp. 324-326, in *Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq* (NY: Public Affairs, 2008) by this author.

[8] Unclassified briefings by U.S. officials and Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan (Section 1230), pp. 67-69.

[9] "Year In Review," National Training Mission-Afghanistan, November 2009-2010, p. 24.

[10] An estimated 7,000 reintegrated insurgents took up arms again after the Peace Through Strength program failed to provide the necessary guarantees or conditions. For a summary of previous reintegration efforts in Afghanistan including the pitfalls of such programs, see "Golden Surrender? The Risks, Challenges and Implications of Reintegration in Afghanistan," by Matt Waldman, Afghan Analysts Network Discussion Paper 04/2010, April 22, 2010.

Provincial Structure for Peace, Reconciliation and Reintegration Program
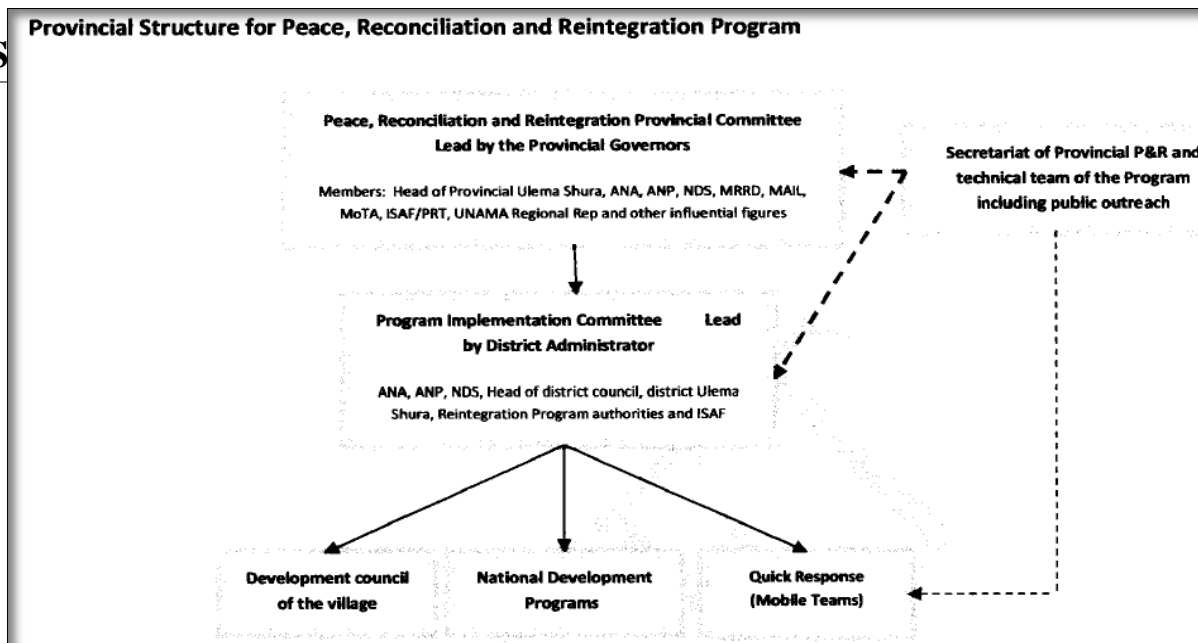
community has pledged $260m for the new initiative and U.S. Commander's Emergency Response Program funds are available as well. In addition, Afghan and other officials interviewed for this paper I believe that successful reintegration requires reconciliation with the insurgent leadership as well as a long-term stabilization program.

The Afghan government approved the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program by presidential decree on June 29, 2010. Oversight of APRP has been delegated to provincial governors, who have begun to form reintegration committees. Since the inception of the program, and particularly since the naming of a High Peace Council by the Afghan president, overtures from low- and mid-level insurgent fighters have increased significantly. Several hundred captured fighters have been released and returned to their communities with pledges from the elders to ensure they do not return to the fight. The APRP design envisions that former fighters will either be reintegrated at the local level or accepted into national training programs. Development funds will be provided to the entire district through the community development councils or other mechanisms established by the National Solidarity Program where such councils do not exist. Finally, the program includes an essential grievance resolution process to ensure that the community accepts the reintegrated fighters and that underlying issues are addressed.

The sustained pressure of combat operations targeting insurgent strongholds in the south and east over the winter is expected to alter the calculus of low and mid-level insurgents. Combined with the carrots of the reintegration program, this should begin to generate a groundswell of reintegration. If mid-level commanders decide to stop

fighting, reintegration alone may produce a dramatic reduction in the number of fighters and the level of violence. Taliban commanders inside Afghanistan who were interviewed by a researcher at Harvard University's Carr Center expressed the view that their senior leadership based in Pakistan is controlled by the Pakistani government.[11] This nationalist sentiment might be an important fissure between those on the frontlines of the insurgency and those in Pakistan. Addressing the issues of concern to the mid-level commanders might pacify some areas and reduce the complexity and difficulty of negotiations with Pakistan-based insurgent leaders.

ISAF forces are likely to play only a supporting role in the reintegration initiative, but ground units can nonetheless be critical facilitators and protectors of those who choose to stop fighting.[12] In some cases those who wish to leave the insurgent ranks may prefer to seek protection from an ISAF or other non-Afghan entity. More likely it will be Afghans—traditional leaders whether maliks, elders or mullahs, NDS intelligence personnel, Afghan local police—who are the conduit for contacts and discussions. The primary role of ISAF should be to provide protection to those who stop fighting and assist in providing alternative livelihoods. This program, if energetically implemented in tandem with other aspects of the strategy, can have a major impact in reducing the size and scope of the 30,000-strong insurgency.

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[11] "The Sun in the Sky: The relationship between Pakistan's ISI and Afghan insurgents," by Matt Waldman, Crisis States Research Centre Discussion Paper 18, Development Studies Institute, London School of Economics, June 2010.
[12] Joint Force engagement with adversaries is addressed in the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations Activity Concepts, 8 November 2010, Part III, Joint Engagement Concept,

Inclusive local governance is vital to achieving stability at the grassroots. It requires balanced representation, participation and distribution of benefits among the principal constituent groups in the key areas of the conflict. ISAF has identified 83 key districts as the geographical areas most critical to the trajectory of the conflict, most of them in the south and east where the conflict is concentrated. The means to achieve this inclusivity or balance of power among the key groups may be the formal government structures in some locations, but more likely it will involve traditional shuras or interim mechanisms such as the community development councils. The need to rely on traditional or interim structures for local decision-making stems from the dearth of government officials in most of the key districts; building formal government structures will take time.[13]

The key principle is that acknowledged tribal, socioeconomic, religious and/or ethnic leaders convene to ensure that the major groups are represented and their concerns addressed in an equitable manner. The chief difficulty is identifying capable local leaders trusted by the population, as Maj. Gen. Nick Carter (UK), the outgoing commander of Regional Command South, acknowledged. He relied on the provincial governor to identify key figures to form a stable and inclusive governance solution in the critical Arghandab district north of Kandahar City. The formula was complex: a well-regarded member of one branch of the Alikozai tribe was named district governor, and a respected member of another Alikozai branch became chief of police. Alikozai leaders in turn reached out to Ghilzai and other minority tribes to ensure they were represented on the district shura council, and elders were persuaded to return to the war-torn area once dominated by the Taliban.[14] Another means of identifying influential individuals as well as principal grievances of a community is the district stabilization framework, which has been adopted for implementation in Regional Command South.[15]

Extending more representation, participation or benefits to some groups will necessarily require some redistribution. Shuras and other mechanisms can be used to reallocate resources and institute anti-corruption and transparency measures as a way to reduce the power of some actors and increase legitimate governance over time. While reducing the dominance of some actors is necessary to achieve the desired balance, care should be taken not to create new intra-Pashtun rivalries or over-empower other actors who may then become the next "malign powerbrokers." In this view, inclusivity is the more important effect to achieve in the short term.
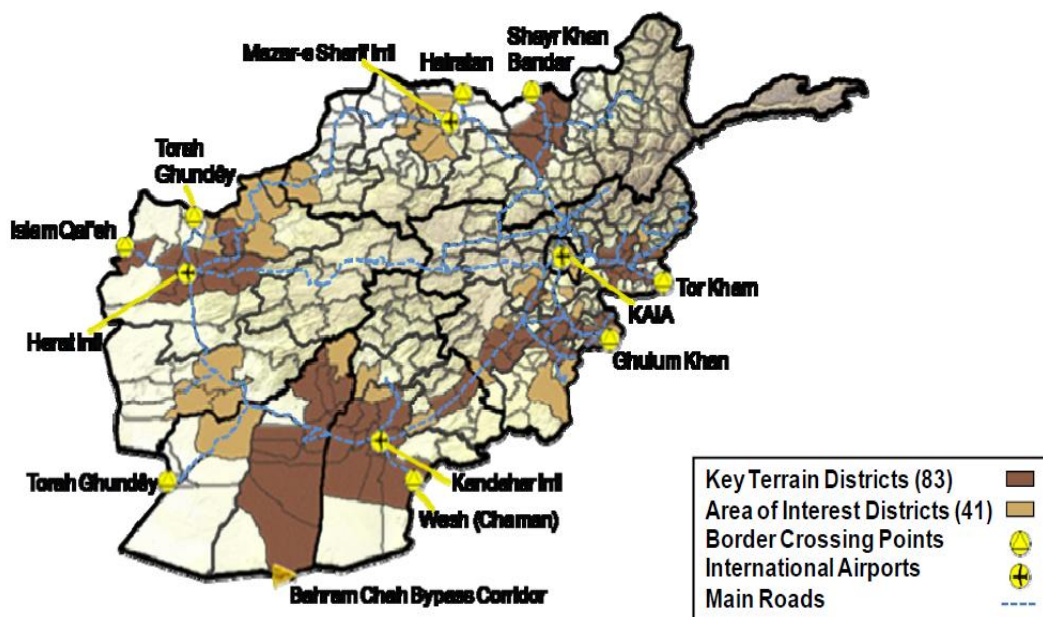
A Political Diplomatic Strategy

"Bottom up" measures can generate momentum and advance conflict resolution at the local level, but they are not in themselves sufficient to achieve enduring stability. Despite the localized, networked character of the insurgency, many diplomats as well as researchers who have talked with Taliban leaders believe that an end to the war is not possible without a process that engages the senior leadership of the Taliban.[16] Such a process is required to address national-level drivers of conflict and ensure that local pacts' cumulative effect is conducive to national stability. In addition, a process is needed to take into account the regional drivers of instability, in particular the security concerns of Pakistan and India since tensions between the two are the primary regional driver of instability. A deliberate process can in itself play a reassuring function to allay the concerns of the many competing interests as well as address the legacy of thirty years of war in a systematic fashion. While any process will reflect Afghan proclivities, some of the mechanisms employed in other conflicts or political transitions may be useful in Afghanistan. This is likely to be a multiyear process.

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[13] See for example "Afghan Government Falters in Kandahar," by Joshua Partlow, *Washington Post,* November 3, 2010. In Kandahar city proper, only 40 of 120 government officials in critical posts were present for duty, and only 12 of 44 in four key districts outside the city (Panjwayi, Zhari, Dand and Arghandab).

[14] DOD News Briefing with British Army Maj. Gen. Carter, October 28, 2010. Transcript at http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4707

[15] Remarks by Michelle Schimpp, Deputy Director of the Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs, USAID, at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 14, 2010.

[16] Staffan de Mistura, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) of the United Nations in Afghanistan, recognizes both aspects. He said "the Afghan Taliban has a range of interests and activities of about six miles. They are very local. They don't go to Kabul." Yet he believes that "Reintegration is the cart. The horse is the reconciliation.... The massive movement, the actual change will take place with the horse, the reconciliation." Afghanistan: Towards a Sustainable Political Process, International Peace Institute, September 30, 2010. See also "Negotiating with the Taliban: Issues and Prospects" by Antonio Giustozzi, A Century Foundation Report, June 2010.

Map labels: Mazar-e Sharif Intl, Hairatan, Shayr Khan Bandar, Torah Ghunday, Islam Qa'ah, Herat Intl, Tor Kham, KAIA, Ghulum Khan, Torah Ghunday, Kandahar Intl, Wesh (Chaman), Bahram Chah Bypass Corridor

Key Terrain Districts (83) ■
Area of Interest Districts (41) ▨
Border Crossing Points △
International Airports ⊕
Main Roads ----

An Afghan national reconciliation process is the most propitious mechanism for pursuing a negotiated settlement. United Nations or other international facilitation of this process is desirable to increase confidence among the parties and suggest means to achieve the declared goals. While a regional conference or process has been proposed as another possible reconciliation mechanism, the most direct stakeholders and rightful arbiters of a settlement are the Afghan people.17 Therefore, an "inside out" process is recommended, with Afghan interlocutors at the center of the process, aided by international facilitation. In addition, however, a coordinated, parallel effort is needed to ensure that the regional dimensions of the conflict are addressed as well. This may result in a regional security accord to codify the understandings reached to support an internal settlement. Finally, either separately or as a "Group of Friends," key outside parties can bring to bear their influence to induce compromise or allay fears to arrive at a settlement.

Some elements of a political diplomatic approach are already taking shape. President Hamid Karzai has advocated outreach to insurgents throughout his tenure, and his position was broadly endorsed in a consultative "peace jirga" in June 2010. Some Taliban leaders were removed from the United Nations terrorist sanctions list. In October Karzai appointed a High Peace Council, a diverse group of 70 warlords, notables and former Taliban leaders, headed by former Afghan president (1992-96) and Northern Alliance leader Burhanuddin Rabbani. While some criticized the composition of the group, Rabbani and others represent at least some of the key factions whose

tacit or active acceptance of a political solution will be required for its implementation.

A more substantive and inclusive process is desirable. President Karzai's approach has been criticized as excluding nonviolent opposition and civil society groups. Their inclusion will help guarantee that Afghans broadly accept the eventual outcome. Since the parties to a negotiation must necessarily agree to the structure and process, President Karzai must be persuaded that it is in his interest to establish a broader, more structured process that identifies and addresses the core political issues in a systematic manner. Current and former Afghan and other officials who know him well say he is inclined to rely on personal relationships and personal contacts to convince insurgent leaders to reconcile. They characterize his approach as one of offering positions in exchange for his own security in power. "That kind of arrangement will completely destroy the prospect of good governance in Afghanistan," one former senior Afghan official said.18 Providing personal assurances will be necessary to persuade the parties to arrive at an agreement, but the key to a lasting accord will be to address substantive issues with the needed structural reforms, rather than merely mete out shares of power or territory.

Facilitation can help overcome the climate of fear and mistrust. The UN SRSG de Mistura has formed a Salaam Support Group to aid the High Peace Council. De Mistura, who assumed charge of the UN Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) last spring, secured a more tightly focused mandate from the UN Security Council that enables him to prioritize support to both Afghan national dialogue and regional dialogue. (U.N. Security Council Resolution 1917 reduces UNAMA's priorities from nine to four.) Given the deep climate of mistrust

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17 See "Is a Regional Pact to Stabilize Afghanistan Possible?" by Tom Gregg, Center on International Cooperation, New York University, July 2010, p. 11. The author is also indebted to James Shinn for sharing a draft paper with extensive analysis of the regional dimensions of the conflict.

18 Interview on background with former senior Afghan official, November 2010.

and the complexity of the required negotiations, some diplomats and experts believe that the key required ingredient is a facilitator who Karzai knows and trusts and who is also acceptable to the Taliban. Some believe that person is Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN SRSG from 2001-07. Brahimi and de Mistura may be able to develop an effective working relationship and constructive division of labor to function as the principal facilitators of an accord.

Interlocutors. The principal insurgent group is the Taliban proper, often referred to as the Quetta Shura Taliban. Former diplomat and Taliban expert Michael Semple argues that 70 to 80 percent of the negotiating effort should be focused on the Taliban.[19] By contrast, the Haqqani group has less of a base in the Afghan population, although its founder Jalaluddin Haqqani was a famed anti-Soviet mujahedeen leader from the Zadran tribe of the Loya Paktia region (Paktia, Khost and Paktika) of southeastern Afghanistan. Today his son Siraj leads the group from its base in Miran Shah in North Waziristan, Pakistan.[20] Various Afghans describe it as a predatory, criminal group that has the closest ties to Al Qaeda and to Pakistan's intelligence service, and note that the current generation of Haqqanis may be closer to Arab countries and donors than to Afghans. The group is also responsible for numerous mass casualty attacks on both Afghans and foreigners in Afghanistan.

Pakistani intelligence reportedly promotes the idea of making the Haqqani group the dominant power in Loya Paktia. While this might provide Pakistan with the security of a known proxy in control of its western border, such an arrangement would not likely be acceptable to the Northern Alliance, which might well rearm in response, possibly with support from India.

The much smaller Hezb-i-Islami faction (HIG) led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyr has a scattered presence in eastern and northern provinces. It met with Afghan government officials in March to offer a peace proposal, albeit on terms not acceptable to the government, and numerous fighters have laid down their weapons. It is generally assumed that Hekmatyr is primarily interested in securing a significant government position for himself.[21]

Content of an accord. Exploratory meetings have been conducted with various interlocutors, but it will take time to determine the actual (as opposed to declared) negotiating position of the principal Taliban insurgent leaders. It is difficult to predict the content of a negotiated settlement, or indeed the balance of issues that can be dealt with locally versus in a national pact, but several experts on the Taliban believe that they have become significantly more pragmatic since their ouster in 2001.[22] The Taliban's principal demand has been the departure of foreign troops from Afghanistan. Combat troops are scheduled to depart in 2014, although some training, assistance and counterterrorism presence is likely to remain. The Taliban also have demanded the strict application of Sharia (Islamic law), but Giustozzi notes that the Taliban have in recent years ceded to local commanders' discretion matters such as allowing schools, girls' attendance at schools, music, and other diversions that were once banned.

Reforms to create a more inclusive political process might be sufficient to induce a significant portion of the Taliban leadership and their marginalized rural base to make peace. A model of governance that balances central authority with local autonomy, such as prevailed in era of King Zahir Shah, would be appeal to many Pashtuns as respecting their equities nationally and in Kandahar. Consolidation of the current 34 provinces into eight would rectify the current weighting of power toward the center at the expense of the regions. To widen participation in key decisions, budgetary and other powers could be shifted to the elected provincial councils (and away from the provincial governors, who are appointed by the central government).[23] Guaranteeing equitable southern Pashtun representation in the security forces is also essential. These changes could be made by legislation without altering the constitution. Constitutional reforms that enhance inclusiveness should not necessarily be out of bounds provided they do not threaten the rights of women or minorities.

[19]Semple was Deputy Special Representative of the European Union to Afghanistan in 2004-07 and is author of *Reconciliation in Afghanistan* (Washington: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2009). He has held extensive discussions with Taliban leaders.
[20] "The Haqqani Network," by Jeffrey Dressler, Afghanistan Report 6, Institute for Study of War, October 13, 2010.

[21] "Afghan Hezb-e-Islami Hold Peace Talks in Kabul," BBC News, 22 March 2010, accessed at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8579380.stm.
[22] See *Decoding the Taliban*, by Antonio Giustozzi, ed., (UK: C Hurst and Company, 2009), and his Century Foundation paper. Semple also holds this view.
[23] The author is grateful to Michael Semple for suggesting these reforms.

Another step could be to grant Taliban leaders a role in dispute resolution and the judiciary, while barring the draconian practices of the former Taliban rule. Semple notes that the government is already Islamic in name, sharia is acknowledged in the constitution, and some practices many in the west consider objectionable, such as forced virginity tests, are currently a feature of Afghan life. The question is whether a series of face-saving measures such as re-affirming the Islamic character of the society would provide what amounts to cover for those who wish to reconcile.

Any concessions made to either Pashtun or Taliban constituencies would need to be agreed to by Afghanistan's Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara groups to ensure a stable resulting balance. An eventual pact could be submitted to a national referendum. District elections could be held at a time and in a manner that served an incorporating function as part of the accord's implementation. In addition, a truth and reconciliation commission could be part of a settlement to document and publicize crimes, abuses and grievances of 30 years of war. Such commissions have played important roles in countries emerging from war or as part of democratic transitions, such as South Africa, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and El Salvador.

Pakistan is the key regional factor in the conflict. While a great number of countries surrounding Afghanistan have a stake in the outcome of the conflict, regional diplomacy to bolster efforts to end the war should focus in the first instance on Pakistan and India with the aim of ensuring that a political settlement does not give rise to increased competition or zero sum behavior at Afghanistan's expense. It may be tempting to see the best achievable outcome as a Kabul government closely aligned with and backed financially by India, but this could further destabilize the region. Pakistan would view such an arrangement as confirmation of its worst fears of encirclement and be even more inclined to undermine the Afghan government through armed proxies and other means. A government in Kabul that is seen as not under the sway of either India or Pakistan provides the most stable outcome.

Pakistani support for a negotiated settlement is vital since it has the ability to derail any accord through continued backing for insurgent groups. Pakistan primarily backs Afghan insurgent groups as a hedge against the consolidation of a pro-Indian government in Kabul. Even if some of Pakistan's concerns are more perception than reality, finding ways to allay them will reduce its incentive to support insurgent activity and armed proxies.

Normalization of Indian-Pakistan relations would benefit both countries and pave the way for a more stable and prosperous region, but few South Asia experts see much chance of that in the near term.24 While a wider entente may be a long way off, the more modest objective of an Afghanistan that is not viewed as under the sway or either India or Pakistan might be achievable if all parties can be persuaded to take a few important steps. A formula might include these four measures:

India offers more information about its activities in Afghanistan to allay Pakistani concerns and agrees to a mechanism to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to transparency.

The continuing presence of the United States and other members of the international community in Afghanistan can be framed and structured to balance India's role and presence to allay Pakistani concerns about an Afghanistan dominated by India.

Afghanistan can offer, as part of a comprehensive agreement with Pakistan, to initiate a formal process of border demarcation consistent with its laws and legislative process. The Afghan government can justify this as a strategic initiative that will bring benefits to Afghans by adopting the European model that permits free flow of goods and people while recognizing formal borders and sovereignty.

A concerted campaign by countries with close ties to Pakistan may persuade it that its nuclear deterrent is sufficient defense against potential aggression by India. China, Britain and Saudi Arabia all wield significant influence and may be willing to offer inducements or assurances to help convince Pakistan to support an Afghan negotiated settlement. They may also credibly convey the likelihood of international isolation, sanctions, or retribution in the event of a terrorist attack that emanates from Pakistani soil.

Patience with Pakistan has worn thin in many quarters as of late 2010. There is little appetite for offering more extensive concessions to Pakistan to gain greater cooperation in shutting down Al Qaeda, Haqqani, Lashkar e Taiba and other armed militant activity emanating from its territory.25 How-

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24 "India in Afghanistan and Beyond: Opportunities and Constraints," by C. Christine Fair, A Century Foundation Report, October 2010, p. 17-18, and *Is a Regional Strategy Viable in Afghanistan?*, Ashley Tellis and AroopMukharji, eds., (Washington: Endowment for International Peace, 2010).
25 Pakistan has alleged that India supports Baluch separatists from Afghan territory and that it has opened nine "consulates" in Afghanistan. The U.S. government might undertake to inves-

ever, if Pakistan played a constructive role in resolving the Afghan conflict, it is possible that the United States would consider other steps that Pakistan seeks, such as opening its markets to Pakistani textiles and other goods, promoting dialogue to resolve the Kashmir dispute with India, and offering a civil nuclear cooperation deal comparable to the one concluded with India, provided that Pakistan adequately addresses proliferation concerns.26

Moving from "Big COIN" to "Small COIN" to Security and Development Assistance

This paper's central argument is that momentum generated by the bottom-up measures and a robust political-diplomatic process can pave the way for a successful reduction in the U.S. military and ISAF coalition footprint and the shift to a "small" COIN effort led by the Afghan government by 2012. The counterinsurgency effort will likely continue in 2012-2014 even as political negotiations gain traction, but the main effort will become a civilian-led political and diplomatic one, with security and other military-conducted activities as the supporting effort. ISAF will downsize to an appropriately sized and led command, and it will ultimately transition into a security assistance office that will provide long-term training and advisory support to ANSF as part of the larger country team (embassy) development assistance program.

The United States has committed to a "conditions-based" reduction in its forces beginning in July 2011. The initial reductions might be modest, particularly if conditions in the south and east require reinforcement by forces shifted out of areas that have progressed more rapidly. Total ISAF

numbers will decline as other NATO forces depart in the coming year. Under this scenario, the bottom up measures will shrink the size and severity of the insurgency and begin a grassroots process of conflict resolution that will permit a reduction in forces. Conclusion of a national accord would provide a war-ending mechanism that would permit the COIN effort to shift to an assistance mission.

Reducing the military footprint. U.S. support to other countries' counterinsurgency campaigns does not have to be massive to be successful, as shown in El Salvador, the Philippines and Colombia. The mission, disposition and composition of the downsized U.S. force will be critical determinants of whether this transition occurs successfully. The U.S. force must continue to conduct and provide support for the bottom up measures that create momentum, enhance security and resolve conflicts locally. Transitioning abruptly to a sole focus on counterterrorism, or pulling back from the main fronts of the war in the south and east would put at risk the gains achieved in 2011. The forces that remain must be able to conduct an array of missions in support of Afghan and civilian partners. Thus, the needed force would:

➢ Continue to implement the bottom up approach rather than restrict its mission to only counter-terrorism, combat operations or ANSF mentoring;

➢ Be highly distributed with a much smaller command structure, principally located in the conflict zones of the south and east, to achieve the most effect and avoid relinquishing gains achieved in 2011;

➢ Be SOF-heavy and perhaps SOF-led, to continue the primary activities of partnering with ALP, ANSOF, PRTs, local community councils and local governments. Working with indigenous forces is a core mission for most U.S. special operations forces;27

➢ Leverage these Afghan and civilian partners to achieve a 50% force reduction in U.S. forces to 50,000 in 2012, with a further 50% reduction to 25,000 in 2013.

➢ Transition to a 25,000-strong international peacekeeping or border monitoring force as part of the enforcement provisions of a negotiated settlement.

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tigate some of the allegations in an effort to lay them to rest. Even if the claims are disingenuous, the U.S. effort might allay some of the Pakistani fears. The deep psychological insecurity that Pakistan feels with regard to India is likely to increase rather than decrease as India continues its rise, according to scholar Fair. The United States has pledged long-term aid and assistance to Pakistan to assure it of the U.S. commitment to a strategic partnership as well as to encourage needed reforms, but this effort has not persuaded Pakistan to end its reliance on armed proxies as a primary mode of ensuring its security and countering competitors. Pakistan has confronted armed groups that attack it (Pakistani Taliban) but not the Afghan Taliban or Haqqani group. Sir Hilary Synnott argues in *Transforming Pakistan* (London: IISS/Routledge, 2009) that only a sustained effort will persuade Pakistan to adopt an alternate approach to its external security and internal stability.
26 See "From Great Game to Grand Bargain," by Rubin and Rashid, in *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2008.

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27 The various competencies of special operations forces are not widely known; counterterrorism is frequently (and erroneously) considered to be their sole or primary mission. For an overview, see the author's "Inside the 'New' Special Operations Forces," *Proceedings*, July 2009.

➤ Provide ongoing training and advisory assistance (noncombat) for some time after settlement is concluded.

Long-term assistance and partnership. A key feature of most successful political settlements is a long-term commitment of assistance to ensure security, political stability and economic recovery and development. In the case of Afghanistan, a long-term state-building program as outlined in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy will be essential to achieve enduring stability.[28] Without sustained aid, the risk is great that terrorists will once again exploit conditions to find safe haven. While the scenario outlined here envisions an end to a U.S. combat role by 2014, a decade of robust assistance will be a necessary part of a successful endgame.

The three main components of an aid program would be:

➤ **Security**. Long-term training, advice and assistance to ANSF. Building professional, competent security forces is a generational effort. The conclusion of the conflict will permit reevaluation of the required size of the ANSF.[29]

➤ **Governance**. While this paper emphasized reliance on traditional and informal governance structures in the near term, strengthening Afghanistan's civil service, justice system and formal representative institutions are vital to long-term democratic development.

➤ **Economic development**. Economic assistance must be targeted to achieve three objectives: economic growth to create jobs, revenue generation to support institutional development, and investment in literacy (currently 28 percent) and education as the essential foundations for political and economic development.

While Afghanistan is now and will remain for the near term heavily dependent on international assistance to achieve its state-building goals, the objective is to channel that assistance into productive investments that galvanize self-sustaining economic growth, regional commerce, infrastructure, development of natural resources and investment from China, India and Russia – three of the worlds' fastest growing economies. Efforts are under way to create a detailed roadmap for Afghanistan's development and a mutually beneficial process of regional economic integration.[30]

In summary, the path to peace in Afghanistan is by no means easy but it is not impossible. War-ending strategies require the application of both military and political-diplomatic means. While the endeavor entails a heavy investment, not all the costs outlined here are borne by the United States. It must continue to lead where necessary and support other key members of the international community to achieve the common objectives. The path outlined here demands progressively less from military forces and more from political and diplomatic practitioners.

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[28] The ANDS is at http://www.ands.gov.af/

[29] The composition of the security forces matters just as much: the current policy of forming blended kandaks (battalions) with a balance of Pashtun, Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara is a powerful means to reinforce national identity over time. Efforts to increase recruitment of Pashtuns from southern and eastern provinces are vital; reintegrated fighters should be permitted and even encouraged to enlist.

[30] See *Fixing Failed States*, by Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart (Oxford, 2008), "The Economic Imperative: Stabilizing Afghanistan Through Economic Growth," by Nathaniel Fick and Clare Lockhart, CNAS Policy Brief, April 12, 2010; *The Key to Success in Afghanistan: A Modern Silk Road Strategy*, by S. Frederick Starr and Andrew C. Kuchins, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, 2010, as well as the Kabul conference implementation plan.

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Article Intro / Excerpts (Chronological Order)

A Response to "A Shot in the Dark: The Futility of Long-Range Modernization Planning"
by Joseph Purser

A response to *A Shot in the Dark: The Futility of Long-Range Modernization Planning* by Lieutenant Colonel Eric A. Hollister, published by the Institute for Land Warfare, Association of the U.S. Army.

The premise of A Shot in the Dark is that the operating environment of the future promises to be so complex it will overwhelm any attempt to anticipate it, especially in the long term. Therefore, argues the author, strategic planners should avoid attempts to describe the future and instead pursue incremental improvements to the force based on what they can understand now and in the near term. This attack on long-range force planning is in fact misguided, as it misidentifies the true root cause of previous Army major acquisition program failures – institutional bias. Put another way, the article unintentionally makes the point that Service bias for and against certain military missions overwhelms the ability to objectively develop long term futures studies, and prevents logical force development based on those predictions.

Download the Full Article: A Response to "A Shot in the Dark"

Karachi's Ethnic Tinderbox
by Ahmed Humayun and Ali Jafri

Over the last month, Karachi- Pakistan's largest city and the center of its commercial and financial life - has witnessed its worst ethnic violence in years. On October 16 a wave of targeted ethnic killings began rolling across the city; four days later, more than 60 people were dead and Karachi had come to a standstill. Since then, the city has been teetering on the brink of even more bloodshed. Why is this violence erupting now?

The proximate cause is straightforward. On August 2nd, Raza Haider, a senior leader of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and a member of the Sindh provincial assembly, was assassinated. The MQM blamed Haider's death on its political rival, the Awami National Party (ANP). The MQM primarily caters to the interests of the Urdu-speaking Muhajir group while the ANP draws support from Pashtun constituencies. After Haider's demise, the MQM argued that the city's law enforcement agencies were biased against Muhajirs and deliberately not capturing the perpetrators of the murder. On October 16, a bye-election for the assembly seat left vacant by Haider's death was to be held, which prompted the recent spate of tit-for-tat killings.

Download the Full Article: Karachi's Ethnic Tinderbox

A Well Worn Path: The Soviet and American Approaches to the Critical Tasks of Counter Insurgency
by Bart Howard

The conflict in Afghanistan is clearly at the top of the list of U.S. foreign policy challenges. Each year more and more resources are committed to the effort to stabilize and secure Afghanistan. The cost of this effort is more than just monetary. U.S. "blood and treasure" is being spilled as Americans debate the potential success or failure in this enigmatic and distant country. Soon all discussion and debate will intensify on the concept of "transition" sometime in the near future.

Afghanistan has been called a "graveyard of empires" because of the long list of nations that have previously attempted to conduct military campaigns that have ended in failure. The most recent super power to wage a counterinsurgency in Afghanistan was the Soviet Union, which fought an expensive and costly campaign spanning from 1979-1989. Although Russia committed billions of dollars and lost thousands lives in the undertaking, the resulting withdraw and eventual collapse of the Afghan government was perceived as a humiliating defeat for Russia.

After nearly a decade of very mixed results, the United States must ask the inevitable question, is this working? Although the records of other nation's adventures in Afghanistan are dismal, it does not mean that history will merely repeat itself, but it does bring to light the importance of looking at the efforts of the current campaign in Afghanistan through the lens of history. The experience of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan should not be dismissed; in fact it should be seriously examined to reveal if there are key lessons that can be gleaned in the conduct of the counterinsurgency campaign.

How did the Soviet Union and the United States approach two critical tasks in conducting a counterinsurgency; Denying sanctuary to insurgents and Building effective host nation forces to conduct counterinsurgency operations?

These critical tasks are derived from United States Army Field Manual 3-24 Counterinsurgency, also known as Marine Corps Warfighting Publication No 3-33.5. This publication generated much intellectual discussion when it was first produced and was the first military manual reviewed by the New York Times. The theories in the publication came after extensive research of numerous counterinsurgencies and full vetting of drafts by a wide audience. For basis of analysis, this manual describes the doctrine for U.S. military ground forces conducting counterinsurgency operations and as such describes "the fundamental principles that guide the employment of US military forces in coordinated action toward a common objective."

For the sake of brevity, this paper will examine two critical operational tenets outlined in chapter one; Deny sanctuary to insurgents and Train military forces to conduct counterinsurgency operations. Although there are numerous tasks to accomplish in conducting a counterinsurgency if the enemy has access to external resources and a safe haven and there is no effective host nation capability to defeat the insurgents, the ability for the host nation to emerge victorious is impossible.

Download the Full Article: A Well Worn Path

Second Land Armies and Excess Combatant Commands
by Robert Jordan Prescott

On August 12, 2010 Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced he had ordered a thorough force structure review of the Marine Corps to determine what an expeditionary force in readiness should look like in the 21st century, echoing the intermittent characterization of the Marine Corps as a "second land army." Three days prior, Gates announced U.S. Joint Forces Command, established to foster joint doctrine and conduct joint training and experimentation, would close, asserting the "U.S. military has largely embraced jointness as a matter of culture and practice" and the need for an entirely separate four star command no longer existed. Together, the two steps constitute major components of the secretary's now well-publicized initiative to enhance efficiency across the Department of Defense. The secretary's efforts are laudable, but exploring opportunities within legacy service and combatant command structures will achieve the minimum. Instead of prompting the world's premier strike force to justify itself or closing a command tasked with cultivating a joint force, the secretary should be exploring how the American military can emulate the Marine Corps and become a truly global joint force.

Download the Full Article: Second Land Armies and Excess Combatant Commands

How Afghanistan Ends: A Political-Military Path to Peace
by Linda Robinson

This paper presents a scenario for resolution of the Afghan conflict in a manner that achieves U.S. objectives in Afghanistan. This scenario takes the current U.S. approach as the starting point and adds 1) a more detailed theory of the conflict that highlights the political effects that must be achieved; 2) emphasis on bottom-up measures that can produce momentum in the short term, and 3) a political diplomatic strategy embraced and pursued in concert by the Afghan government, the United States and key international partners. Finally, the paper identifies requirements for a smaller follow-on military force to pave the way for a long-term advisory and assistance effort.

Download the Full Article: How Afghanistan Ends

The Military's Cultural Disregard for Personal Information
by Gregory Conti, Dominic Larkin, David Raymond, and Edward Sobiesk

Identity theft is not simply an inconvenience; it can lead to long-term financial and legal difficulties for individuals and families. In forward-deployed locations such as Iraq and Afghanistan, the distraction caused by identify theft can directly affect combat readiness as service members attempt to recover from these crimes. What makes matters worse it that Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines face an increased likelihood of being targeted due to the manner that many military organizations treat individuals' Social Security numbers, dates of birth, and other Personally Identifiable Information (PII). There are numerous recent examples of deployed service members being victims of identity theft.

The time has come for the United States military to enforce a culture that respects PII and to discontinue use of the Social Security number as the primary means of tracking its personnel. We advocate the return to a service number system. The military previously used a service number system, but began replacing it in the late 1960's with Social Security numbers. The impetus for the change stemmed from Executive Order 9397 which directed Federal agencies to use the Social Security number as an identifier to provide a single numerical identification system for Federal employees [,]. What authorities failed to envision at the time was how using the Social Security number as both a unique identifier for the Internal Revenue Service, which led to the use of SSNs across the financial spectrum to include banks, mortgage lenders, credit reporting agencies, etc., and as an employee identifier would lead to easy access to, and potentially widespread abuse of, this critical piece of PII. The result was a well-intentioned, but misguided, policy. In an era when an individual's Social Security number and date of birth have become the keys to identity theft, the ubiquitous use of the Social Security number by the military services is reckless. The problem is compounded by an uninformed, sometimes cavalier, culture and attitude surrounding the protection of PII that is common in the military.

While recently updated policy documents created at the most senior levels of the military services do exist, there is a significant disconnect between this high level policy and the requisite culture required for proper protection of PII in practice. As a result, the military services lag a decade or more behind best practices found in other sectors of government, industry, and academia in the proper use and handling of PII. While positive progress has been made by the services, such progress is slow, ad-hoc, frequently ignored, and overshadowed by the common usage of the Social Security number as a way of tracking and identifying individuals. The systemic leakage of personal information in day to day operations, and a pervasive attitude of disregard for personal privacy is unsettling. Such issues are not tolerated outside the military - the time for substantive change within the military has arrived.

The problem of PII use has broad implications because the impact is felt by uniformed service members as well as government civilians, family members, and contractors, all of whom are compelled to disclose their Social Security number and incur the risk that it will be further disclosed, intentionally or unintentionally, without their knowledge or consent. The Federal Trade Commission, the United States Government's lead agency in preventing identity theft, states "Don't carry your Social Security card in your wallet or write your Social Security number on a check. Give your Social Security number only when absolutely necessary, and ask to use other types of identifiers." This guidance is impossible to follow within the military given the pervasive and compulsory use of the Social Security number.

There are some who believe that disclosing one's Social Security number or birth date is harmless, however, this view is patently incorrect. An individual's Social Security number combined with their date of birth provides access to one's identity. Scammers, identity thieves, and other criminals can use this information to commit a wide variety of crimes including opening new credit card accounts, generating credit reports, taking over existing accounts, or as a way to shield their true identity when arrested for a crime. There is even a recent trend where criminals will use the Social Security number of children as a means of stealing an untainted credit history.

Fixing the damage caused by identity theft is imperfect, stressful, expensive, and time consuming. Accounts must be closed and credit reports fixed through long and painful processes. Innocent individuals are subject to harassment by collection agencies. The cost is high in terms of time and frustration. The problem is magnified when an individual is deployed, allowing much damage to occur without their knowledge, or if known, serves to place additional stress on already strained families. Unlike a password which can be routinely changed, our Social Security number and date of birth are meant to be with us for life. Thus, disclosure of this information places us at risk for life; in fact some identity theft even occurs after death, creating immense problems for surviving family members.

This article outlines the problem by illustrating the common use of the Social Security number as a unique identifier and pseudo-password in the military services. We illustrate the many ways, both large and small, that PII continues to be abused, as well as common misperceptions. We conclude with actionable solutions that will help correct the problem.

Download the Full Article: The Military's Cultural Disregard for Personal Information

U.S. Armor in Afghanistan: Worth the Effort?
by Irvin Oliver

With the arrival of 14 U.S. Marine M1A1 tanks in Afghanistan, it may be worth considering the wider role of armor and mechanized forces in irregular warfare. For many, the initial view may be that mechanized forces have little or no place in Afghanistan for several noted reasons – the logistical burden of mechanized forces will further strain an already fragile supply chain; the Soviets used mechanized forces and failed; mechanized forces limit the effectiveness of counterinsurgency. While there may be some validity in all of these criticisms, they are flawed or incomplete arguments that rely on shaky assumptions. The primary consideration of the introduction of armor and mechanized forces into a situation like Afghanistan should be the means of employment and terrain considerations.

Download the Full Article: U.S. Armor in Afghanistan: Worth the Effort?

From Conception to Policy: Evolution of Thinking on the War Against Terrorism 2002-2004
by D. Robert Worley

This paper provides a synthesis of information drawn from several efforts conducted by a Washington-based think tank in the 2002 to 2005 time frame. Findings, conclusions, and recommendations should be of interest to senior policy makers across the agencies of the United States Government and members of Congress. Recommendations are developed specifically for the interagency process statutorily housed in the National Security Council. The focus is on three different conceptions of the conflict and how they evolved in the years immediately following the 9/11 attacks. The material presented remains relevant to those who study national security policy and how it is formulated. It may hold some interest for historians. It has been productively employed in a graduate program in government and security at Johns Hopkins University to evoke discussion on national security policy formation.

Download the Full Article: From Conception to Policy

Design and the Prospects for Artistry
by Christopher R. Paparone and George L. Topic

Here, we would like to open a conversation about educating military practitioners, focusing more on the artistry of design (reflective practice) involving the "where," "why," and "how." Through our normative stance (i.e. taking a "should" perspective), we hope the community of educators and senior practitioners are spurred to better appreciate what we argue are the more desirable professional qualities of artistry. To that intent, we admit we argue provocatively rather than seek to ratify the status quo. Our intent is not to suggest current practices in professional military education have no place in the future, but that they must be subordinated to greater scope and methods of design.

Download the Full Article: Design and the Prospects for Artistry

Children, the War on Terror and Decision Making
by Robert Tynes

President Obama appears to be caught in a dilemma, poised between the hard rock moral choice of human rights and the cold-cocked fist of global terrorism. At least that's what his most recent decision to continue military funding to Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan and Yemen seems to indicate. President Obama has waived the Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2008 for these four countries. The law, which he supported when he was serving in the US Senate, states that the US government shall not provide military funding to governments that use or support the use of child soldiers. That is, of course, unless the President deems it in the national interest to supply military aid to the countries. In other words: national interest trumps protecting children. Yet in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, President Obama declared that "the promotion of human rights cannot be about exhortation alone." What gives?

Download the Full Article: Children, the War on Terror and Decision Making

Insurgencies in South Sudan: A Mandatory Path to Build a Nation?
by Marc-Andre Lagrange

The 2010 elections in Sudan were more than just a formal exercise for the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLM/A). It was for both of them the ultimate test of the capacity of SPLM to turn from an armed insurgent/liberation movement into a government supported by a national army and set the base for separation from Khartoum regime. Immediately after its first elections, the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) had to face two small scale insurgencies in Jonglei State. Led by General George Athor and David Yaw Yaw, those two insurgencies, despite their apparent limited scale, had a serious destabilizing potential for the first elected government of South Sudan.

South Sudan may seem as united to some, but for observers, South Sudan is all but united. The federal system in place does not grant to the central government a full approbation and support from the various ethnic groups and post Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) political parties issued from the armed groups. In fact, federation seems to be the only possible solution to build a modern State and government in this constellation of armed ethnic groups and semi political armed groups which constitute the population and political scene of South Sudan. Part from fighting against Khartoum, most of them have limited, if not opposite, common objectives and visions of independent South Sudan.

Less than four years after the CPA was signed and war with North ended, semi-autonomous South Sudan was already on the verge to fall into civil war. According to the United Nations, in 2009, inter and intra ethnic conflicts claimed more lives than Darfur fighting. Elections were then not just a mile stone to prove the capability of both North and South to organize large scale electoral process. It was a necessity to build minimal cohesion among South and set the foundations of the post referendum Southern institutions.

In that perspective, even small scales insurgencies conducted by a handful of renegade soldiers are major challenges. Any mistake would discredit GoSS among the Southern population.

Part of the challenge resided into the fact that the Sudan People Liberation Army is not a homogenous army but rather a conglomerate of former armed militias with combating Khartoum as unique common point. While the differentiation between various political parties was clear, the real test laid in the SPLA capacity to manage the various political allegiances of the armed groups it is composed of.

As the political process of independence in South Sudan is not yet complete, there is no real distinction between the SPLA, the SPLM and the Government of South Sudan. First of all, GoSS had to handle a political hiccup that could destabilize the newly elected government and revive the internal political tensions in a not so united South Sudan population. Secondly: respond to an internal threat with a divided under construction National Army. The faced problematic was then much bigger than just crushing several insurgent groups and avoiding falling in the endless Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo turmoil. It was also a "grandeur nature" test of the coming post referendum challenges that GoSS will face to avoid the premature collapse of this country to be.

Download The Full Article: <u>Insurgencies in South Sudan</u>

The U.S. in Afghanistan: Follow Sun Tzu Rather Than Clausewitz to Victory
by Ben Zweibelson

Over the past nine years United States counterinsurgency strategy reflected a reliance on Clausewitzian industrial-era tenets with a faulty emphasis on superior western technology, doctrine fixated on lethal operations, and a western skewed perspective on jus ad bellum (just cause for war). American military culture is largely responsible for the first two contextual biases, while western society is liable for the third in response to September 11, 2001. To turn this operational failure around, the U.S. military instrument of power should replace the teachings of 19th century German military strategist Carl Von Clausewitz with Ancient Chinese strategist Sun Tzu and abandon the aforementioned contextual factors in favor of more appropriate counterinsurgency alternatives. These include an increased emphasis on civil-military relations, jus in bello (just conduct during war) through non-lethal operations, and quantifiable conflict resolution that includes negotiating with moderate Taliban militia groups, as unpalatable as that sounds to military purists. This paper stresses that moderates do not include radical Islamic terrorists or non-native fighters.

Download the Full Article: <u>The US in Afghanistan: Follow Sun Tzu rather than Clausewitz to Victory</u>

Visual Tracking and the Military Tracking Team Capability: A Disappearing Skill and Misunderstood Capability
by John D. Hurth and Jason W. Brokaw

Of all the potentially valuable skills in the military the one that is most commonly misunderstood and underestimated is Visual Tracking. Unfortunately most opinions are based on misconceptions within the civilian tracking community. Trackers who are teachers of a holistic form of tracking that focus their instruction on a spiritual aspect have crushed any true debate on the virtues of tracking as a military specialty skill. Visual Tracking is not an exclusive skill associated with the Native American, San Bushmen, Iban, or Dyak trackers.

Visual Tracking, at its very basic level is the natural predatory hunting instinct of man. The sign that the tracker reads, is the "Physical Evidence" that his quarry leaves behind. The Trained Tracker is able to locate, identify, pursue and interpret those signs as well as form reasonably accurate conclusions based on the evidence left by the quarry.

In an environment where information on an enemy is limited the primary means of intelligence gathering will be through conducting patrols. Visual Tracking supports a commander's intent to find, fix and finish the enemy as well as be that human sensor that collects information. Soldiers who are taught the visual tracking skill will possess a greater attention to detail. Visual Tracking also provides them with a keener situational awareness to the environment around them.

It is very difficult for even the smallest element of men to move across any terrain without leaving some type of evidence. If one looks at sign left by the quarry and puts that into the context of military intelligence, then the physical evidence becomes intelligence indicators. Indicators observed by a trained tracker can provide immediate use intelligence about the quarry, such as:

- ¬ Enemy size
- ¬ Direction of movement
- ¬ Rate of movement
- ¬ Infiltration and Exfiltration routes and methods used
- ¬ "Safe Areas" being utilized
- ¬ State of training and discipline
- ¬ Enemy capabilities and intentions

Historically, Visual Man-Tracking has been used by many Militaries and Law Enforcement Agencies in other countries around the world with a great deal of success. The ability of employing Visual Trackers to locate and interdict a subject attempting to elude their pursuers, gather information for intelligence purposes or help rescue lost individuals and groups.

In today's Contemporary Operating Environment, Man-hunting techniques employed by the Military have been ineffective and reactionary. With The inability to immediately interdict insurgents, who commit attacks and flee a clear capability gap exists.

The Military over the past few decades have focused on methods other than patrolling, as a way to deter, detect and pursue an elusive quarry. Scent Dogs, Sensors, cameras, and the use of UAV's are some examples. Basic "field craft" skills have given way to the over reliance on technologies and dogs. This has dulled their natural human senses and ability to pursue their quarry.

Download the Full Article: <u>Visual Tracking and the Military Tracking Team Capability</u>

Airborne Troops as a Tactical and Operative Military Revolution
by Tal Tovy

In 1898, Jan Bloch published six volumes dealing with future warfare entitled The Future of War in its Technical, Economic and Political Relations. The book examines military technological developments and the techno-tactics at the end of the 19th century. As we know from history, about 15 years after the publication of the book the First World War broke out and Bloch's predictions about future warfare were almost exactly realized. But his perceptions regarding this were not accepted by his contemporaries, especially not by the senior military officers in Germany and France.

The character and range of the war surprised the higher military command of all the countries that participated in the war, which led especially on the Western front to a state of immobility.

Bloch was not the only one who foresaw the changes in the future battlefield. For example, already in the 1880s, General Sheridan, the commander of the American Army, envisioned the new character of war operations that would constitute the main methods of warfare on the Western front in Europe during the course of the First World War. From an analysis of the American Civil War (1861-1865) in which he had participated, and of the Franco-German War (1870-1871) in which he served as an observer, Sheridan claimed that the rival armies would protect themselves in dugouts and that any side that tried to go out on a direct frontal attack against enemy lines would be destroyed. Sheridan's estimate was derived from the understanding that improvements in firepower, in the rate and precision of firing, made war far more lethal and destructive.

As said before, most of the senior officer rank in Europe failed to understand the changing nature of warfare as a result of technological developments at the techno-tactical level. The immediate intellectual challenge was to comprehend the future aspects of warfare in connection with the rapid technological changes. Today the commonly accepted term for this process is Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA).

Research in military history has proved that in many cases it was these new technologies that changed the nature of warfare. Whichever side was wise enough to develop new technologies and to integrate them into new warfare doctrines had a decisive advantage. This article attempts to claim that the operation of airborne forces during the Second World War was a military revolution at the tactical and operational level. The basis for this claim is that the activation of airborne forces led to an essential change in the perception of the concept Line of Communication (LOC). The article will first examine the sources for the use of the concept RMA and the classical aspect of the concept LOC. This is in order to provide a theoretical dimension for the examination of historical test cases. Following this, through a discussion of a number of airborne campaigns that were conducted during the Second World War, the article will exemplify these tactical and operational changes in the LOC concept.

The geophysical nature of the LOC concept constituted a paradigm for thousands of years. From the middle of the 18th century extensive theoretical literature on the subject began to be written. By an analysis of paratroop operations during the Second World War we shall try to determine whether this new operational perception was able to undermine the basic foundations of the classical LOC paradigm.

During the war, a number of airborne campaigns were carried out in all the war arenas and in the various forces. A study of geographical distribution shows that most of the campaigns including the largest ones (at the division level and above) were carried out in the arena of Western Europe first by Germany and later by the United States and Britain, and therefore the article will be focused on an analysis of the campaigns in this arena.

Historiography concerning the operation of paratroop forces during the Second World War deals mainly with the military dimension. This means their practical activation in the various battlefields and an analysis of the success or failure of this or that operation. Therefore one may divide the research literature on paratroop forces into two main groups. The first group consists of discussions about those operations in the framework of a general discussion about the military history of the Second World War. The second group consists of studies that deal only with a discussion and analysis of operations in books that are focused only on paratroop operations. This literature does not take into account the activation of paratroops during the Second World War as a tactical revolution. An additional group is the memoirs of paratroopers at all levels of command. In this literature one can find in greater detail the training techniques and battle tactics of the paratroop forces and are therefore of great value in understanding the operational nature of those units.

Download the Full Article: <u>Airborne Troops as a Tactical and Operative Military Revolution</u>

800 Words on the Last Year in Afghanistan
by Major General Nick Carter, British Army

The last year has seen significant change in southern Afghanistan. An uplift of over 20,000 US troops, and more importantly, a huge increase in Afghan security forces has more than doubled the number of forces in Helmand and Kandahar. When I arrived in southern Afghanistan last October there was one weak Afghan Army brigade in Helmand and one in Kandahar, the original capital of Afghanistan. When I left a year later these had increased to nearly six. The Afghan Police has also been uplifted by 30%. These reinforcements have made possible the disposition of our forces to be realigned so that our counter insurgency strategy can focus on protecting the population.

Download the Full Article: <u>800 Words on the Last Year in Afghanistan</u>

A Conversation with Dr. Douglas Porch: Relooking French Encounters in Irregular Warfare in the 19th Century
by Major Michael Few

To complement the recent interviews conducted by <u>Octavian Manea</u>, we reached out to the defense analysts experts at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA. In the first interview of this series, Dr. John Arquilla described how he felt that French Encounters with Irregular Warfare in the 19th Century can inform COIN in our time. This rebuttal comes from Dr. Douglas Porch, a historian in the National Security Affairs (NSA) department. This department specializes in the study of international relations, security policy, and regional studies. NSA is unique because it brings together outstanding faculty, students from the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, National Guard and various civilian agencies, and scores of international officers from dozens of countries for the sole purpose of preparing tomorrow's military and civilian leaders for emerging security challenges. Notable alumni from the NSA department include LTG William H. Caldwell.

In a July 2010 Military Review article "Let's Take the French Experience in Algeria Out of U.S. Counterinsurgency Doctrine," Geoff Demarest, Director of Research at the Foreign Military Studies Office at Fort Leavenworth, laments that the authors of FM 3-24 were inspired in part by French COIN practices as transmitted by Algerian War veteran David Galula. Not only were French efforts in Algeria unsuccessful, he notes; they also were anchored in terror tactics that brought discredit on French soldiers and their nation.

Not so fast, says John Arquilla, Professor at the Naval Postgraduate School, who argues that the French pioneered three tactical concepts he believes central to the success of contemporary COIN: Information Operations (IO), "swarm tactics," and "the need to understand how networks fight – and how to build networks of one's own." First, according to Arquilla, General Louis-Gabriel Suchet's occupation of Aragon and Catalonia of which he was in charge during the Peninsula War of 1808-1813 succeeded in winning over the population with the devolution of authority, infrastructure improvements, and the Napoleonic promise of modernization, administrative efficiency and social progress. Second, General Thomas-Robert Bugeaud's 1843 "swarm" of Algerian resistance leader Abd el-Kader's camp, caused the latter to surrender "not too long after," which even, in turn, heralded "over a century of generally peaceful conditions and prosperity" in Algeria. Finally, Colonel Joseph Simon Gallieni's successful campaign against "Vietnamese criminal/insurgent networks" in northern Tonkin in the 1890s illustrates a successful network-centric COIN tactics.

Download the Full Article: <u>A Conversation with Dr. Douglas Porch</u>

Thinking Critically about COIN and Creatively about Strategy and War: An Interview with Colonel Gian Gentile
by Octavian Manea

I've carefully read your commentary concerning David Galula's work on counterinsurgency and its applicability for today's COIN campaigns and you seem to identify a special kind of lesson or warning than the ones that influenced the development of FM 3-24: "its tactical brilliance was divorced from a strategic purpose. So don't repeat the same mistake. After all, France lost Algeria". So, why do you think that by embracing Galula's tactical brilliance, we tend to lose sight of the art of strategy?

That has been the whole problem with the COIN narrative that developed at least in US Army circles since the end of the Vietnam War. It was, and is, premised on the idea that the Vietnam War could have been won by better counterinsurgency tactics and operations. This is the basic nugget of an idea that had a snowball effect; in the 1980s with Andrew Krepinevich' *The Army and Vietnam*, then in the 1990s with John Nagl's *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* and Lewis Sorley's *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and the Final Tragedy of America's Last Years in Vietnam*, and more currently many of the writings of Colonel Robert Cassidy and others.

The idea of a better war through improved counterinsurgency tactics has come to define causation in the Iraq war too. Recent books like Tom Ricks's duo of *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* and *The Gamble: General Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq* and Linda Robinson's *Tell Me How this Ends: General Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq* offers the notion of a bumbling, fumbling conventional army that is doing counterinsurgency incorrectly, but because a better and enlightened general comes onto the scene combined with a few innovative new officers at the lower levels who figure out how to do counterinsurgency by the classic rule and voila the operational Army is reinvented and starts doing the things differently. And it is because the Army does things differently on the ground that it produces a transformed situation, as the narrative states. It's the idea that better tactics can rescue a failed policy and strategy.

Download the Full Article**:** <u>An Interview with Colonel Gian Gentile</u>

The Killer Tiger Roared: A Strategic Analysis of Sri Lankan "Kinetic" Counterinsurgency and its Theoretical Implications
by Christian Chung

Conventional wisdom and recent developments in the study of the art of conducting "traditional" counterinsurgency (COIN) has defined the importance of a population-centric approach to COIN in which a "whole of government", integrated political component is central to an effective partnership with the host nation in ultimately defeating the insurgency.

Using an analysis of the COIN campaign in Sri Lanka against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, this study contends that governments conducting COIN against an insurgency that has a primary focus on military-kinetic operations, and not on building polit-

ical legitimacy with the population, can defeat the insurgency by competitively executing a hyper-kinetic COIN strategy, in which political reform is not emphasized, political strategy is diminished, and armed force "kinetic" operations are mainly utilized.

This study further extends this strategic comparison to encompass a renewed outlook on COIN strategy: that COIN, in both Foreign Internal Defense and Internal COIN, is a strategic competition with the nature of the insurgency itself, through the principle of adaptive competitive strategic advantage; and as such, any predisposition to a "population-centric" approach is a fallacy in outlook.

The article demonstrates, in its analysis of Internal COIN, that the nature of counterinsurgency for a particular campaign is defined by the nature of the insurgency as well as the nature of the counterinsurgent force, and not merely by executing the staple strategy of winning the "hearts and minds" of an indigenous population without prior proper analysis.

Download the Full Article: <u>The Killer Tiger Roared</u>

Che Guevara: An Exploration of Revolutionary Theory
by Jamie E. Hill

During the mid-20th century, a number of revolutionary movements were being conducted throughout South America. Some of which applied the theories developed by Che Guevara during the Cuban Revolution in the 1950's. This paper will analyze Che Guevara's 'Foco Theory', from his work Guerrilla Warfare, in relation to the revolutions in Cuba and Bolivia. The comparison will be made to determine what methods worked in Cuba, which led to the revolution's success, and then determine to what extent the 'Foco Theory' was actually employed to reach that success. In addition, other South American dissident groups attempted to use the same theory and did not achieve the same results. As a result, there will be an analysis of the events that took place in Bolivia to determine the contributing factors to the revolution and what may have caused its failure. The end result will provide a comparison of the revolutions and determine what led to certain successes or failures and why. It will also provide an assessment of Che's theory to determine if it is useful, and valid, to the events that inspired and supported its creation.

Download the Full Article: <u>Che Guevara: An Exploration of Revolutionary Theory</u>

Beyond FM 3-24: Readings for the Counterinsurgency Commander
by Joshua Thiel Bryan Martin, William Marm, Christopher O'Gwin, Christopher Young, Gabriel Szody, and Douglas Borer

Prior to the September 11, 2001 attacks, United States (U.S.) Army Green Berets were active in the international sphere. Organized in small, twelve-man teams known as Special Forces Operational Detachment Alphas (ODA), these specially trained soldiers were primarily engaged as teachers of Counterinsurgency (COIN) to Host Nation's (HN) military forces during Foreign Internal Defense (FID) missions. They were expected to not only add value to the capacity, professionalization, and operational capabilities of the HN forces, but were also expected to be the COIN subject matter experts within the U.S. military. However, ODAs rapidly evolved from teachers of COIN to practitioners of the art during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

If one were to follow a randomly chosen ODA chronologically, the COIN techniques and methods used by that unit have changed in three general ways over the last ten years. The initial pedagogical role as teachers of COIN to foreign partners before 9-11, gave way for the first seven or so years in Iraq and Afghanistan to extreme instances of Direct Action in the new role as the "Primary Counterinsurgent." In the third phase, many ODA's have returned to a more nuanced approach today that reflects the Special Force's original call to arms, "By, With, and Through." Additionally, even as Special Forces has sought to reclaim its roots, the U.S. military as a whole, including conventional or general purpose forces, have also become much more COIN savvy over time.

Indeed, ODAs in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, the Trans-Sahel, and in Central and South America have traveled the full arc between primary teacher to primary practitioner and back again depending on the local rules of engagement. Likewise, many Army and Marine units have been assigned duties in Afghanistan and Iraq as practitioners of COIN, and Navy Seal Teams have often been assigned roles as COIN teachers in FID missions – assignments for which they have minimal formal preparation. In preparation for these difficult assignments, most junior officers today refer to the Army's FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency, a document which is weighted heavily towards preparing the U.S. military in the role of "Primary Counterinsurgent." What additional readings beyond FM 3-24 might be useful to help prepare junior officers for the full array of COIN challenges facing America's expeditionary units?

Download the Full Article: <u>Beyond FM 3-24</u>

Combat Advising the ANA 205th Commandos: An Operational Perspective
by Tim C. Leival

One of the goals of the Operational Art is to effectively translate the expression of national will, in the form of strategy, into concrete tactical tasks; preferably ones that can be assigned metrics to mark progress. This paper reflects the application of the Art in the small example of the Afghan National Army 205th Commandos and Special Forces Operational Detachment A 2132.

ODA 2132 received the mission to Combat Advise the 205th Commandos at literally the worst time imaginable. We had just lost our Detachment Commander to an IED attack that also gravely wounded our Junior Engineer. We were down to eight personnel, one of whom, our Intelligence Sergeant (18F), would be serving as escort for our Commander and would be gone for almost a month. Our pre-mission training had been focused on the more usual ODA mission set. We were grieving and dispirited, but eagerly looking to get back into the fight.

When we received our change of mission brief from LTC Heinz Dinter (Task Force 32 Commander), he made it very clear that he was assigning us to the CJSOTF-A Commander's (COL Haas) designated Main Effort not because of our limitations, but because of

our strengths. As a National Guard Detachment, we have a collection of experience and education of unusual breadth and depth as well as a wealth of time spent working with indigenous soldiers in many venues. Events proved his concept to be correct and, more germane to the thesis; we had already demonstrated an adherence to the principle of Cognitive processes in prosecution of Irregular Warfare. This principle is commonly and incorrectly expressed as "putting an Afghan face" on tactical operations. Because of our life experiences, our detachment was able to correctly interpret this principle into the action of avoiding creating dependencies at any level. Properly expressed by our Junior Communications Sergeant, "An Afghan Solution to an Afghan problem" became our mantra and rallying cry when less flexible minds tried to make the Commandos into institutional mirror-images of their own light infantry organizations.

Download the Full Article: <u>Combat Advising the ANA 205th Commandos</u>

Counterinsurgency as a Cultural System
by David B. Edwards

Beginning in 2008, when news of the development of the Human Terrain Systems (HTS) program first came to public attention, a number of anthropologists began a systematic campaign to dismantle the program or at least ensure that it would never receive the imprimatur of legitimacy from professional organizations. Since the premise of HTS was that it would bring the insights of academic anthropology to the practice of military counterinsurgency, what might normally have constituted an irrelevant gesture (like the shy 9th grader deciding that she simply would not to go to the prom with the football captain, even if he asked) had some clout, in that many anthropology graduate students and unemployed PhDs who might otherwise have considered joining the program chose not to join for fear of being black listed and never landing a job in academia.

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Mullah Engagement Program: Helmand and Farah Provinces, Afghanistan 15-February – 15 March 2010
by Commander Philip Pelikan, USN

"By order of the Commanding General, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), Afghanistan, the Command Chaplain and a Muslim Chaplain (if obtainable), along with appropriate political specialists, governance advisors, and necessary security, were to engage with Islamic leadership in Helmand and Farah Provinces in discussions to enhance the relationship with key religious leaders and the communities in which they serve in order to convey the good will and otherwise positive intentions of U.S. Government and ISAF (International Security Assistance Force)/NATO forces operating in the region in conjunction with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) and its military and police forces."

This was the basic premise for the operation which subsequently took place between February and March 2010, and for which I was responsible to organize and carry out. Additionally, my responsibilities as the MEB Command Chaplain were to provide religious coverage, general pastoral care for the Marines and Sailors of 2nd MEB, and supervision of 15 chaplains.

Download the Full Article: <u>Mullah Engagement Program</u>

Is Our Afghanistan Counterinsurgency Approach Irrelevant?
by Colonel Lawrence Sellin

"You know you never defeated us on the battlefield", said the American colonel.

His adversary pondered this remark a moment. "That may be so," he replied, "but it is also irrelevant."

That conversation occurred on 25 April 1975 in Hanoi between Colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr., then Chief, Negotiations Division, U.S. Delegation, Four Party Joint Military Team and Colonel Tu, Chief of the North Vietnamese Delegation.

Colonel Summers is now best known as the author of a powerful critique of the Vietnam War titled, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*. It analyzed the reasons behind the US tactical victory, but strategic defeat in that conflict.

Download the Full Article: <u>Is Our Afghanistan Counterinsurgency Approach Irrelevant?</u>

The Strategic Risk versus Tactical Safety: What Happens When We Lose the COG
by Jeremy Kotkin

GEN Petreaus' COIN Guidance is published and on the bulletin boards in hundreds of staff offices in Kabul. As the vanguard of this new policy, Afghan Hands have a charter to operate under the COIN Guidance in concert with the mission statement developed for the program: "to build long-lasting, positive partnerships with GIRoA, Afghan entities, and civilians, in order to demonstrate the long-term commitment of ISAF to build capacity and capability within Afghanistan and deny support among the Afghan people to insurgents." These two concepts, the COIN Guidance and the Afghan Hands Program intent before it, should operate in perfect harmony, each reinforcing the other. Afghan Hands, through eyes unencumbered of 9 years of standard operating tactics and procedures, should be allowed the professional scope to "get the job done" in ways which no other individual augmentee can.

COMISAF's COIN Guidance, especially when wielded by Afghan Hands, should be the combination to take this war in a new, winning direction. It will, unfortunately, not take hold in an environment more concerned about tactical and shortsighted personnel

safety and standard operating procedure where attempting to follow the strategic intent and spirit of the new guidance is met with UCMJ punishment. The strategy operationalized by the Commander's COIN Guidance is failing in Kabul, the most visible expression of GIRoA's power, to the perceptions of the center of gravity (the people) and this carries an unacknowledged risk to the entire campaign plan.

The current COIN strategy can be a winning one. Whether it is enacted by Trinqueir's quadrillage, Marshal Lyautey's oil-spot, or a modern version of the USMC's Combined Action Platoons on a massive scale, ISAF is conducting a classic Galulian three line of operation plan focusing on security, the economy, and development. This, coupled with the Afghan Peace and Reconciliation Program and US anti-corruption efforts, are what Afghan stability desperately needs to germinate. The nature of Afghanistan and its history, however, should very strongly caution us from forgetting about the capital; yet, this is exactly what we are doing. Our strategy, focusing on the population centers in the outlying areas of the Key-Terrain Districts (KTDs), is leaving Kabul to the corruption of the central government and allowing the insurgent/guerilla to reoccupy spaces once cleared due to our own policies which segregate US/NATO Forces from the capital. The vacuum created by our absence is marking an easily followed path for the population to turn away from their government. Kabul, as the center of gravity's (the population's) capital, should be the most important oil spot; it should be the geographic center on which everything depends; the point against which all our energies should be directed. What we are doing through our own policies is voluntarily ceding this ground to the insurgent not because of his direct action, but because we are forcefully separating ourselves from the people and, in turn, creating a wedge between the people and their government.

Civilians in Kabul see our lack of effort; see a lack of economic assistance within easy reach yet kept behind hescos; and in a culture distinctly centered around bravery and honor, see us as cowards afraid to interact with them in their own largely stable and secure cities. Our actions speak louder than our words. We do not travel "outside the wire" (truly, the most pathetic line to hear from soldiers in Kabul bases; but it's not entirely their fault – it's the mindset they're being inculcated with) and live up to our own Population Centric (PC)-COIN theory. Afghans realize this. In that realization, we cripple their trust in the very government we are trying to support. If people are the center of gravity, and the capability we are trying to promote is stability and trust, what does it say that we don't even apply the Commander's guidance here? Why do we think the Kabul bubble is immune from their youth being radicalized....by our very own actions no less? Basic COIN theory would have us separate the insurgent from the population. What we have done in Kabul is separate the population from ourselves. This has marked effects on them psychologically, economically, and civically.

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