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Command and Staff College
Marine Corps University
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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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**Reexamining the Operational Relevance of Chapter IV – Training
Small Wars Manual 1940**

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AUTHOR:

**Major Adam T Strickland, USMCR
USMC Command and Staff College**

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Mentor and Oral Defense Committee Member: _____

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Executive Summary

Title: Reexamining the Operational Relevance of Chapter IV – Small Wars Manual 1940

Author: Major Adam T Strickland, United States Marine Corps Reserve

Thesis: Chapter IV—Training in the Small Wars Manual requires minor revision in order to provide a common doctrinal foundation and educational framework necessary to defeat adaptive irregular competitors capable of achieving asymmetric effects.

Discussion: The purpose of this document is to expand upon the basic tenets of small wars training as originally detailed in Chapter IV of the Small Wars Manual, in order to provide an additional and updated guide to the current conduct and design of small wars training. Above all, this document seeks to provide Marines with a new way of thinking about preparing for and executing irregular warfare, and a framework for clear and rapid analysis that will generate tempo and temporal advantage. All training for small wars must begin with a solid understanding of maneuver warfare as articulated in *MCDP 1- Warfighting*. Small wars demand that we infuse subordinates with the ability to rapidly maneuver temporally by enabling them to use initiative to make decisions faster than adversaries. Due to our continued emphasis on temporal maneuver, influence operations, and ability to achieve asymmetric effects, we must include psychological training as an essential component of small wars instruction. Cultural training and planning should attempt to identify ways to use the three most common forces of popular influence in a culturally specific context: nationalism and national policies, religion and customs, and material well-being and progress. All training evolutions should begin with a review or discussion of the commander's intent, followed by an operational center of gravity analysis. In small wars, intelligence gathering, analysis, and dissemination are arguably the most essential tasks.

Conclusion: All training for small wars must begin with a solid understanding of maneuver warfare as articulated in *MCDP 1- Warfighting*. In an era of adaptive irregular threats capable of achieving asymmetric effects, Marines must be able to temporally and spatially maneuver in order to satisfy grievances, manage expectations, and protect friendly critical vulnerabilities. While lessons learned are useful tools, they should not be applied operationally in the absence of considered reflection to respective scenarios and the potential for unintended consequences. In the end, we must conclude that the Small Wars Manual, regardless of omissions, remains the most useful guide for preparation of Marines for unconventional warfare.

“We might well ask ourselves, have we fully profited by past experiences?”
- Major Charles J Miller, USMC (1934)¹

INTRODUCTION

Founded in the lessons learned from operations conducted between 1894 – 1934 in the Caribbean, Central America and Asia, the Small Wars Manual, 1940 edition, has provided the most useful framework for Marines preparing for unconventional operations in the previous 65 years.² Marines operating in environments as diverse as Vietnam and Somalia have relied upon and repeatedly validated the material within the manual yet have not been able to ensure others could benefit from their experiences. The publication of the manual predates significant small war events in Malaya, Kenya, Southeast Asia, Northern Ireland, El Salvador, and Afghanistan, and thus fails to benefit from the associated lessons learned, or academic insights of individuals such as Robert Thompson, Frank Kitson, or Bernard Fall. While the manual does not require complete revision, recent operations in Somalia and Iraq have highlighted shortfalls within the manual regarding training, language, technology, and tactics-techniques-and-procedures (TTPs) that merit attention. Chapter IV—Training in the Small Wars Manual requires minor revision in order to provide a common doctrinal foundation and educational framework necessary to defeat adaptive competitors capable of achieving asymmetric effects.

FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this document is to expand upon the basic tenets of small wars training as originally detailed in Chapter IV of the Small Wars Manual, in order to provide an additional and updated guide to the current conduct and design of small wars training. The format utilized in this paper closely resembles that of the 1940 manual, and uses the same section headings when appropriate. Direct quotes have been used whenever possible to reinforce assertions, and create linkages between this document and the original. The target audience for this document is

Marines from the rank of Staff Sergeant to Colonel responsible for leadership, training, and force readiness. Completion of this document will facilitate the development of a comprehensive company, battalion, Marine Expeditionary Unit, or regimental training schedule to prepare Marines for a small war. Above all, this document seeks to provide Marines with a new way of thinking about preparing for and executing irregular warfare, and a framework for clear and rapid analysis that will generate tempo and temporal advantage.

CHARACTER AND PURPOSE OF SMALL WARS TRAINING³

*“The aim is not to develop a belligerent spirit in our men but rather one of caution, steadiness, instead of employing force, one strives to accomplish the purpose by diplomacy.”*⁴

All training for small wars must begin with a solid understanding of maneuver warfare as articulated in MCDP 1- Warfighting. Thus, in order to ensure that our Marines are properly mentally and physically prepared to create and exploit advantages gained by spatial and temporal maneuver in a small war, training should focus on the following essential subjects:⁵

- (1) Scouting and Patrolling⁶
- (2) Convoy Operations.⁷
- (3) Casualty Care and Transportation of Casualties.⁸
- (4) Immediate Action Drills.⁹
- (5) Firm Base Operations and Defense of Garrisons.¹⁰
- (6) Rear Area Operations and Force Protection.¹¹
- (7) Logistics.¹²
- (8) Ambushes and Counter-ambushes.¹³
- (9) Cordon and Knock / Search – Attack of a fortified position.¹⁴
- (10) Urban Operations.¹⁵
- (11) Civil disturbances.¹⁶
- (12) Raids.¹⁷
- (13) Shaping Operations.¹⁸
- (14) Combat Marksmanship.¹⁹
- (15) Navigation.²⁰
- (16) Movement to contact.²¹
- (17) Air-ground liaison.²²
- (18) Rules of Engagement / Law of Armed Conflict.
- (19) Cultural intelligence.
- (20) Civil administration and Joint Interagency Coordination.
- (21) Lines of Operation Development and Planning. (See Appendix 3)

* Note: The numbering convention used above corresponds to congruent numbers throughout, thus subjects numbered (1) in latter sections correspond to the subject numbered (1) at the beginning.

Relation to other training.²³

Since Operation DESERT STORM, Marine commanders have trained their units to satisfy the requirements of the Mission Essential Task List (METL) for Major Combat Operations (MCO). Through compliance with Marine Corps Order - 3500 Ground Training & Readiness Program and Unit Training Manual Guide MCRP 3-0A, commanders assumed that if their unit could satisfy these MCO requirements during battalion and company focused training, they would also possess the requisite skill-sets to successfully conduct small war operations. This basic assumption is flawed, for it is founded in the idea that MCO and small wars are more alike than not, and implies that the parts will remain congruent to the whole when disaggregated.

In order to have well-trained squads prepared for combat, commanders should assert that each embodies the requisite skills to operate independently, and make rationale decisions in accordance with the commander's intent. Further, these squads when aggregated would be capable of defeating any threat across the spectrum of conflict. By starting with the lowest common denominator, or the Marine rifle squad, and then working up through the rifle platoon, company, and battalion; we ensure that the squads are in fact just as strong together as apart. This training method will guarantee the incorporation of the strategic corporal mindset necessary to succeed in a small war.²⁴

Military Qualities.²⁵

*"Particular attention should be given to initiative and adaptability, leadership, teamwork, and tactical proficiency."*²⁶

In the past, Marines have been evaluated based upon the example they set for others in relation to the 14 Leadership Traits.²⁷ All agree that courage, initiative, unselfishness, and loyalty should remain hallmarks of Marines; however, small wars demand much more. A lack of

cultural intelligence (knowledge), abuse of force (judgment), and inability to mentally and physically outlast (endurance) an enemy trying to protract operations in order to expose friendly vulnerabilities will create irreparable damage by inflaming dormant grievances in a small war. Moral courage is undeniably a congruent requirement to physical courage in small wars. Finally, and perhaps of greatest importance, commanders must ensure that all actions are predicated upon restraint in order to further promote legitimacy and avoid inflaming popular grievances.

In the past, the Marine Corps' maneuver warfare philosophy was confined to the realm of physical or spatial maneuver during battalion and regimental training. Small wars demand that we infuse subordinates with the ability to rapidly maneuver temporally by enabling them to use initiative to make decisions faster than adversaries. This ability to complete the Observe-Orient-Decide-Act (OODA) loop cycle faster will ensure that Marines continue to adapt to an ever-changing battle-space more quickly than the threat.²⁸ This mental and physical agility will help our Marines to avoid inflaming popular grievances or cultural misperceptions as they maneuver through the Three-Block-War phenomenon present in many small wars. This ability to out-think a competitor generates a tempo all its own, and assists in placing threat competitors in an operational dilemma. In addition to locating, closing with, and destroying the enemy, Marines must view the ability to out-think their opponent as essential to mission accomplishment. The essential ability to better predict enemy actions through network or pattern analysis, and then conduct operations to disrupt the threat, forces our adversaries to expend limited resources on planning, operational security, execution, and force protection.

Commander's Intent.²⁹

“Building on our existing ethos and our maneuver warfare philosophy, we must continue to elevate the already high competence of our most junior leaders, educating them to think and act at the tactical level of war, with an understanding of the application of the commander's intent to achieve operational effects.”³⁰

While a thorough understanding of the commander's intent by all Marines is valuable in a purely kinetic operation, it is essential in a small war due to the ability of an individual to inflame real or perceived grievances through an unlawful or unnecessary use of force that could adversely shape the outcome of a mission.³¹ The potential for misunderstanding and abuse places an additional burden upon the commander to express his intent in an unambiguous manner in order for his subordinates to ensure the dissemination of this guidance down to the individual Marine. Small wars also place a demand on commanders to articulate measures of effectiveness or metrics for their commander's intent by stage, phase or line of operation. Metrics should be applied across all four dimensions of the battle-space: social, informational, military, and economic.³² Whether detailed under method, end-state, or both, commanders must provide subordinates with a reasonably quantifiable metric in order to ensure that all can evaluate the success or failure of an operation. This is essential to maneuver warfare, though extraordinarily difficult in a counterinsurgency environment. Detailed mission analysis will facilitate identification and exploitation of enemy critical vulnerabilities. In small wars, leaders at every level must continuously reassess the nature of their mission, in order to determine whether a modified course of action or execution of a branch plan is necessary.

*Note: An example of a clear commander's intent issued for a small war can be found in Appendix 1.

“Training is conducted all the way down to the individual Marine, with an emphasis placed on practical application of the commander's intent in order to minimize misunderstandings with the local population and minimize innocent loss of life.”³³

Tactical training.³⁴

“The usual enemy tactics encountered in small wars are those associated with the ambush of patrols and convoys, river fighting, and surprise attacks against garrisons and towns.”³⁵

Tactical training should focus on the individual Marine and his squad at the expense of company, battalion, or higher unit operations.³⁶ The success or failure of units in small wars will not be determined by the success of company or battalion operations, but rather the individual battle-skills and problem solving abilities of each Marine within his rifle squad. The ability of each Marine to shape his environment through individual acts, rapidly process information, and then decide whether to engage or not engage a target with his individual assault rifle is primary.

While mines and improvised explosive devices have been used with undeniable success by insurgents in Vietnam, Somalia, and Iraq; these devices simply represent the means to one of many potential ambush techniques, and were not unfamiliar to the Marines who constructed the original manual. Training should not focus on these devices at the expense of other threat TTPs. Small unit leaders should seek to incorporate IED awareness into proper movement, intelligence gathering, and navigation instruction. It is imperative that our training does not create mental or operational paralysis through risk aversion by over-emphasizing the complexities of this issue.

Units preparing to conduct Stability and Support Operations (SASO) should focus training on the following subjects as a continuation of the periods of instruction associated with the broader subjects under *Character and Purpose of Small Wars Training*:

- (1) Satellite and Parallel Patrolling.³⁷
- (2) Route Clearance; Hasty and Deliberate Checkpoints; Night Driving.³⁸
- (3) Casualty Evacuation and Combat Lifesaver Instruction.
- (4) Reaction to a Sniper or Improvised Explosive Device.³⁹
- (5) Establishing a Firm Base⁴⁰; Combined Action Platoon Operations.
- (6) Quick Reaction Force Operations.
- (7) Urban Sustainment.⁴¹
- (8) Counter IED Operations.⁴²
- (9) Isolating Urban Objectives and Establishing Rolling Cordons.⁴³
- (10) Mechanized Operations and Tank-Infantry Integration⁴⁴; Urban Communications.⁴⁵
- (11) Reaction to Funerals or Civic Demonstrations.
- (12) Raid Planning.
- (13) Influence Operations; Network and Pattern Analysis.⁴⁶
- (14) Range Estimation and Close Quarter Battle instruction.
- (15) Urban Navigation and Route Selection and Clearance.
- (16) Movement-to-contact.

- (17) Forward Observer and Close-Air Support briefing instruction.
- (18) Rules of Engagement Decision Exercises.⁴⁷
- (19) Identifying Center(s) of Gravity; Religious, Tribal, Social Link Analysis.
- (20) Hierarchy of Needs Instruction⁴⁸; Community Policing.
- (21) Lines of Operation Staff Planning.

While current training continues to focus on military operation on urban terrain, we must not neglect proficiency training in mountainous or jungle environments, which will continue to have relevance in small wars training and readiness. Though our current training assumption is that a Marine capable of operating effectively in an urban environment will also by default be able to be just as effective in the jungle or mountains, this assumption is seriously flawed. Both jungle and mountain terrain present a disparate array of problems not present in complex urban environments. Training should remain diverse, and not seek the 100% solution to any issue at the complete expense of others. A more accurate assumption is that a Marine capable of physical and mental endurance in the mountains and further capable of shooting-moving-and-communicating in the jungle is more likely to succeed on urban terrain. Due to the fact that jungles and mountains create spatial separation of small units, they provide a useful training environment for Marines preparing for operations independent of adjacent units on urban terrain.

These austere environments also build small unit cohesion. The demand for a continued positive presence in successful small war operations requires units to attempt to “be everywhere at anytime,” thus, rifle squads require the ability to operate independently. This requirement must be addressed through training that places a premium on individual actions, self-reliance and sustainment, and mental endurance regardless of terrain.

“In small wars, the normal separation of units, both in garrison and in the field, requires that all military qualities be well developed in the individual and the unit.”⁴⁹

Training must further address the incorporation of Headquarters and Service personnel and Weapons Company Marines into existing rifle platoons and companies. H&S Marines must

receive additional basic military skills training in order to ensure that every Marine is truly a rifleman. In addition, Tactical Decision Games provide a useful way to ensure that Marines not accustomed to tactical thought can develop such skills. H&S Marines should be able to successfully conduct convoy security, entry control point operations, interior guard, and other rear area force protection duties in order to free infantry needed for patrolling. Weapons Company Marines provide not only useful manpower and firepower capabilities, but also are adept at conducting training and instruction common in foreign internal defense missions due to their higher percentage of non-commissioned officers. Additionally, as Marines comfortable and accustomed to operating spatially independent from their higher command, Weapons Company Marines can more easily be employed as combined action, mobile assault, or as sapper platoons. Finally, reserve component weapons companies should not only provide a degree of the proficiencies listed above, but also provide commanders with additional capabilities due to the presence of civilian law enforcement agents and civil administrators familiar with criminal network analysis and counter-gang operations.

Psychological Training.⁵⁰

“. . . We must understand the psychology of the individual, who operates beyond the direct control of his superiors.”⁵¹

Due to our continued emphasis on temporal maneuver, influence operations, and ability to achieve asymmetric effects, we must include psychological training as an essential component of small wars instruction. The SWM clearly articulates Basic Instincts — self-preservation, self-assertion, pride, fear, and self-submission in Chapter I. Marines must train to recognize and expect expressions of these behaviors in order to better manage personal and unit expectations, prevent unnecessary uses of force, and establish useful metrics for operations.

Subordinate leaders need a basic understanding of Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (physiological, safety, belonging/love, esteem, actualization, and cognitive needs) in order to plan for and execute effective shaping and decisive operations within the small war battlespace.⁵² During staff training and operational planning team exercises, commanders should develop shaping operations and metrics to satisfy basic needs in order to ensure that they do not falsely commit resources toward higher order needs, only to find that these actions produced unintended consequences that further give credibility or legitimacy to a threat competitor such as that which occurred in Somalia with Mohammed Farah Aideed.

Cultural training and planning should attempt to identify ways to use the three most common forces of popular influence in a culturally specific context: nationalism and national policies, religion and customs, and material well-being and progress.⁵³ If Marines understand how influencing factors and the hierarchy of needs complement each other, then they should be able to exploit popular and threat vulnerabilities in order to create temporal and spatial advantage. This understanding will further assist Marines attempting to separate active insurgents from passive support bases by making it easier to identify potential sources of recruits — naturals, the converted, and the deceived, and thus deny the enemy a critical requirement.⁵⁴

In order to conduct a more complete family-clan-tribe analysis of our adversaries in a small war, a thorough understanding of memes and memetics is necessary. Memes are defined as contagious ideas or information patterns that replicate by parasitically infecting human minds and altering their behaviors causing them to transmit the behavior.⁵⁵ Through this framework, ideas are viewed as living organisms capable of reproduction and evolution as they pass from host to host. This construct, when explained in a simplified form, further provides Marines an additional tool to utilize when evaluating more radical elements of a traditionally moderate

institution. This framework has particular relevance to both religion and those who use terror tactics, such as suicide bombings. It further potentially provides Marines with additional cultural intelligence to understand the battle-space, and identify potential social gaps to vulnerabilities to exploit through maneuver.

Finally, commanders and small unit leaders at every level must ensure that all training instills confidence in our Marines. Marines' confidence can be eroded by detrimental media reports or over exposure to external stresses such as constant reports or signs of casualties or physical destruction during training.

“Confidence is the most precious ingredient for success, and it is the test of leadership to maintain course without wavering.”⁵⁶

Center of Gravity (COG) Analysis.⁵⁷

“One obstacle in dealing with a revolution lies in the difficulty of determining the real cause of the trouble.”⁵⁸

While Marines that have participated as members of an operational planning team have conducted a center of gravity analysis in accordance with Dr. Joe Strange's model, leaders must ensure that all their subordinates understand and apply this framework in order to complement commander's intent instruction. Whether or not subordinates develop the same center of gravity, critical capabilities, critical requirements, and critical vulnerabilities as their commanders is not as important as teaching them an effective way to think and interpret information, view the battlespace, and make decisions. COG analysis should adhere to the following definitions:⁵⁹

- **Centers of Gravity:** Primary sources of moral or physical strength, power, and resistance.
- **Critical Capabilities:** Primary abilities (physical, mental, financial, or legal power to perform) which merit a Center of Gravity to be identified as such in the context of a given scenario, situation or mission.
- **Critical Requirements:** Essential conditions, resources, and means for a Critical Capability to be fully operative (exert influence).
- **Critical Vulnerabilities:** Critical Requirements or components thereof which are deficient, or vulnerable to neutralization, interdiction or attack (moral/physical harm) in a manner achieving

decisive results — the smaller the resources and effort applied and the smaller the risk and cost, the better.

*Note: After developing a high level of proficiency with this model, operational planning teams should be exposed to and assess the utility of Warden’s COG analysis. This analytical framework focuses on “systems,” defined as leadership, processes or system essentials, infrastructure, population, and military or action units, which each maintains a COG.⁶⁰

All training evolutions should begin with a review or discussion of the commander’s intent, followed by an operational center of gravity analysis. Units preparing to deploy that have already been designated battle-space can begin a more detailed analysis in order to ensure a greater level of understanding and situational awareness. In garrison, Marines can practice with anticipated contingencies based on current events in order to develop further situational awareness, tempo and initiative, or chose more familiar historic examples. Once comfortable with this framework of critical thinking, Marines are prepared to address several questions common to all insurgencies in the framework of a COG analysis:

- “What is the appeal of the insurgency in the target community?”
- “How do insurgent forces survive, and even threaten to prevail over large-scale conventional forces with seemingly limitless resources?”
- “How can the insurgents be defeated except at enormous cost in men, money, material and time?”⁶¹

While in the past, only those in the command element would have sought to answer these questions, today’s junior Marines need to be capable of the same. All Marines must understand these issues, particularly when preparing to conduct operations in environments where seemingly small or relatively benign actions can create unintended and strategic consequences.

Network and Pattern Analysis.

We must be able to conduct detailed network and pattern analyses in order to properly analyze non-linear threats’ range of operations, recruiting, financing, supply and sustainment, and choice of targets. Though information and intelligence intensive, Marine experiences in Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan have validated this process. Whether utilizing a framework of

confirmed, suspected, or unknown insurgents within an area of operations and influence, or Malcolm Gladwell's framework of connectors, mavens, and salesmen, rifle company's need to establish organic intelligence cells coordinated by the executive officer, or designated representative capable of conducting such analysis.⁶² Not only does this framework aid in the identification potential high value targets, it can also help predict potential attacks based on a detailed analysis of previous ones. A detailed analysis of the time and date of previous attacks, the attack's spatial relationship to a major highway or road intersection, and any noted temporal relationship to past friendly activity assist this process. Units operating in Iraq and Afghanistan have successfully utilized this analysis to identify weapons caches and insurgents planting IEDs.

By mapping previous IED attacks, Marines were able to locate positions central or common to all, thus focusing patrols and collection assets in order to locate weapons caches used in these attacks, and identify areas where individuals were either passively or actively assisting insurgents. Insurgents often returned to locations of previous caches, reutilizing not only these sites, but also, the site of the attack or IED itself.

Large numbers of digital cameras exist within rifle platoons and companies today, thus an accurate, detailed visual record of individuals and events is easily produced. By teaching our Marines to think in this manner and conduct detailed analyses, we can quickly infuse them with an understanding that few acts occur independently of all others, and thus search for possible links or connections among them.

By using Gladwell's framework of connectors, mavens, and salesmen, we are not only able to identify potential high-value targets, but also uncover individuals within the community who exert disproportional levels of influence in the battle-space, such as tribal elders, school-teachers, religious leaders, veterans, or civil or tribal judges. Leaders and planners use analysis

and identification when developing appropriate shaping actions used to gain the assistance of influential individuals, as well as to develop appropriate force protection and security measures.

It is essential that our leaders learn civilian law enforcement TTPS to identify, track, and develop criminal networks, as well as the techniques they utilize to counter such networks. These individuals are restrained by use of force, constrained to adhere to both state and federal laws, and live within the communities in which they operate. They provide the perfect instructor cadre for those units preparing to operate within restrictive rules of engagement, and/or cultures where justice is primary.

Intelligence Gathering.⁶³

*“The fact is that beside the great events of which history treats, there are the innumerable little facts of daily life which the casual observer may fail to see.”*⁶⁴

In small wars, intelligence gathering, analysis, and dissemination are arguably the most essential tasks. In order to satisfy the demands for intelligence necessary to shape and motivate operational planning, evaluate metrics, complete targeting, identify critical vulnerabilities, etc., every Marine must be trained as an intelligence collector. Utilizing the framework established in the Urban Generic Intelligence Requirements Handbook, Marines should train in a manner consistent with these collection demands.⁶⁵ Using modified Kim’s Games, Marines should be asked to recite the number of personnel, vehicles, mailboxes, sewers, telephone poles, etc., they encountered during training.⁶⁶ This training can be conducted in any environment including aboard ship. Through a repetition of this training Marines will create the level of situational awareness necessary to successfully compete in small wars. Marines capable of this level of analysis will be able to quickly identify the presence of a threat, a change in public opinion, absence of a target demographic, or presence of unexplained personnel and wealth.

Rules of Engagement.⁶⁷

*“. . .use of indiscriminate violence generates the three “Rs”: resentment, resistance, and revenge. People who argue that the enemy only understands force imply that force wins respect. In reality, force usually only instills fear.”*⁶⁸

Training should attempt to replicate the environment in which a unit will operate to include the application of restrictive rules of engagement in exercises. It is imperative that Marines train in an environment where actions have consequences, an essential aspect of small war operations. While the authorization of the use of deadly force will always apply for self-defense, its use will not always be permitted for defense of property to include critical infrastructure. The loss or destruction of critical infrastructure can inflame popular grievances, aggravate humanitarian assistance issues, and force a populace to seek the satisfaction of basic needs over higher order needs necessary for mission success. As a result, we should ensure that our Marines are trained to conduct fixed site security with restraint.⁶⁹ In tribal or clan oriented societies where justice is primary, it is essential that Marines receive training on the handling, search, seizure, and detention of individuals in accordance with established rules of engagement.

Suitable Subjects for Training Aboard Ship.⁷⁰

*“The more advanced an organization is in its training, the more difficult it is to prepare a profitable schedule that can be carried into effect on board. It must be remembered that one of the main features of a system of instruction is the prevention of idleness and resultant discontent.”*⁷¹

Training conducted aboard ship should focus on studies relevant to the target area of operations, review of intelligence products, maintenance of gear and perishable skills, as well as continued leadership development training. Due to variables such as transit time and presence of a well-deck, unit training while aboard ship is difficult; however the unique MEU relationship permits unique opportunities for invaluable training.⁷² In preparation for deployment in Iraq, numerous Navy commanders have provided sections of their ships to Marine units for practical

application exercises on room clearing, grenade training, night navigation, and casualty evacuation. Forcing individuals Marines to focus on sound maneuver, correct weapons handling, intelligence collection, and situational awareness in this type of confined environment aboard ship can greatly enhance unit capability once deployed in theatre.

Lessons Learned.⁷³

*“The past can never substitute for knowledge of the current challenge, but it can help us interpret that challenge.”*⁷⁴

While lessons learned are useful tools, they should not be applied operationally in the absence of considered reflection to respective scenarios and the potential for unintended consequences. During training conducted during concentration or while in transit on ship, leaders should review lessons learned documents in search of useful practices and TTPs for application in their anticipated area of operations. Whether using a training framework constructed from Frank Hoffman’s *“Principles for the Savage Wars of Peace”* or from Dr. Kalev Sepp’s *“Best Practices in Counterinsurgency”* listed below, one should not attempt to develop a training program without first reviewing the wealth of information collected from lessons learned materials.⁷⁵

Principles for the Savage Wars of Peace:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| ▪ Understand | ▪ Discriminate Force |
| ▪ End-State | ▪ Endurance |
| ▪ Unity of Effort | ▪ Freedom of Action |
| ▪ Credibility | ▪ Agility |

*Successful and Unsuccessful Counterinsurgency Practices:*⁷⁶

Successful

- Emphasis on intelligence
- Focus on satisfying popular needs
- Secure areas established, expanded
- Population control
- Single Authority
- Pervasive PSYOP campaign

Unsuccessful

- Primacy of military direction of COIN
- Priority of kill-capture mission
- Failure to engage population
- Focus on battalion operations
- Military units concentrated on large bases
- Special Forces focused on raids

- Amnesty and rehabilitation programs
- Police in lead; military in support
- Police force expanded, diversified
- Advisors embedded in indigenous force
- Insurgent sanctuaries denied
- Advisor effort receives low priority
- Creating indigenous force in image of US force
- Open borders
- Peacetime government processes

CONCLUSION

“The only two prerequisite and enduring assets are brains and feet. These are entirely human. The side that has the feet on the ground at the right time and in the right place will win.”⁷⁷

While the 23 training sections of the original manual provide useful information for units preparing to deploy in support of a small war, operations conducted over the previous 65 years demonstrate the increased relevance of the 13 articulated in this document. In an era of adaptive irregular threats capable of achieving asymmetric effects, Marines must be able to temporally and spatially maneuver in order to satisfy grievances, manage expectations, and protect friendly critical vulnerabilities. Physical courage and endurance will remain common characteristics of Marines; however, equal emphasis should be placed on an individual’s ability to maintain complete situational awareness, gather intelligence, conduct detailed analyses, and more rapidly cycle through the O-O-D-A loop than a competitor. The focus of small wars training should continue to shift from company and battalion operations to individual actions consistent with the idea of the strategic corporal engaged in the Three Block War. For the 21st Century Marine, we must conclude that the Small Wars Manual, regardless of omissions, remains the most useful guide for preparation of Marines for unconventional warfare.

“Small unit leaders must recognize that there are limits to the application of military power alone. The usual hate for the enemy is not appropriate, and small wars cannot be fought with major warfare methods. The people must have their economic welfare provided for in order for peace and industry to be restored.”⁷⁸

APPENDIX 1 – Commander’s Intent

The following is the unclassified version of a commander’s intent issued by Major General J.M. Mattis, Commanding General 1st Marine Division for Operation Iraqi Freedom II.⁷⁹

Purpose: My aim is to make common cause with the Iraqis, providing security until Iraqi forces are trained, organized with trusted leaders, and equipped to assume the mission; in order to restore civil administration.

Method: Creating a model of stability in our zone for all Iraq, we will act swiftly to diminish fear and frustrations and conditions that cause any Iraqis to support anti-coalition efforts. Rewarding those Iraqi areas that turn against Anti-Coalition Forces, we will use their example to turn the population against the enemy. Concurrently we will defeat non-compliant elements through interdiction, elimination of sanctuary, and building trust with Iraqis to gain actionable intelligence. These two lines of operations—diminishing the causes for anti-coalition efforts and destroying non-compliant forces—will facilitate transition to political, administrative, and social conditions for a free Iraq in our zone. Wrapping all our actions inside a bodyguard of information operations, we will do no harm to innocent Iraqis, using focused and discriminate force by sturdy Marines who remain unfazed by enemy actions.

Endstate: Through presence/influence, persistence and patience our endstate is a functioning Iraqi civil administration and a populace free of fear and reprisal with Iraqi security forces that are trusted and well led replacing USMC security elements.

Subordinate leaders within 1st Marine Division quickly disseminated this intent through two guidelines: 1. “Do no harm.” 2. “No better friend, no worse enemy.” This intent was clear to all Marines prior to departure into theatre.

APPENDIX 2 – SELECTED COUNTERINSURGENCIES

Note: These examples are particularly useful due to the wealth of information available on each competitor in each conflict. A detailed campaign analysis can be conducted for each insurgency as a useful planning exercise for staff training.

*Selected 20th Century Insurgencies*⁸⁰

- French Indochina (France vs. Viet-Minh, 1945-1954)
- Palestine (UK vs. Jewish separatists, 1945-1948)
- Algerian Revolt (France vs. National Liberation Front [FLN], 1954-1962)
- Cuban Revolution (Batista Regime vs. 26 July Movement, 1956-1959)
- Angola (Portugal vs. Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola [MPLA], 1961-1974)
- Colombian Civil War (Colombian Government vs. Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC] and National Liberation Army [ELN], 1964-present)
- Northern Ireland (UK vs. Irish Republican Army [IRA], 1968-present)
- Soviet-Afghan War (Government of Afghanistan vs. insurgents, 1979-1988)
- Salvadoran Civil War (El Salvadoran Government vs. Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN], 1979-1991)
- Chechnya (Russia vs. Chechen separatists, 1994-present)
- Iraq (US and Iraqi Government vs. insurgents, 2003-present)

APPENDIX 3 – LINES OF OPERATION and IMPLIED TASKS⁸¹

Examples of Lines of Operation: *This list is not intended to be all-inclusive or complete, but simply to provide basic examples from which planners can develop contextually specific LOO.*

- Rule of Law
 - Security – Military Operations
 - Intelligence (Collection, Assessment, and Dissemination)
 - Foreign Internal Defense – Train & Employ Indigenous Forces
 - Pacification – Disarmament of Population
 - Judicial Infrastructure (Jails, Courts, Police)
 - Physical Infrastructure (Water, Sewer, Electrical)
 - General Amnesty
- Governance (a potential sub-set of rule of law)
 - Diplomacy (State – local connectivity)
 - Civil Infrastructure (Ministries, Schools, Healthcare, Refuse, Tax System)
 - Countering Shadow Government and Illegitimate Authority
 - Elections
- Information Operations
 - Expectation Management (Friendly, Enemy, General Population)
 - Influence Operations – Civil Military Operations – Humanitarian Assistance
 - Removal of War Relics – Signs of Conflict
 - Information Dissemination and Denial (News, Radio, Television, Phone, Internet)
- Economic Development & Economic Pluralism⁸²
 - Foreign Direct Investment
 - Employment Opportunities and Unemployment Protection
 - Agriculture (Subsistence to Export)
 - Price Controls and Free Market Forces
- Elimination of Grievances⁸³
 - Legitimacy - Reform
 - Satisfying Hierarchy of Needs
 - Justice and Equality (Tribal, Religious, Ethnic, Gender)
- Population and Resource Control⁸⁴
 - Border Security
 - Population Concentration – Individual Identification System
 - Critical Infrastructure Fixed-Site Security
 - Check-point Operations / Traffic Management and Control
 - Sanctuary Denial
- Military /Operational Measures⁸⁵
- Essential Services⁸⁶

Warden’s 5 Rings as Lines of Operation:⁸⁷

- Fielded Military / Action Units
- Population
- Infrastructure
- System Essentials / Processes
- Leadership

ENDNOTES

¹ Major Charles J Miller, "Marine Corps Schools, 1934-1935," *Marine Corps Gazette*, XIX (Aug. 1934), pp.57-60, quotation from page 58.

² The years 1894 - 1934 were chosen due to the USMC intervention and occupation of Bluefields, Nicaragua in 1894, and the end of the USMC occupation of Haiti and Nicaragua in 1934. The author understands the word unconventional to be defined as different from what is regarded as normal or standard. While small wars operations are quite normal for Marines, the word unconventional was chosen to signify non-uniformed threats or adversaries not employing conventional infantry or offensive tactics within the rules of armed conflict or land warfare.

³ Chapter IV, Section I, Small Wars Manual 1940 edition, and Chapter VII, Section I, Small Wars Operations 1935 revision.

⁴ SWO 1935 revision, 3-1-d. The author did not use this quote to imply that force was neither necessary nor at times appropriate in small wars, but rather, to demonstrate that non-kinetic means were more desirable, thus making many of the subjects listed below essential.

⁵ SWM 1940 edition 4-1-c. The list of small war training subjects is a revision of the original list of 28 subjects listed in the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1. Many listed are the product of combining subjects listed separately on the original list, or a simple renaming of subjects. The original list is as follows: (1) Composition, armament, and equipment of infantry patrols. (2) Formations and tactics of Infantry Patrols. (3) Mounted detachments. (4) Transportation of the wounded. (5) Planned schemes of maneuver when enemy is encountered by patrols. (6) Security on the march. (7) Security during halts and in camp. (8) Organization of the ground for all-around defense. (9) Night operations, both offensive and defensive. (10) Employment of weapons. (11) Messing. (12) Laying ambushes. (13) Attacking a house. (14) Street fighting. (15) Riot duty. (16) Defense of garrisons. (17) Surprise attacks on enemy encampments. (18) Stratagems and ruses. (19) Scouting and patrolling, including tracking. (20) Combat practice firing. (21) Sketching and aerial photograph map reading. (22) Marching. (23) Bivouacs and camps. (24) Sanitation, first aid, and hygiene. (25) Handling of small boats on inland waterways. (26) Air-ground liaison. (27) Training of officers as aviation observers. (28) Rules of land warfare.

⁶ This is a combination of subjects (1), (2), (4), (6), (9), (12), (19), (22) from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

⁷ This is a renaming of subject (3) from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1. As operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have demonstrated, our convoys are extremely vulnerable to ambush and general attack. The inability of many to be able to drive on night-vision-devices or with lights-off only exacerbates this vulnerability. It is essential that all drivers are qualified to drive on night-vision-devices.

⁸ This is a combination of subjects (4) Transportation of the Wounded and (24) Sanitation, first aid, and hygiene from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

⁹ This is a renaming of subject (5) Planned schemes of maneuver when enemy is encountered on patrol from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

¹⁰ This is a combination of subjects (6) Security on the march, (7) Security during halts and in camp, and (8) Organization of the ground for all around defense from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

¹¹ This is a combination of subjects (8) Organization of the ground for all around defense and (16) Defense of garrisons from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

¹² This includes subject (11) Messing from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

¹³ This includes subject (12) Laying ambushes from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

¹⁴ This includes subject (13) Attacking a house from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

¹⁵ This is a renaming of subject (14) Street fighting from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

¹⁶ This is a renaming of subject (15) Riot duty from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

¹⁷ This is a renaming of subject (17) Surprise attacks on enemy encampments from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

¹⁸ This includes subject (18) Stratagems and ruses from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

¹⁹ This is a combination of subjects (10) Employment of weapons and (20) Combat practice firing from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

²⁰ This is a renaming of subject (21) Sketching and aerial photograph map reading from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

²¹ This is a renaming of subject (22) Marching from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

²² This is inclusive of subjects (26) Air-ground liaison and (27) Training of officers as aviation observers from the SWM 1940 edition, 4-1.

²³ SWM 1940 edition, 4-1, and SWO 1935 revision 7-1.

²⁴ General Charles C Krulak, "The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three-Block-War," Marines Magazine, January 1999.

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- ²⁵ SWO 1935 revision, 7-2-d.
- ²⁶ SWO 1935 revision 7-2-d.
- ²⁷ Dependability, Bearing, Courage, Decisiveness, Endurance, Enthusiasm, Initiative, Integrity, Judgment, Justice, Knowledge, Tact, Unselfishness, and Loyalty.
- ²⁸ John Boyd, "A Discourse on Winning and Losing: The Patterns of Conflict," unpublished lecture notes and diagrams, August 1987.
- ²⁹ The author included this as a new section based largely on a review of 3-10-d and 3-10-g in the SWO 1935 revision. In addition, the author was moved as a result of the emphasis placed on this subject by then CG, 1st Marine Division, Major General J.M. Mattis prior to the division's deployment to Iraq in January 2004.
- ³⁰ General M.W. Hagee, "A Concept for Distributed Operations," Quantico: Marine Corps Combat Development Command, 25 April 2005, p.V.
- ³¹ Note: The abuse of prisoners at Abu Ghraib Prison, Iraq undeniably caused irrevocable damage to coalition efforts that little other than time could repair. During periods of instruction on this subject, leaders should utilize examples of abuses against US forces to demonstrate the asymmetric effects that such acts had on public opinion, such as the desecration of the bodies of dead soldiers by Somali militiamen during the Battle of Mogadishu in October 1993.
- ³² Lieutenant Colonel David Kilcullen, "Notes on Operational Metrics for Counterinsurgency," Washington D.C.: The Pentagon, April 2005.
- ³³ Colonel Michael Bohn, "Small Unit Leadership in the Future Security and Stability Operations," Marine Corps Gazette, March 2004.
- ³⁴ SWM 1940 edition, 4-2, and SWO 1935 revision 7-3. Details of most of the subjects listed below can be found in X-File 3-35.33 (Revised), Urban Patrolling and MOUT produced by the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory (MCWL) for units preparing to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This list reflects many of the subjects taught by Project Metropolis (PROMET) during SASO training, as well as incorporates input from battalion lessons learned and after action reports completed upon re-deployment from OIF and OEF.
- ³⁵ SWM 1940 edition, 4-2.
- ³⁶ This has proven especially true during 2004-2006 for units preparing to deploy to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Units routinely receive their "new-joins" within 90 days of deployment. With these time constraints, training should focus on the individual, fire team, and squad.
- ³⁷ British units operating in Northern Ireland utilized these techniques with undeniable success. Based on their experiences, USMC units have begun incorporating these techniques into all basic patrolling periods of instruction. All units preparing to deploy to Iraq receive instruction on these patrolling techniques as part of the training conducted by Project Metropolis (PROMET).
- ³⁸ Reference X-File 3-35.34 (Revised) Security Operations; It is essential that our troops understand not only the basics of these subjects, but also the consequences associated with their potential abuse. Mishandling of civilians at checkpoints, the disruption of the normal flow of traffic, the collection of vehicles at checkpoints, and unnecessarily aggressive driving all create threats and potentially aggravate grievances and false perceptions about security personnel.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Reference X-File 3-35.34 (Revised) Security Operations; One possible firm base rotation used with success by rifle companies in Iraq is as follows: (1) Platoon Patrolling Operations for 2 weeks, (1) Platoon QRF duty for 1 week, (1) Platoon on Firm Base Defense for 1 week, and (1) Platoon ECP or TCP duty for 2 weeks. After Action Reports by 1st Battalion 5th Marines support this rotation plan.
- ⁴¹ Reference X-File 4-11.71 (Revised) Urban Sustainment.
- ⁴² Reference X-File 3-35.34 (Revised) Security Operations.
- ⁴³ Reference X-File 3-35.31 (Revised) Urban Attacks.
- ⁴⁴ Reference X-File 3-35.18 Fundamentals of INF/Tank/MECH Integration in MOUT.
- ⁴⁵ Reference X-File 3-35.35.1 Personal Role Radio.
- ⁴⁶ Reference X-File 2-1.1 Company Intel Cell in SASO.
- ⁴⁷ Reference X-File 3-11.21 (Revised) Combat Squad Leader Decision Making.
- ⁴⁸ See Abraham Maslow's "A Theory of Human Motivation," Psychological Review, 50, pp.370-396.
- ⁴⁹ SWM 1940 edition, 4-1-b.
- ⁵⁰ SWO 1935 revision, 3-1; Psychology is also included in the SWM 1940 edition on 1-10 through 1-17.
- ⁵¹ SWO 1935 revision, 3-1-b.
- ⁵² Abraham Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," Psychological Review, 50, pp. 370-396.
- ⁵³ Robert Thompson, Defeating Communist Insurgency, New York: Praeger Publishers, p.63.

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- ⁵⁴ Ibid, p.35.
- ⁵⁵ Memetic Lexicon, www.aleph.se/Trans/Cultural/Memetics/meme_lex.html
- ⁵⁶ Ibid, p.170.
- ⁵⁷ Dr. Joe Strange, PERSPECTIVES OF WARFIGHTING: Centers of Gravity & Critical Vulnerabilities, Marine Corps University, Number 4, Second Edition, 1996.
- ⁵⁸ SWO 1935 revision, 3-5-1.
- ⁵⁹ Strange, p.43.
- ⁶⁰ John Warden and Leland Russell, Winning in Fast Time, California: Venturist Publishing, 2001.
- ⁶¹ Thompson, p.14.
- ⁶² Reference X-File 2-1.1 Company Intel Cell in SASO.
- ⁶³ This section is included based of the author’s experiences training for Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the stress placed on the idea that “every Marine is an intelligence collector” by 1st Marine Division.
- ⁶⁴ SWO 1935 revision, 3-5-d.
- ⁶⁵ Urban Generic Intelligence Requirement Handbook, Marine Corps Intelligence Activity
- ⁶⁶ Kim’s Games date back to the time of Rudyard Kipling and his messengers, but have been further developed by both the Canadian and UK Militaries. The Canadian Army has developed several acronyms associated with memory games, such as ACCSS – Appears-to-be, color, condition, shape, and size. Additionally, they utilize A-H indicators for target personnel – age, build, complexion, distinguishing features, elevation, face, gate, and hair.
- ⁶⁷ The author’s own perceptions concerning the significance of this topic were reinforced by LtCol Glen Babington, Australian LNO MCCDC, and Major Joseph Lore, USMC.
- ⁶⁸ Dr. John Lynn, “Patterns of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency,” Military Review, July-August 2005, p.22.
- ⁶⁹ We must continue to evaluate the use of non-lethal weapons in these situations.
- ⁷⁰ SWO 1935 revision, 7-23; this section is titled “*Essential Training*”, 4-17, in the SWM 1940 edition. The majority of suggested training subjects listed were taken from After Action Reports filed by the Marines of 1st Battalion 5th Marines, 3rd Battalion 4th Marines, 3rd Battalion 8th Marines, 2nd Battalion 4th Marines, 1st Battalion 6th Marines, 1st Battalion 7th Marines, 3rd Battalion 1st Marines, and Marine Detachment ONE. These After-Action Reports can be found on the USMC Small Wars Center for Excellence Website at www.smallwars.quantico.usmc.mil.
- ⁷¹ SWM 1940 edition, 4-10-a.
- ⁷² During their transit to Iraq, 1st Battalion 4th Marines’ Operations Officer Major Chris Griffin was given the entire starboard 0-3 section of the ship for training.
- ⁷³ Please reference the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned at www.mccll.usmc.mil/
- ⁷⁴ Dr. John Lynn, p. 27.
- ⁷⁵ Frank G Hoffman, “The Principles for the Savage Wars of Peace,” Center for Emerging Threats, MCWL; and, Kalev Sepp, “Best Practices in Counterinsurgency,” Military Review, May-June 2005.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ Thompson, p.171.
- ⁷⁸ Colonel Michael Bohn, “Small Unit Leadership in the Future Security and Stability Operations,” Marine Corps Gazette, March 2004.
- ⁷⁹ Major General Mattis’ commander’s intent can be found on-line at the MAGTF Staff Training Program website in the Class section – commander’s intent.
- ⁸⁰ Sepp, p 3.
- ⁸¹ Much of the information below was developed in December 2005 during the Barbary Sword Exercise at Command and Staff College by Majors Dan Greenwood, Robert Zyla, Adam Strickland, and David Shank.
- ⁸² Chiarelli, p.7.
- ⁸³ Reference Dr. Tom Marks’ Plan for Sri Lanka – 1986.
- ⁸⁴ Ibid.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid.
- ⁸⁶ Chiarelli, p.
- ⁸⁷ John Warden, Air Theory for the 21st Century,

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