

## SMALL WARS: CIVIL–MILITARY RELATIONS

Major Carlos Vallejo, USMC

### INTRODUCTION

Western COIN [counterinsurgency] doctrine generally identifies the ‘hearts and minds campaign’–gaining and maintaining the support of the domestic population in order to isolate the insurgent–as the key to success. It thus sees the population as a potential instrument of advantage. It further recognizes that military operations must contribute to the achievement of this effect and be subordinate to the political campaign.

– Brigadier Nigel Aylwin–Foster,  
British Army

Chapter 1, Section VI of the 1940 Small Wars Manual addresses the inevitable contact of military forces with the local civilian authorities and general population. It stresses the impact of cultural awareness in military–civil operations. Military leaders who lack cultural knowledge and sensitivity can be detrimental to the mission and the lives of their service members. Winning the support of the civilian population is paramount to successful military–civil operations. This paper addresses and expands on the themes of military–civil relationship discussed in the 1940 manual. Specifically, it addresses relations with the

population, cooperation with local security forces, and contact with local civil and religious leaders with the intent to bring these themes up to date based on interviews and lessons learned during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Although the lessons and conclusions in this paper are drawn from OIF, the principles have applications to future small wars.

### HOW ABOUT IT?

*We’ve been presented a tremendous opportunity to publish works on Small Wars by the ’05-’06 USMC Command & Staff College, plus contributions from a new (to us) author and a welcome repeat offender. See p.5 for more on how that came to pass.*

*We need to hear the rest, from the rest of you. Please contact us with your suggestions or content contributions. We would very much like to hear more from the Army, other agency (esp. State, USAID, ORHA, etc.), NGO, and non-U.S. military or governments. One team, one fight. Or one team, let’s fight! Just don’t stay quiet.*

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## CONTACT WITH THE POPULATION.

Cordial relationships between our forces and the civilian population is best maintained by engendering the spirit of good will...every endeavor should be made to assure the civilian population of the friendliness of our forces. No effort should be spared to demonstrate the advantage of law and order and to secure their friendly cooperation.

– FMFRP 12–15, Small Wars Manual

Military leaders and their subordinates must establish and maintain positive relationships with the civilian population in order to win small wars. They must be prepared to interact with the civilian population at any time. Winning the hearts and minds of the population is a long and arduous process, but without the population's support, military

leaders will find themselves losing the war against the insurgents. The common practices used by the coalition forces are not new or revolutionary. Military leaders must place emphasis on treating the civilian population with dignity and respect, assuring them of the friendliness of the forces, and earning their trust and respect.<sup>1</sup>

The center of gravity in small wars is the support of the people. The triangular relationship between the people, the government, and the insurgents explains why it is important to win their hearts and minds. Governments lose legitimacy for many reasons. They may be corrupt or inefficient in providing rule of law, public services or basic security for their region. Such failures of governance create ripe conditions for the insurgents to gain credibility and popular support. FM 100–20 states, “the leaders of the insurgency must make their cause known to the people. They must gain popular support. Their key tasks are to break the ties between the people and the government and to establish the credibility of their movement. They must replace the government’s credibility with that of their own.” As noted by one commander, the struggle between the government and the insurgents becomes “a fight over people”, specifically the large uncommitted population on whose support hinges the fate of the insurgency.<sup>2</sup>

Maintaining positive interaction that demonstrates sincere benevolence with the people is a combat multiplier. The 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division followed this is the policy of “no better friend”. A Marine battalion in the strong anti-

<sup>1</sup>. Major Brett Clark and Captain Scott Cuomo, response to author’s questions, 3 January 2006.

<sup>2</sup>. These comments were taken from a brief that Col Mayer provided me to help me explain why it is important to win the hearts and minds of the population. LTC Tom Guthrie, USA, gave this brief to his Bn in preparation for Iraq.

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coalition area of Al Anbar Province in Iraq employed a “good neighbor” policy.<sup>3</sup> Marines at all levels practiced this policy and their leaders emphasized it daily to the point that young Marines fell into the routine of applying it as part of the rules of engagement (ROE). The principles were simple and common sense. Be as polite and courteous as possible to all

<sup>3</sup>. Major Clark.

Iraqis unless feeling threatened by suspicion of insurgent affiliation, possession of contraband, or any hostile intent. This policy went beyond just being respectful to locals, and encouraged Marines to be sincerely friendly. Leaders encouraged waving, smiling, handshaking, interacting with the children, and sharing comfort items.<sup>4</sup> Distributing agricultural tools

<sup>4</sup>. Major Clark.

to the farmers and book bags, school supplies, water, candy, and soccer balls to the children in the name of benevolence served to improve relations with the Iraqis.<sup>5</sup> Marines used the elders as intermediaries in order to secure their position in the community. As one battalion commander asserts “since we couldn’t readily give the Iraqis the things they really wanted...we did the small things to show we cared...by giving the item to the elders, we showed sensitivity to the elder-child relationship. How would you like it if your neighbor was always giving your kids candy, toys, etc and you couldn’t afford to do the same? It would make you mad—we didn’t want that. In this way we showed common—I argue transnational—courtesy and common sense.”<sup>6</sup>

It is important to point out, what a battalion commander calls “the polarity of our generosity.”<sup>7</sup> His Marines were focused on giving the little things they could to show their kindness. His experience shows that what his Marines perceived as generosity sometimes had detrimental effects. Some Iraqi elders were indignant and unreceptive due to their pride. They saw the generosity as a handout and as a temporary solution to their long-term needs of security, jobs, education, and good government. The Marines’ desire to fix schools are a great illustration. While the Marines felt like they were making a significant contribution, the Iraqi elders could not understand why the Marines were so focused

on fixing the small things while bigger problems such as jobs, gas availability, reliable electricity, clean drinking water, working sewers, and security didn’t get fixed. This presents a big dilemma for a commander who has limited resources and can’t provide the long-term solution. A way to address this dilemma, according to this battalion commander, was an effective information operations (IO) campaign letting the Iraqis know that their bigger needs were being addressed, but that it would take some time and additional resources. Until those problems could be solved, he would address those that he could impact immediately with his own resources. This open, honest communication was fundamental in building trust.

More than showing kindness and generosity, military leaders also want to create trust, build relations, and make friends. A company in the same Marine battalion that employed the good neighbor policy also adhered to the motto “first do no harm” to achieve these objectives. During what they termed “house visits” or “knock and talks,”<sup>8</sup> the Marines in this company demonstrated courtesy and empathy with the local population and avoided damagingly heavy-handed tactics. A senior Iraqi official who worked closely with Coalition forces, and who had his house searched on two occasions as part of a routine search explained the contrast in approach. On one occasion, the troops conducting the search applied common sense, used minimum force necessary, and most importantly, demonstrated cultural sensitivity by treating the women appropriately. The second routine search was

<sup>5</sup>. Major Clark.

<sup>6</sup>. Col Mayer was the battalion commander for First Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> Marines during OIF. His battalion operated in Babil Province, mostly a Shiite populated area.

<sup>7</sup>. Colonel Mayer. His comments were that critics may fault my analysis of the system in which Marines were generous and benevolent in their actions in that the “system” I describe is not a system, but a charity based on us giving Iraqis something—whether its food, water, tools or money. That’s not a long-term solution or system, but one based on charity that ends once we leave. His subsequent explanation clarifies the perception of US good deeds and hopefully provides the reader awareness, caution, and insight into the polarity of US generosity.

<sup>8</sup>. Major Clark. These two terms, house visits and knock and talks, are slang military terms to mean visits by a military personnel to a civilian establishment where the intent is to maintain low profile as to not scare the people, and gather potential intelligence on insurgent activity. Although the key is to not show military force, it important to note that force protection measures should still be taken into consideration.

conducted with aggressive tactics by a new battalion who had just arrived in theater. This search led to formal complaint and undoubtedly produced adverse consequences.<sup>9</sup> In trying to find the balance between capturing the insurgents and winning the support of the people, military leaders and their subordinates must understand “that their actions should be well thought out so that in trying to capture or kill one insurgent, we don’t make ten new enemies.”<sup>10</sup>

During OIF-I, a Marine company operating in Babil Province, a mostly Shiite populated area, also discovered that winning the support, trust, and respect of the people was absolutely essential to bring stability to its AOR.<sup>11</sup> While conducting foot patrols in Al Mashru, this Marine unit found large crowds of Iraqis displaying their distrust of Americans and expressing their desires for the Marines to leave.<sup>12</sup> The Marines found the source of the population’s discontent when the company commander met a man who was convinced that his brother had been killed while in the custody of coalition forces. Trying to convince him otherwise, the company commander promised the man he would gather information on his brother’s whereabouts and return with the news. Unfortunately, the company commander found out that the man’s brother had died three weeks earlier while in the custody of coalition forces because he had refused to eat and to take insulin for his diabetes. The company commander immediately ordered an

<sup>9</sup> . Brigadier General Nigel Aylwin-Foster, “Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations,” *Military Review*, November-December 2005, 5. The senior Iraqi official mentioned by General Aylwin-Foster is LTG Nasier Abadi, with whom he had frequent contact and who eventually became vice chief of the defense staff in the newly created Iraqi Ministry of Defense. His house was searched twice.

<sup>10</sup> . Colonel John Mayer.

<sup>11</sup> . Captain Scott Cuomo, unpublished essay provided to author, 3 January 2006.

<sup>12</sup> . Capt Scott Cuomo, response to author’s questions, 3 January 2006.

This volume of SWJ Magazine includes four articles that are the result of USMC Command & Staff College’s innovations and responsiveness in their curriculum, plus the dedication of the students some key faculty members. We had a stutter step on publishing these, but with permissive copyrights, willingness from the authors, and special thanks to long time contributor Adam Strickland, here they are without further delay. Additional great insight generously shared by Director CSC with us remains in our notebooks and will be published in the next volume.

It is great when a plan comes together. But sometimes, you just get lucky, and we couldn’t have planned this better.

– Maj Vallejo and Mr. Speyer provide some insights into the practice of small wars. Disarmament is damn complex. Examples of civil–military relations wins and whiffs reaffirm that trust is hard to gain, easy to lose, requires the patience of Sisyphus, and is always in a delicate balance with force protection and warrior spirit.

– Maj Kopets and Maj Sullivan provide some of the best discussion that we’ve seen, addressing the strengths AND limitations of the seminal small wars works. We also hark back to when the ink was still drying on Small Wars and Maj Utley and his peers were refining the body of knowledge that would become the Small Wars Manual. The déjà vu is astonishing (or damning?).

– Mr. Menning and LTC Odom provide us more insight on key periods of history that must serve as our guide in the future, so we do not repeat (again) the past.

New ideas, consistent themes, a lot of good gouge, but in particular as Maj Sullivan points out in his appendix A and the news does every day, plenty still to do.

exhausted platoon of Marines to accompany him back to Al Mashru to deliver the bad news to the dead man’s brother. Upon receiving the bad news of his brother’s death and the non-traditional Muslim burial, the man’s brother told the company commander to bring his brother’s body to him by 0600 the next day or the entire town would turn against the coalition. The company commander understood the gravity of the situation and realized that he had to meet the man’s request.

He drove an hour and a half to the site where the Coalition had buried the body, exhumed, and placed the remains in a casket to bring to his brother the next morning as promised. Despite being extremely upset about the loss of his brother, the man expressed his gratitude and told the young company commander that he had earned his trust and that of the town.<sup>13</sup> A fruitful relationship was developed between the military forces and the local population in this town, to include the loyalty of the grateful man's uncle who was a sheik and the head of a 10, 000–man tribe.<sup>14</sup> The company commander's actions reveal four universally applicable points. First, gaining trust is not easy; unit leaders at all levels have to listen and then go out their way to show genuine concern. Second, once that leader makes a promise, he must exhaust all means available in order to be true to his word. It shows that he cares. Third, it is very important to understand cultural sensitivities. Last, it pays to be diplomatic. Letting an ego get in the way, or creating an argument because a leader thinks the demands are unreasonable will only aggravate the situation.

The commander must select the location of the unit's Forward Operating Base (FOB) in order to establish and maintain a positive relationship with the civilian population. Establishing the FOB amongst the population, centrally located, where the majority of the people live enhances the security of the population. Close proximity to the population provides better security. Additionally, if the population trusts the military units in their area, the former will be apt to provide the latter intelligence on enemy activity. For one

battalion in Hillah, its neighborhood established a neighborhood watch that killed an insurgent mortar team as they set up an 82mm mortar.<sup>15</sup> This mutual security relationship was also illustrated in Vietnam. CAPs were successful in Vietnam because the Marines lived in the villages with the people and provided security at all times. This is particularly challenging in Iraq with 150K US servicemen trying to secure a population of 26 million. An

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commander with a claim and all  
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Iraqi may see a foot or vehicle patrol passing by on occasion, but this doesn't protect him from his neighbor who is an insurgent. One way that a battalion commander helped the security situation was to establish CAP-like relations by having Marines live with the police and national guard units.<sup>16</sup>

Another reason to establish the FOB centrally located with the population is that the FOB provides jobs, from markets to garbage collection to construction projects. As a battalion commander asserts, each of his FOBs in Iraq hired over 100 Iraqi locals to work inside them on a daily basis.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> . Captain Scott Cuomo, unpublished essay provided to author, 3 January 2006.

<sup>14</sup> . Captain Cuomo essay.

<sup>15</sup> . Colonel John Mayer.

<sup>16</sup> . Colonel John Mayer.

<sup>17</sup> . Colonel John Mayer.

One significant problem that commanders must guard against is the creation of fortress FOBs that may alienate the population.<sup>18</sup> In one region, the population could not understand why they had no power or clean water yet the Marines returned to their FOBs and had constant electricity, clean water, and gas for their vehicles.<sup>19</sup> The perception was that the Marines were stealing the electricity and water from the population because FOBs always had lights and water to drink. The Iraqis usually received 4 to 8 hours of electricity through the civil electric grid so this perception was a real problem. Once again, one battalion commander recommended a strong IO program telling the Iraqis that electricity came entirely from generators and water from wells below the FOB.<sup>20</sup>

Another criterion for site selection is the site's usefulness to the population. A commander wants a site he can easily secure while not taking away a useful asset to the people. One battalion commander moved units several times because his units occupied old factories that they were able to make operational again so the people could work. During OIF-I, many units moved into former Baath Party buildings to include Saddam's palaces. Over time, the civilians would point to these locations where coalition forces were headquartered and say "one oppressor has been replaced by another!" Convincing the Iraqis that the Americans were there to help became difficult, especially since US forces had all the gas, clean water, great food, and electricity they needed and the Iraqis services did not substantially improve. Some commanders out of necessity had to guard the

Iraqi government offices in their AORs. While this was an important mission, it undermined the credibility of the local security forces. A technique employed by one commander if he had to guard a public office, was making sure the Marines were well out of sight from the people while close enough to assure the Iraqi security we would be there if needed.<sup>21</sup>

Ultimately, there comes a time when it will be appropriate and necessary for US forces to move out of centrally located areas so not to have such an immediate presence. At that time, US forces must turn it over to the Iraqis and let them do it even if imperfectly. As long as the people see the coalition still in the center of town, they will see the US and not the Iraqis providing the security.

Damage to private property by the military forces is frequently the cause of complaints by members of the civilian population...If the military commander were supplied with a fund to be used for the prompt adjustment of limited claims, the foregoing condition might be materially improved.

-FMFRP 12-15

Another way that military forces will interact with the civilian population is settling claims. In Iraq, the most common was from military vehicle accidents with civilians. Others common claims were collateral damage claims from fighting and from accidental death to civilians caused by shootings and accidents. Payment to locals to compensate for property and personal damage inflicted by military operations was a frustrating and difficult issue

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<sup>18</sup> . Capt Cuomo.

<sup>19</sup> . Capt Cuomo.

<sup>20</sup> . Colonel John Mayer.

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<sup>21</sup> . The comments on the criterion for site selection of FOBs were provided in discussion with Col Mayer.

for some units, while it was a combat multiplier for others.

A Platoon commander in one Marine battalion experienced that to win the support of the population, his company had to be sensitive to all the claims, and that it was impossible to avoid anger and resentment if they did not quickly address claims. In this particular unit, the battalion delegated funds to the company level to pay claims with an itemized list of amounts to be paid for certain property damages. These discretionary funds,

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commander’s emergency response funds (CERP), were critical in building a relationship with the people.<sup>22</sup> As LtCol Nagl asserts in his book, “The U.S. is working diligently in Iraq, as it did in Vietnam, to improve the lives of the people. Dollars are bullets in this fight; the Commander’s Emergency Response Program

<sup>22</sup>. Captain Cuomo.

(CERP), which provides field commanders funds to perform essential projects, wins hearts and minds twice over – once by repairing infrastructure, and again by employing local citizens who are otherwise ready recruits for insurgents. CERP is helping with the painstaking process of building relationships with the Iraqi people.”<sup>23</sup>

A company commander in a different battalion experienced frustration in settling claims because of the lack of adjudicating authority. He felt that the payment of claims required a more reliable system with the need for an Iraqi representative to interpret needs, evidence and accuracy of the claim.<sup>24</sup> Another frustration he encountered was that the battalion found itself paying for damages caused by units that operated in that area prior to their arrival.<sup>25</sup> The company commander’s recommendation was to refer claims to the battalion’s staff judge advocate (SJA) and avoid becoming directly involved in the settlement of terms and amounts.<sup>26</sup>

For practical purposes, it is important to compare the approach of the two unit leaders and draw applicable points. First, an area commander is the man responsible for the AO so he must adjudicate the claims as quickly as possible, to include paying for damages caused by previous and transit units passing through. Second, the area commander himself or someone from his unit must handle settling the claim. If the civilians go to the area commander with a claim and all the commander does is listen and send the claim for processing by higher authority, the message he presents is that he is not in charge. A unit

<sup>23</sup>. John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002), xiii.

<sup>24</sup>. Major Clark.

<sup>25</sup>. Major Clark.

<sup>26</sup>. Major Clark.



must be able to process claims quickly and efficiently or will rapidly lose any legitimacy it has in the area. If a patrol gets in a vehicle accident with a civilian and then lets the simple matter of fixing a wrecked car become lost in red tape or dispute over amount of money to be paid, then the population will quickly turn against the Americans. One battalion commander explains how he used to laugh about Marines' concerns over being ripped off on claims settlements. He asserted that "here we are spending a million dollars a day to keep forces in Iraq and Marines will alienate an entire family, neighborhood, and tribe by trying to pay a few hundred dollars less on a vehicle claim... so what if the man comes out a little ahead in an otherwise bad situation. At least he is happy and not your enemy"<sup>27</sup>

The commander's reconstruction efforts were critical in establishing credibility with the population.<sup>28</sup> Involving key civilian personnel in the planning was very important. Some commanders appointed councils and established town halls with regular meetings to prioritize reconstruction projects, with the focus on basic life support needs.<sup>29</sup> The best way to get support from the local populace was to attempt to assist in the five areas commonly referred to as SWEAT (sewer, water, education, architecture and trash).<sup>30</sup> The key in winning their support was to prioritize projects so that the Iraqis could directly and quickly see improvements in the lives and health of their children.<sup>31</sup> It's important to note that some Iraqis understood that there were limitations to

the things that could be provided and that certain projects took time to coordinate. The common lesson learned by different commanders was to set reasonable goals and not to promise unrealistic expectations.<sup>32</sup> Once you promised to provide any service, it was paramount that you exhausted any resource to deliver what was promised.<sup>33</sup>

The integration of the civilian population into most reconstruction projects was another technique used by military leaders. Most utilized local contractors as much as possible to complete reconstruction work. This expedited the process, provided a local face to the work being completed, and helped with the extremely high unemployment rate.<sup>34</sup> Part of some local job programs was to start a factory to build playground equipment for schoolyards.<sup>35</sup> Other skilled labor initiatives involved the distribution of over \$181,000 over two months in the three towns. This money assisted in reconstructing seven schools that had not received government funding since the 1970s, four government offices, three police stations, three health clinics that were in dismal condition, two water treatment facilities, two electric transformer stations, and one veterinary clinic, and dredging a canal.<sup>36</sup> When commanders noticed some Iraqis were still unemployed, they initiated unskilled labor projects such as collection of garbage that had piled on the streets.<sup>37</sup> In Babil during OIF 1, a battalion started the Babylon Lions, a conservation corps-like project that hired 1000 Iraqis to pick up the garbage littering the

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<sup>27</sup> . Col Mayer who had extensive experience adjudicating claims in his area provided the analysis and implications of settling claims expeditiously. His insights are consistent with the guidance he provided his company commanders who were also area commanders.

<sup>28</sup> . Major Brian Collins, interview with author, 12 January 2006.

<sup>29</sup> . Major Collins.

<sup>30</sup> . Major Beaty.

<sup>31</sup> . Major Beaty.

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<sup>32</sup> . Major Collins and Major Eric Beaty, response to author's questions, 30 December 2005.

<sup>33</sup> . Major Collins.

<sup>34</sup> . Major Beaty, Collins and LtCol Phil Skuta, response to author's questions 19 December 2005.

<sup>35</sup> . LtCol Skuta.

<sup>36</sup> . Captain Cuomo.

<sup>37</sup> . Major Collins.

streets and remove the damage from the war. According to the battalion commander, they “had a local textile factory make them uniforms (more jobs) and hired truck drivers (more jobs) to drive the captured trucks we confiscated from looters to move our Lions around the area. Marines supervised the workers and provided them clean water, food, and most importantly, leadership. As the program blossomed, we were able to turn it over in entirety to the Iraqi governor who then put the entire program on the civil parole. The program was a great success.”<sup>38</sup> Perhaps the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) started the smartest unskilled work program. It hired 100,000 workers to clean the grass and fungi out of the extensive canal system in Iraq. The workers did all the work by hand instead of using machine operated shovels, which would have been faster and more effective. The intuition and reasoning behind the CPA’s initiative were brilliant. Doing the work by hand hired more people for a longer period of time. Additionally, the hard work in the hot sun all day, and the money in their pocket would hopefully make the workers too tired and too happy to conduct insurgent activity at night.<sup>39</sup>

Two challenging aspects of reconstruction, however, were instilling a sense of competitive bidding among local contractors and civic officials, and avoiding corruption.<sup>40</sup> According to a battalion commander, “nepotism is nearly all encompassing of anything economic in west-central Al Anbar. This is due to the tribal structure of society, which the local population and power centers fell back on after the fall of the Hussein regime. Efforts into breaking this nepotism, by presenting

competitive bidding processes led to competition and sparked local economic activity with U.S. provided stimulus.”<sup>41</sup> Constant supervision of construction projects was paramount. Military leaders awarded money up front, but did not pay the rest until the contractors made satisfactory progress. There were cases of corruption in which local leaders tried to utilize their power to keep money for personal gains. In these cases, military commanders gave the culprits a choice: return the money or go to jail.<sup>42</sup> One commander in Al Anbar proposed two rules as a guide during reconstruction efforts. First, “just like market research is done in the US before introducing a new product, research in determining the impact (second and third order effects) of the civil military operation should be conducted using those that understand local culture, before the work is committed to.”<sup>43</sup> Second, “don’t just throw money at problems” – just like combat power it has to be used at the decisive time and place to be effective in defeating the enemy.”<sup>44</sup>

The People of many countries take their religion as seriously as their politics. Consequently members of the United States forces should avoid any attitude that tends to indicate criticism or lack of respect for the religious beliefs and practices observed by the native inhabitants.

–FMFRP 12–15

The 1940 Small Wars Manual briefly discusses religious sensitivity, but it is a topic that requires further discussion to show how it

<sup>38</sup> . Colonel John Mayer.

<sup>39</sup> . Colonel John Mayer.

<sup>40</sup> . LtCol Skuta and Major Beaty.

<sup>41</sup> . LtCol Skuta.

<sup>42</sup> . LtCol Skuta and Capt Cuomo.

<sup>43</sup> . Major Clark.

<sup>44</sup> . Major Clark.

heavily influences commanders' decision during military operations. In Iraq, the daily interaction with a population for whom religious beliefs and practices are very important demanded that commanders at all levels enforce respect for these beliefs and practices. A "common-sense approach" was effective for commanders in ensuring their subordinates overcame the challenges in respecting religion. Education was essential.<sup>45</sup> Education in the form of cultural awareness as well as the S-2 and Iraqi input on important religious dates to factor into operations was very beneficial.<sup>46</sup> Leaders also developed an awareness of the local religious practices from their liaisons, from the newspaper, local radio, and lessons learned from patrol de-briefings. Tactical commanders subsequently briefed such practices to other patrols prior to deployment to ensure they acted respectfully.<sup>47</sup> On holy days or during weddings or funerals, units were always sure to be respectful of religious areas and avoided unnecessary overt military presence.<sup>48</sup> Finally, leaders ensured that US forces did not desecrate religious sites, and conducted careful planning to prevent accidental damage or the perception of desecration.<sup>49</sup>

One enormous challenge for coalition forces was that enemy forces realized the coalition's respect for local religious facilities and increased their utilization of these sites to meet, store weapons, and conduct attacks on US patrols.<sup>50</sup> One technique to overcome this challenge was to videotape enemy attacks from mosques and distribute the videos to the local

leadership.<sup>51</sup> In the wake of global television and technological evolution, commanders must establish an effective way of communicating with the population. Otherwise, the enemy, who is also aware of the power of video, will gain a strategic advantage by communicating his message.

When conducting cordon and searches in Iraq, the most effective procedure was to utilize local national security forces to search and secure religious sites.<sup>52</sup> A good illustration of the importance of religious sensitivity occurred during the fighting against Maqtada Sadr's militia near the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf during OIF II. Despite heavy insurgent activity from the mosque, coalition forces maintained a cordon around it and restricted friendly forces from shooting at the mosque.<sup>53</sup> Although Coalition forces could have easily defeated the insurgents with conventional means, by doing so would have destroyed the mosque, thereby, turning tactical victory into strategic defeat.<sup>54</sup> The implication is that in small wars, political considerations will weigh heavier on tactical actions more so than in conventional wars.<sup>55</sup>

## COOPERATION WITH LOCAL SECURITY FORCES.

It follows, therefore, that by cooperating to the fullest extent of his authority with the native forces in the performance of civil police functions, the military commander will...be rendering valuable

<sup>45</sup> . Major Clark and Major Beaty.

<sup>46</sup> . Major Clark.

<sup>47</sup> . Major Beaty.

<sup>48</sup> . Major Clark and Major Beaty.

<sup>49</sup> . Major Beaty.

<sup>50</sup> . Major Beaty.

<sup>51</sup> . Major Beaty.

<sup>52</sup> . Major Clark and Major Beaty.

<sup>53</sup> . Captain Cuomo describing the actions during the battle for Najaf and the measures taken to avoid any shooting of the Imam Ali Mosque.

<sup>54</sup> . The Imam Ali Mosque is the most holy site for the Shia faith. This was not an ordinary mosque. Rules of engagement allow Marines to return fire on a mosque that has insurgent fighting within; the Imam Ali Mosque was different due to its sacredness.

<sup>55</sup> . Colonel John Mayer.

assistance towards the accomplishment of the ultimate mission assigned to the combined military forces.

–FMFRP 12–15

Developing trust and establishing personal relationships were no different in cooperating with law enforcement agencies than in dealing with the population. Military commanders developed trust and personal relationships to establish stability and legitimacy.<sup>56</sup> US military forces in Iraq worked closely with Iraqi security forces, military and police, to establish stability and regain legitimacy. Whether working with Iraqi National Guard units or local police forces, the techniques and procedures employed by military commanders yielded great success. Overall, the techniques that proved to be efficient employed a variation of the Combined Action Platoon (CAP) that was among the most effective ways the U.S. military found to secure the populace and defeat the Viet Cong in Vietnam.<sup>57</sup> The end state of the military's relationship with the Iraqi security forces was that the Iraqi forces could provide the security without U.S. support.

For a battalion commander, establishing trust was the first step in cooperating with local security forces. To facilitate this, U.S. forces should co-locate with local security forces.<sup>58</sup> Military forces lived, ate and slept with the local security forces as they established a training

program.<sup>59</sup> Military leaders and subordinates established mutual trust “by sharing simple staples of everyday life in Iraq that mattered to the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF)—drinking tea, smoking cigarettes, eating, and talking about tribe, family, and at times religion”.<sup>60</sup> According to one commander “once individual trust is established, a foundation is formed from which more mature relationships can evolve.”<sup>61</sup>

Subsequent to establishing trust is developing and maintaining personal relationships.<sup>62</sup> These relationships became a critical mitigating factor until the development of common standard operating procedures. In Iraq, security forces “would be hesitant to adopt U.S. processes...not because the Iraqis had a negative view of U.S military techniques, quite the contrary; it was because they maintained Arab and Iraqi pride.”<sup>63</sup> By sharing hardships, local security forces and U.S. military personnel fostered personal relationships, which became a crucial factor in making combined operations a success. Military leaders recognized the success of the local security forces, bolstering the pride and morale of security forces. “Public recognition of police officers and their better actions caused a cascade effect in the local police force as well. Once an officer is publicly recognized for excelling at his job, the fever spread and the other officers also wanted to perform better and be recognized themselves.”<sup>64</sup> One battalion commander would hand out Navy Marine Achievement Medals during a public ceremony to the Iraqi soldiers and police who displayed positive actions.

<sup>56</sup> . LtCol Philip C. Skuta, “Partnering with the Iraqi Security Forces,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, April 2005, 36-37.

<sup>57</sup> . 1stLt Jason Goodale, and 1stLt Jon Webre, “The Combined Action Platoon in Iraq,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, April 2005, 40. Also Bing West, *The Village* (New York: Pocket Books, 1972) talks a lot about the CAP and its success in Vietnam.

<sup>58</sup> . Capt Cuomo.

<sup>59</sup> . Major Ty Edwards, response to authors questions, 1 January 2006 and Major Beaty.

<sup>60</sup> . LtCol Skuta, “Partnering with Iraqi Security Forces”, 36.

<sup>61</sup> . LtCol Skuta, “Partnering with Iraqi Security Forces”, 37.

<sup>62</sup> . LtCol Skuta, “Partnering with Iraqi Security Forces”, 37.

<sup>63</sup> . LtCol Skuta, “Partnering with Iraqi Security Forces”, 37.

<sup>64</sup> . Major Beaty.

These soldiers had never received a “thank you” or recognition under Saddam’s regime, and a heartfelt thanks and recognition went a long way to build their esteem and confidence.<sup>65</sup>

When an Iraqi policemen or soldier was injured in the line of duty, one battalion commander always visited them in the hospital and made sure they received the best care available in the Iraqi system.<sup>66</sup> If gravely

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*One technique...was to videotape enemy attacks from mosques and distribute the videos to the local leadership. In the wake of global television and technological evolution, commanders must establish an effective way of communicating with the population. Otherwise, the enemy, who is also aware of the power of video, will gain a strategic advantage by communicating his message.*

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injured then he would medevac the man through the Coalition system and assured him of the best possible care. By doing this the battalion commander showed the injured man and his family that the Americans cared. Furthermore, the battalion commander also tried to make sure their families received

monetary compensation for their injured family member so the family would not be placed in undue hardship. As the battalion commander states, he “usually I did this through the governor’s, police, or military chain of command so the leaders would learn to take care of their people and put a positive “Iraqi face” on the issue. People in a dangerous line of work must know that they and their families will be well taken care of if something were to happen. It’s these little things that build trust in relationships and in the system.”<sup>67</sup>

As TE Lawrence stated in his “Twenty-Seven Articles”, “Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not win it for them.”<sup>68</sup> Commanders found this maxim extremely helpful in guiding their subordinates while developing relationships and training with local security forces. In the early stages of the training process, it was evident that the goal of local security forces was to be able to provide the security without the assistance of their US counterparts. Accomplishing this goal would require a crawl, walk, and run method. Once trust was established, local security forces were incorporated into tactical operations as often as possible and coalition leaders found it easier to get local security forces to patrol with their subordinates.<sup>69</sup> This also enhanced the trust and legitimacy of the Iraqi security forces in the eyes of the population because the local populace saw their own forces conducting operations.

One unit developed a “Train the Trainer” program by which veterans in the local forces were identified and trained in basic combat skills, vehicle and personnel search procedures,

<sup>65</sup> . Colonel John Mayer.

<sup>66</sup> . Col Mayer felt that, Iraqis respond favorably to the same leadership principles officers use with their Marines.

<sup>67</sup> . Colonel John Mayer.

<sup>68</sup> . LtCol Skuta, “Partnering with Iraqi Security Forces”, 36.

<sup>69</sup> . Major Beaty and Captain Cuomo.

dismounted patrolling, establishing checkpoints and medical training.<sup>70</sup> The objective was for this trained cadre to assume responsibility for training its own forces. At times, some of the local security forces leaders wanted to conduct certain tasks in their own way. Allowing them to demonstrate how they wanted to perform a task was at times more important in the end because it gave them a sense of ownership and avoided creating an attitude of superiority. Ultimately, building trust, developing relationships, and training local security forces to an acceptable level requires time and patience on the part of the military commander and his subordinates.<sup>71</sup>

Not all contact with local security forces was as pleasant and rewarding as described. In some instances, US military leaders were forced to deal with corruption and intimidation by the insurgents.<sup>72</sup> Coalition forces faced a significant dilemma of vetting the Iraqi officers and in particular the senior Iraqi leadership. In one part of the country, a battalion went through four police chiefs in six months until it found the person that was honest and acceptable to the population and not perceived as closely aligned with previous regime.<sup>73</sup>

## CONTACT WITH CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS<sup>74</sup>

Such conference will invariably lead to acquaintance with the government's leading officials with

whom the military commander may be required to deal throughout the subsequent operation. Meetings with these officials frequently require considerable tact...When the mission is one of rendering assistance to the recognized government, the relationship between its officials and the military commander should be amicable.

–FMFRP 12–15

It is paramount for a military leader to understand local behavior and values in order to negotiate effectively with civil and religious leaders. According to LTC Wunderle, a Middle East Foreign Area Officer and Army Research Fellow at RAND Corporation, “culture can be likened to a minefield – dangerous ground that, if not breached, must be navigated with caution, understanding, and respect... Cultural interpretation, *competence*, and adaptation are prerequisites for achieving a win-win relationship in any military operation. Cultural Competence results from the intimate knowledge of an adversary's (or allies) motivation, intent, will and tactical methods.”<sup>75</sup>

Behavioral considerations are important for a commander to establish trust and develop the relationships that will assist in accomplishing the mission. Nonverbal communication, for example, will be extremely important “in order to adequately communicate with someone from an Arab country and avoid any miscommunication, misperception or misinterpretation.”<sup>76</sup> What is not being said, but perhaps expressed through body movements, facial expressions and body

<sup>70</sup> . 1stLt Jason Goodale, and 1stLt Jon Webre, “The Combined Action Platoon in Iraq” 42.

<sup>71</sup> . LtCol Skuta, “Partnering with Iraqi Security Forces”, 37.

<sup>72</sup> . Major Clark.

<sup>73</sup> . Major Edwards.

<sup>74</sup> . The 1940 SMW titles this section “contact with national government officials”. For the purposes of this paper, I have titled it “contact with civil and religious leaders” since I talk about more than just government officials. In Iraq, the government officials are several notches down the totem pole of the leadership hierarchy, especially at the tactical level.

<sup>75</sup> . LTC William Wunderle, “Through the Lens of Cultural Awareness: Planning Requirements in Wielding the Instruments of National Power,” Power Point Presentation sent by LtCol John Mayer.

<sup>76</sup> . LTC Wunderle.

posture, is as important as what is being said. As LTC Wunderle asserts, another behavioral consideration is the space used to communicate. Americans tend to establish a circle of personal space that is much less tolerant of invasion than many other cultures.<sup>77</sup> A third behavioral aspect is touch. Arab culture places a great deal of emphasis on shaking hands, embracing, or kissing.<sup>78</sup>

It is imperative for a military leader to gain an appreciation for local values in order to improve his negotiation skills. The traditional American way of doing business can alienate the local leadership with whom a commander must have cordial and amicable relations. A commander must be prepared for long negotiations and slow deliberations and ready to exchange pleasantries at some length before getting down to business. Middle Easterners in general will be skeptical and mistrustful at first since they tend to establish business relations with family or members that are so close that they almost consider family. As LTC Wunderle states “they always want to know their business partners very well before talking business with them...the business relationship is based on trust, and networking is very essential for doing business.”<sup>79</sup>

A battalion commander in one of the provinces established situational awareness by determining who were the local leaders and decision makers. The structure of the town had civil and administrative leaders, as well as religious and tribal leaders.<sup>80</sup> Sources of power and extent of authority will vary from group to group and from situation to situation.<sup>81</sup> Once he had good situational awareness, his focus

turned towards establishing relationships with key players in the community. He thoroughly immersed himself in the culture, and was highly regarded by the population. He conducted radio and television addresses on a regular basis so everyone in the province knew whom he was, and was focused on the political networking aspect. Most of his success was because he met, ate with, and visited the home of nearly every political, religious, and intellectual leader in the province, careful not to take sides or alienate any of the leadership. Although they all wanted something, he treated them well, listened to their concerns, and was sensitive to their customs. In return, they gave him information because they trusted him. By treating them as equals rather than subordinates, he gained a lot in return.<sup>82</sup>

Another technique that gained the support of the local government was the military leadership’s regular attendance at political meetings where key decisions were made regarding the reconstruction effort.<sup>83</sup> This became a great venue to show concern and empower the local government. Working through the imams, village elders, and empowered tribal leaders was of benefit as long as care was taken not to play favorites.<sup>84</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The satisfactory solution of problems involving civil authorities and civil population requires that all ranks be familiar with the language, the geography, and the political, social and economic factors involved in the country in which they are operating. Poor judgment

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<sup>77</sup> . LTC Wunderle.

<sup>78</sup> . LTC Wunderle.

<sup>79</sup> . LTC Wunderle.

<sup>80</sup> . Major Edwards.

<sup>81</sup> . LTC Wunderle.

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<sup>82</sup> . Major Edwards.

<sup>83</sup> . Major Beaty.

<sup>84</sup> . Major Clark.

on the part of the subordinates in the handling of a situation involving the local authorities and the local inhabitants is certain to involve the commander of the force in unnecessary military difficulties and cause publicity adverse to the public interests of the United States.

–FMFRP 12–15

Although the lessons and conclusions in this paper are drawn from OIF, the principles have applications to future small wars. The themes of military–civil relationship discussed in the 1940 manual, specifically, relations with the population, cooperation with law enforcement agencies, and contact with local civil and religious leaders are still valid today. Ultimately, winning the support of the civilian population is paramount to successful military–civil operations. Unlike conventional operations where the target is enemy units and locations, in small wars the target is the support of the people. Without it, US forces will be alienated from the population and perceived as illegitimate occupiers.

More than showing kindness and generosity, military leaders also must create trust, build relations and make friends. Some universally applicable points, as we have seen, are that gaining trust is not easy. The most important lesson is the importance of cultural

knowledge and sensitivity. Understanding and respecting the cultures of others, opens many doors and facilitates meaningful relationships. Second, you have to listen and then go out your way to show genuine concern to earn trust. Third, once you make a promise, you better exhaust all means available in order to be true to your word. It shows you care. It is paramount for a military leader to understand local behavior and values to gain an appreciation for the art of negotiation, a powerful tool in dealing with any component of the society.

It is appropriate to end with T.E Lawrence maxim, “better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not win it for them”. It must be pointed out that Lawrence’s maxim doesn’t apply only to Arabs. The Iraqi people are proud people who ultimately want to be able to run their country without US intervention. The most successful commanders kept this in mind. No matter what the mission, a reconstruction project or local security, they always made sure to put an Iraqi face associated with that mission. By seeing their own people accomplishing these tasks, the local Iraqis will gain confidence that their country will have security, jobs, education and good governance.

*Maj Vallejo is a Marine Corps Logistics Officer. He wrote this piece while a student at Command and Staff College..*



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# SMALL WARS PROJECT:

## DISARMING THE LOCAL POPULATION

Mr. Arthur Lewis Speyer III

### PREFACE

Disarmament operations are a critical component of security and stability operations (SASO). Despite the frequency and importance of disarmament missions to SASO, limited current guidance exists to aid commanders.

Disarmament operations do not lend themselves to simple checklists for success. The single, most significant factor in predicting a successful disarmament operation is the psychological aspects or perception of security by the local population. In addition, disarmament operations require the careful balance of incentives and punishments through voluntary and coercive methods.

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*In Iraq, the first responsibility of every male is to protect his family. He will not willingly turn over his weapon until he believes his family's safety is guaranteed.*

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Disarmament operations do not take place in a neutral environment, but inside a complex cultural, religious, historical context. To successfully conduct a disarmament operation, one must understand the role weapons play within the targeted culture. By working within local cultural hierarchies and

understanding the cultural terrain, tact and diplomacy are powerful toolsets.

As Marines continue to conduct disarmament missions worldwide, more detailed guidance is needed so Marines do not have to re-learn the same lessons from conflict to conflict. Disarmament operations will be a central focus of future battlefields. The lessons learned go well beyond Iraq and Afghanistan.

The millions of unaccounted small arms will be a permanent feature on all future threat environments. The proper neutralizations of these weapons is a core tenet of SASO missions and critical to force protection. The absorption of these issues into training and doctrine is essential for Marines to succeed in the wars of the future.

### INTRODUCTION

Disarmament is a critical component of security and stability operations (SASO). Since the 1990s, the U.S. military has been tasked with disarmament in Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. While disarmament was not a pre-deployment priority for any of these operations, U.S. forces found themselves conducting large-scale disarmament during each operation. As SASO becomes a major

focus of the U.S. military, the frequency of disarmament operations will increase.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the frequency and importance of disarmament missions to SASO, limited guidance or doctrine exists to aid commanders tasked with conducting these sensitive operations.<sup>2</sup> Historically, a 10–page chapter in the 1940 edition of the United States Marine Corps *Small Wars Manual* is one of the few official publications on disarmament. The lack of official procedures forces small–unit leaders to rely on ingenuity, discretion, and flexibility to complete disarmament missions.<sup>3</sup>

This thesis will attempt to develop an analytical framework for disarmament by examining recent U.S. and international operations. The focus will be at the operational and tactical level, to provide the most benefit to expeditionary forces.

While the presence of small arms and light weapons<sup>4</sup> does not cause instability, the addition of large numbers of small arms into regions suffering from an array of instability factors increases the lethality and scope of the conflict's potential. The *Small Wars Manual* states that disarmament is the most vital step in the restoration of stability.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, the presence of large numbers of uncontrolled weapons is a significant force protection threat to U.S. forces. In a recent example, after the seizure of Baghdad, the U.S. Army's 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division removed 20,000 rifles, 995 RPG launchers (w/50,000 RPGs), and more than

7,000 artillery rounds.<sup>6</sup> Eliminating insurgent access to weapon stockpiles is an obvious priority for field commanders. In Iraq and Afghanistan it was hoped that “weapons for cash” programs would quickly reduce the numbers of uncontrolled weapons. A deeper analysis demonstrates that these programs are often rife with problems.

The United Nations (UN) estimates more than 600 million small arms and light weapons are in circulation. International organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the UN have deemed small arms a significant factor in instability, crime, terrorism, warlordism, and humanitarian disasters.<sup>7</sup> In 1997, the UN declared that all future peacekeeping missions would have a disarmament component. The U.S. Department of State declared illicit small arms and light weapons major obstacles to peace, economic development, and efforts to rebuild war–torn societies.<sup>8</sup>

The increased emphasis on SASO missions within the Department of Defense (DoD), coupled with the State Department's more aggressive small arms policies, require a more focused effort on disarmament operations.<sup>9</sup> The Department of State has the lead on coordinating strategic programs to reduce the spread of illegal weapons, but at the tactical level, the U.S. military conducts most

<sup>1</sup> “Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations”, Department of Defense Directive, Number 3000.05, Washington D.C., 2005, p1.

<sup>2</sup> “Guide for Small Arms/Light Weapons Elimination Operations (DRAFT), Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, November 2005, p3.

<sup>3</sup> Moore, Bill, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>4</sup> The U.N., with U.S. agreement, adopted the following definitions in 1997.

<sup>5</sup> *Small Wars Manual*, FMFRP 12-15, Department of the Navy, Washington D.C., 1990, p 11-1.

<sup>6</sup> Warren Richey “Iraq’s other challenge: small arms”, *Christian Science Monitor*, May 2, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Huges-Wilson, “Safe and Efficient Small Arms Collection and Destruction Programmes”, *United Nations Development Programme*, p iii.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of State “Background Paper: The U.S. Approach to Combating the Spread of Small Arms”, June 2001, p1.

<sup>9</sup> The Department of State’s small arms disarmament policies are carried out by the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA). It is tasked with creating local, regional and international conditions conducive to peace, stability and prosperity by curbing the illicit proliferation of conventional weapons of war such as light automatic weapons and rocket propelled grenades, and removing and destroying others, such as persistent landmines and abandoned stocks of munitions, that remain and pose hazards after the cessation of armed conflict.

U.S. disarming operations. The current ad-hoc nature of U.S. disarmament missions, especially at the operational and tactical levels, need to be replaced with a fully developed program consisting of doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs); specialized training; and equipment.

## FRAMEWORK

The term “disarmament operation” involves an array of missions differing widely in scope, direction, and philosophy. While disarmament usually occurs after large-scale conflict has ended, on today’s complicated battlefields disarmament missions begin while

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*...disarmament is the most vital step in the restoration of stability. Additionally, the presence of large numbers of uncontrolled weapons is a significant force protection threat...*

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combat missions continue. In Iraq, for example, disarmament began while major combat operations were still consolidating. In Mozambique during the 1990s however, such missions did not begin until years after a cease-fire.

Disarmament may be conducted by tactical units that raid a compound based on human intelligence, or it may be conducted by large international organizations such as the UN, which manages voluntary weapon buy-back programs. Before discussing methods for

conducting successful disarmament missions, it is necessary to establish an analytical framework.

Disarmament operations are conducted by military, security, and law enforcement personnel to control the proliferation and use of small arms and light weapons. The aim is to further conditions that contribute to the development of a safe and secure environment. At the tactical level, disarmament operations are divided into five steps: locate, collect, transport, store, and dispose/destroy.<sup>10</sup> These missions may be conducted as part of an international peace agreement, such as large NATO and UN disarmament programs in the Balkans, or they may be carried out unilaterally by a military government, as in Iraq. Successful disarmament operations are an essential part of larger stability and reconstruction efforts that seek to address root causes of the conflict. It is important to note, however that, operations that focus exclusively on disarmament as a means of stability often end in failure.

Disarmament operations can be divided into two sequential phases. Phase one operations exist during the immediate cessation of conflict or right after the introduction of intervention forces. They are more likely to involve military forces, involuntary disarmament, and the use of force. Phase two operations are run by international organizations or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and involve large, well-funded reconstruction and incentive programs encouraging disarmament. During phase two, military forces provide security and logistical support, but the actual disarmament is conducted by international organizations. Disarmament operations often occur for years

<sup>10</sup> “Guide for Small Arms/Light Weapons Elimination Operations (DRAFT), p5.

after the cessation of combat, with significant overlap between phase one and phase two operations.

During phase one, tactical military units conduct the bulk of disarmament operations, often in an unstable and dangerous environment. Operations rely heavily on tactical intelligence and constant patrolling to conduct search-and-seizure missions to remove weapons from the environment. U.S. and multi-national forces, during the first years in Somalia, the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq, conducted extensive phase one operations.

Programs in Bosnia from 1996–2004 demonstrate both phases of disarmament operations. From 1996–1998 NATO forces in Bosnia conducted phase one operations, mainly through ad-hoc confiscations of illegal weapons using cordon-and-search techniques.<sup>11</sup> Due to their organic logistical capability, rapid deployment options, and offensive capability, military forces are often the first tasked to conduct disarmament operations during the most unstable periods of post-conflict environments.

Phase one operations can be further divided into the two sub-missions of finding weapons caches and disarming the general population. Cache searches and general disarmament are very different missions that require a unique set of skills and procedures. For cache searches, platoon or company-sized units use grid searches to discover large hidden weapons caches. These are often highly visible, show of force operations conducted during the daylight with the help of combat engineers, military working dogs, and armored vehicles.

Disarming the general population requires a more subtle approach during phase one. These operations usually involve going onto somebody's property and seizing personal weapons. This type of mission relies on the soft skills of negotiation, discretion, personnel contact, and understanding local culture. Personal disarmament operations work best when carried out by small teams of experienced personnel, often at night or inside individual homes.<sup>12</sup>

As a region becomes more secure, phase one operations transition into phase two operations, which rely more on incentives and public awareness campaigns to encourage disarmament. In 1998, NATO began Operation HARVEST in Bosnia, which used deterrence and educational initiatives to encourage disarmament. NATO forces supported local police and international organizations by assisting at weapon collection points and with other voluntary programs. In 2003, The UN initiated a small arms project in Bosnia with similar objectives. A similar program in Afghanistan gives former insurgents \$200, a medal, a change of civilian clothes, a box of food, vocational training, employment counseling, and a certificate of service. Phase two operations, such as in Bosnia, often continue for 5–10 years after the cessation of actual hostilities<sup>13</sup>.

## OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Disarmament operations do not lend themselves to simple checklists for success. The varied threat levels, local conditions, and disarmament methods prevent guaranteed success. Despite these limitations, the study

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<sup>11</sup> “Small Arms and Light Weapons Disarmament Programs: Challenges, Utility, and Lessons Learned” U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency, 12 July 2004, p5.

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<sup>12</sup> Homiak, Travis, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>13</sup> “Small Arms and Light Weapons Disarmament Programs: Challenges, Utility, and Lessons Learned”, 7

and analysis of disarmament missions in Somalia, Mozambique, the Balkans, and Afghanistan point to several operational and tactical considerations.

The single, most significant factor in predicting a successful disarmament operation is the psychological aspects or perception of security by the local population. While weapons have varied roles in different cultures, at the most basic level a weapon provides an individual with the perception of security. In Iraq, the first responsibility of every male is to protect his family. He will not willingly turn over his weapon until he believes his family's safety is guaranteed. It is the perception of security, vice actual security, that decides whether an individual will turn over a weapon. The *Small Wars Manual* states that Marines have the responsibility to provide security for disarmed citizens and must retain sufficient local presence to guarantee safety.<sup>14</sup>

In the period immediately following a conflict, individuals feel less secure, whether a dictator was overthrown, a civil war ended, or an ethnic war stopped. Uncertainty and fear causes individuals to focus on the basic needs of food, shelter, medical care and security. Until a new paradigm of security is perceived by the local population, any attempts to disarm them will fail. Disarming the local population of personal weapons is the most difficult type of disarmament operation, since it relies on an individual giving up what he perceives as his primary protection means for himself and his family. Individual weapons are inherently more difficult to locate due to dispersion, complex terrain, and limited numbers.

There are several methods for increasing the perception of security among the local

population. The most critical is to build trust and legitimacy between the local population and the local government. Legitimacy includes establishing a perception of U.S. or multi-national forces as a positive influence in the region.

A key step in building legitimacy and trust between U.S./Coalition forces and the local population is to form relationships through close contact. In Iraq, commanders who practiced active patrolling were able to send a message of presence and involvement. They believed that staying inside well-protected U.S. military bases would alienate the local population to the U.S. presence.<sup>15</sup> In areas where U.S. forces stayed visible, responded quickly to incidents, and demonstrated consistent restraint, the locals felt more secure and were more likely to support disarmament programs.

Two key components in building trust among the local population are the transparency and openness of the disarmament program. The reasons for implementing a disarmament program must be well publicized and the links between disarmament and security must be fully explained. Clear and uniform policies for weapon ownership, turn-in procedures, incentive programs, and destruction methods are critical for gaining trust and legitimacy.<sup>16</sup>

When conducting disarmament operations in an area with significant tension between ethnic or religious groups, such as in the Balkans or Iraq, it is critical that policies and procedures are applied evenly to all groups. Any perception of favoritism to one

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<sup>15</sup> Moore, Bill, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>16</sup> "Small Arms and Light Weapons Disarmament Programs: Challenges, Utility, and Lessons Learned", 31

<sup>14</sup> *Small Wars Manual*. P 11-1.

group will immediately end the involvement of the other groups and could result in a resumption of violence. After a NATO peacekeeping force entered the Kosovo region of the former Yugoslavia in 1999, NATO forces implemented a disarmament program. The majority Albanian population, who felt liberated from Serbian oppression, was more open to disarmament than the minority Serbs who now perceived themselves as a targeted minority.<sup>17</sup>

Careful planning is required to disarm groups evenly, so members of each group feel they are giving up their fair share of weapons and are not being unduly punished or weakened by the disarmament process.

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**Successful disarmament operations are an essential part of larger stability and reconstruction efforts that seek to address root causes of the conflict. It is important to note, however that, operations that focus exclusively on disarmament as a means of stability often end in failure.**

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The need for uniformity of disarmament policies is critical to building trust. The ad-hoc nature of disarmament operations in Iraq led to different policies being implemented in different regions. This variation caused distrust among the local population, as groups

perceived they were being harshly penalized while other groups were allowed greater leniency. Often, policies would also change when U.S. units rotated out. Locals would immediately note the unit change and friction would increase when the new unit had a different disarmament policy.<sup>18</sup> All efforts should be made to ensure an evenly applied disarmament process.

The local media is useful in building trust and transparency during disarmament operations. Programs should include local media outlets, such as leaflets, radio, television, and other means to ensure the widest dissemination of information.<sup>19</sup> Events such as the destruction of large weapon stockpiles or initiation of large voluntary weapon collection programs are best held in prominent public places with strong media coverage. Participation by local, regional, and national leadership coupled with publicity of the program will aid in building trust and openness, and can lead to greater participation. In both Kosovo and Afghanistan, large phase two disarmament programs were accompanied by ceremonies, awards, and public information campaigns.<sup>20</sup>

An exception to the desire for publicity is when disarming individuals in high-threat environments or when disarmaments may prove provocative despite the best efforts of those tasked with carrying it out. As an example, in Iraq, most individual disarmaments were conducted at night, under low visibility conditions, to prevent insurgents and criminals identifying those being disarmed while affording force protection to the disarmament

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<sup>18</sup> Strickland, Adam, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>19</sup> "Guide for Small Arms/Light Weapons Elimination Operations (DRAFT), 19.

<sup>20</sup> "Small Arms and Light Weapons Disarmament Programs: Challenges, Utility, and Lessons Learned", 34

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<sup>17</sup> "Small Arms and Light Weapons Disarmament Programs: Challenges, Utility, and Lessons Learned", 33

force.<sup>21</sup> The ability for individuals to quietly and anonymously turn over weapons is a needed option for all disarmament operations.

Conducting disarmament operations requires the careful balance of incentives and punishments through voluntary and coercive methods. Incentives could include amnesty, cash, material goods, housing, training, employment, and medical care. Punishments may include weapons and property seizure, monetary fines, and detention.

In a perfect scenario, local populations feel secure by the presence of a mix of trusted indigenous and U.S./Coalition forces. The host nation would implement a well-published and fair voluntary weapons collection program. The local population, feeling that their security and basic needs are being met, will enthusiastically turn over small arms, creating a safe and secure environment for economic and social development.

In reality, the situation is always more complex. Finding the right mix between voluntary and involuntary disarmament is often the toughest aspect of mission planning. Historically military forces have relied on coercion and show of force to involuntarily disarm individuals immediately upon the cessation of hostilities, while large international organizations have generally relied on monetary incentive programs.

Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrate the increased use of incentive programs by U.S. military forces to assist in disarmament operations. The typical form of incentive is the cash-for-weapons program. Although exchanging cash for weapons has helped get some weapons off the street, the

program has seen many problems. In Iraq, most of the weapons turned in were broken, rusted and useless.<sup>22</sup> In Bosnia, locals used the program to dispose of unwanted weapons. In Afghanistan, the UN was paying \$200 for an AK-47, twice the local rate on the weapons market. This program actually fueled the market as weapons flooded into Afghanistan only to be sold to the UN for a profit.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, it was suspected that groups used the program to finance the purchase of more advanced weaponry. In Iraq large volumes of low quality “junk weapons” were turned in at collection sites in Najaf, Sadr City, and Fallujah. Iraqis at these sites complained that Americans thought money was the answer to everything. Many Iraqis expressed they felt insulted that Americans simply threw money at the situation and did not spend the time to understand their true problem.<sup>24</sup>

A more successful incentive policy emerged when weapons were exchanged for useful every-day items. Despite the lack of guidance from higher headquarters, many individual units, often at the battalion and company level, improvised similar programs to remove weapons from the environment. Near Fallujah, Marines handed out wheelbarrows and bottled water to local leaders who helped turn-in weapons and identified IEDs or UXOs.<sup>25</sup> This gave the Iraqis something useful to rebuild their area instead of cash. Other positive examples include, Marines from 3/1 and 3/24 who gave out water bladders to cooperative towns and helped with water purification issues. These policies had the two-fold effect

<sup>21</sup> Homiak, Travis, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>22</sup> Huggins, Lawrence, Personal interview, October 2005, Homiak, Travis, Personal interview, October 2005, Jent, Tim, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>23</sup> “Small Arms and Light Weapons Disarmament Programs: Challenges, Utility, and Lessons Learned”, 42

<sup>24</sup> Homiak, Travis, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>25</sup> Jent, Tim, Personal interview, October 2005.

of getting weapons out of the area and gaining the trust of local populations.

Disarmament operations do not take place in a neutral environment, but inside a complex cultural, religious, historical context. To successfully conduct a disarmament operation, one must understand the role weapons play within the targeted culture. In many societies, gun ownership goes beyond simple family protection and resonates at a deeply emotional level. In Kosovo, gun ownership is a source of cultural pride. Weapons are passed down from generation to generation as heirlooms, and are significant sources of local power and prestige. In Afghanistan, the ultimate symbol of masculinity is a mountain warrior fighting to protect his land and tribe. Weapon ownership is vital to this vision. It is no wonder that attempts to force these mountain fighters to give up their weapons in exchange for farming equipment and agricultural training often end in failure.<sup>26</sup>

While the cultural view of gun ownership is often a hindrance to disarmament operations, the use of cultural factors such as cultural hierarchy and tribal/clan/family relationships, can improve success rates. Somalia, Afghanistan, and Iraq all adhere to various levels of clan/tribe cultural hierarchies. Instead of targeting individuals directly, successful U.S. commanders in Iraq dealt with local tribal elders. These elders would use their established cultural legitimacy to facilitate the disarming of their tribe or clan.<sup>27</sup> In almost every case, individuals are more likely to honestly disarm if told to do so by their local cultural leadership, vice at gunpoint by a squad of foreign soldiers. Of equal importance,

commanders would also bring the tribal leader into the process, holding him accountable for the actions of his groups. Any material incentives would also be passed through the local leader to empower him by emphasizing his credibility. This also reduced individual perceptions that they gave up their weapons to a foreign military. The *Small Wars Manual* states that disarmament is only successful with the full cooperation of local leaders and that officers must be skilled in tact, psychology, and diplomacy.<sup>28</sup>

## TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Several tactical themes have emerged from experience in Somalia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The lack of training and procedures has forced Marines to relearn the same lessons from conflict to conflict. Marines throughout Iraq independently came to the same conclusions that Marines discovered in Somalia and the Balkans years ago.<sup>29</sup>

Disarmament operations involve significant interaction with local populations. While the threat of force, punishment, or detainment is an important aspect of disarmament, the ability to negotiate, convince and discuss often proves a more useful tactic. The rules for disarmament vary from one conflict to another. In Somalia, locals could own certain weapons, but not carry or display them in public.<sup>30</sup> In Iraq, each family was allowed one AK-47 for self-protection.<sup>31</sup> Even with well-publicized rules, Marines must use discretionary judgment when enforcing disarmament regulations. Disarmament operations are unpredictable and decentralized.

<sup>28</sup> *Small Wars Manual*. P 11-1.

<sup>29</sup> Homiak, Travis, Moore, Bill, Strickland, Adam Rababi, David, Landen, Huggins, Lawrence, Jent, Tim

<sup>30</sup> Rababi, David, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>31</sup> Jent, Tim, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>26</sup> “Small Arms and Light Weapons Disarmament Programs: Challenges, Utility, and Lessons Learned”, 23

<sup>27</sup> Strickland, Adam, Personal interview, October 2005.



They require high levels of flexibility and creativity, since plans must be altered to meet dynamic local conditions. This imperative cannot be overstated in cross-cultural environments.<sup>32</sup>

During a disarmament raid on an isolated family compound in Iraq, 60 AK-47s were discovered. The Iraqis claimed 60 families lived in the compound, and therefore, they were entitled to 60 AK-47s. The Marines on the scene used their discretion and decided that 60 weapons were not needed to provide basic self-protection of the compound.<sup>33</sup> In other situations, Marines would discover old hunting shotguns and .22 caliber pistols. The locals would claim the shotguns were family heirlooms that were used only to hunt to feed their family and the .22 pistols were used to slaughter sheep and other small livestock. The Iraqis would complain that they could not feed their families if Marines took these weapons. While the Marines were authorized to confiscate these weapons, they often did not. This use of discretion was an important tool in building trust among the local population. Sometimes weapons were confiscated and tagged with the full intention of returning them to families after engaging local tribal leadership. Concessions were made on both sides, empowering local tribal leaders while building rapport.<sup>34</sup> The locals were held accountable for their actions and helped build relationships between U.S. forces and the local population.<sup>35</sup>

The key precursor to discretionary judgment was having a strong situational awareness of the local environment. Once a commander understood the local culture,

power structure, and internal dynamics, it became easier to use discretionary judgment. The amount of time it takes to gain significant situational awareness in a SASO environment is considerably longer than in a conventional

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*Weapons are passed down from generation to generation as heirlooms, and are significant sources of local power and prestige.....In almost every case, individuals are more likely to honestly disarm if told to do so by their local cultural leadership, vice at gunpoint by a squad of foreign soldiers..*

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operation. In Iraq, the physical environment of the terrain, streets, and major structures was learned within two weeks, but it took 1–3 months to be able to work effectively within the cultural environment.<sup>36</sup> The key was learning how to see what was out of place. A popular saying among the Marines in Iraq was “the absence of the normal, the presence of the abnormal.”<sup>37</sup> Once the Marines gained a feel for the area, they could easily spot when a compound had freshly dug piles of dirt (burying weapons is a popular method). Marines learned from experience when a group of young males did not belong in the area. Only by living in and around a local area does one pick up the

<sup>32</sup> “Guide for Small Arms/Light Weapons Elimination Operations (DRAFT), 10.

<sup>33</sup> Strickland, Adam, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>34</sup> Buhl, Willard, Personal interview, March 2006.

<sup>35</sup> Homiak, Travis, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>36</sup> Jent, Tim, Huggins, Lawrence, Strickland, Adam

<sup>37</sup> LtCol Willy Buhl “Thundering Third on the Ground in Iraq”, E-Mail, 24 June 2004.

local knowledge and ability to spot these abnormalities.<sup>38</sup>

Constant, visible, dismounted patrolling is key to gaining the situational awareness required in disarmament operations. The more active the patrolling among the local population, the better chance of discovering hidden or illegal weapons. This re-affirms the U.S. promise to provide security, while also allowing the interaction of U.S. forces among the locals. When patrolling, the key is for locals to know that you are never far away, but not to be visible on every street corner or every time they turn around. Active patrolling uses varied routes, taking advantage of small alleys and cut-throughs. The goal is to be visible throughout the area, but in constantly changing and unpredictable ways.<sup>39</sup>

The likelihood that weapons searches will be successful increases when working alongside indigenous forces. In Iraq, indigenous interpreters and security forces quickly noticed when something was out of place, or if people were in an area they did not belong. Through common language and culture, indigenous forces were able to form a quick connection with the local population that increased the flow of information.<sup>40</sup> They also knew where Iraqis traditionally hid weapons and other contraband.<sup>41</sup> It was discovered that when working with indigenous forces from the local area, they would often protect their own group. This required U.S. forces to bring in Iraqis from other parts of Iraq to ensure impartiality.

Disarmament operations, especially searches for weapon caches, present unique

challenges to U.S. military logistics infrastructure. The seizing of weapons is only one phase in disarmament operations. The need to account for, transport, store, and secure large weapon stockpiles is time-consuming and manpower-intensive. Captured weapons must be constantly guarded and maintained by experts. In Iraq, weapons seizures numbered in the tens of thousands. The simple transport of stockpiles strained already limited logistic assets. The destruction of large stockpiles requires special skills and equipment often found only in the high demand/low density EOD community.<sup>42</sup> In Iraq, limited EOD assets were often focused on the priority threats of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The German military has developed specialized, field-deployable weapon-shredding machines, specially designed for disarmament missions. These machines work like giant paper shredders, and they can quickly destroy a large number of small arms. Crushing weapons under tracked vehicles offers an effective hasty alternative.<sup>43</sup>

When searching for weapon caches in Iraq, infantry units quickly learned the value of task-organized combat engineers down to the platoon level. The specialized equipment found in combat engineer units, such as metal detectors and earth-moving equipment, proved invaluable when searching villages and compounds for weapon caches. In response, the Iraqis became skilled at burying weapons and hiding them amid rubble and debris. Well briefed combat engineers however, were able to quickly work around these techniques. The flexibility of Marine Corps units allowed task organized combat engineer teams to quickly

<sup>38</sup> Jent, Tim, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>39</sup> Homiak, Travis, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>40</sup> Jent, Tim, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>41</sup> Huggins, Lawrence, Personal interview, October 2005.

<sup>42</sup> "Guide for Small Arms/Light Weapons Elimination Operations (DRAFT), 15.

<sup>43</sup> Buhl, Willard, Personal interview, March 2006.

integrate into infantry platoons, significantly increasing their weapon cache locating capabilities.<sup>44</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

As the U.S. military continues to refine the conduct of SASO operations, the need for increased focus on disarmament will also increase. Disarmament operations conducted in a vacuum are doomed to fail; within a holistic program of security, reconstruction, and institution building, disarmament will work. An Iraqi father will not surrender his weapon until he believes that his family is safe. The most critical elements in any disarmament process include building trust and legitimacy between the local population, local government, and security forces. By working within local cultural hierarchies and understanding the cultural terrain, tact and diplomacy are powerful toolsets.

As Marines continue to conduct disarmament missions worldwide, more detailed guidance is needed so Marines do not have to re-learn the same lessons from conflict to conflict. The millions of unaccounted small arms will be a permanent feature on all future threat environments. The proper neutralization of these weapons is a core tenet of SASO missions and critical to force protection. Absorption of these issues into training and doctrine is essential for Marines to succeed in the wars of the future. Disarmament must be a key component of future Phase IV planning. Staff planners and field commanders need a solid background in the fundamentals of disarmament.

The *Small Wars Manual* has stood the test of time, and its wisdom on disarmament operations still rings true. The importance of its topic however, and today's security environment, require an updating of its core tenets. In this way, we can leverage the lessons of today's conflicts to improve the missions of tomorrow.

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Bibliography and interview credits can be viewed in the full version of this thesis at [www.smallwarsjournal.com](http://www.smallwarsjournal.com).



<sup>44</sup> Buhl, Willard, Personal interview, March 2006, Jent, Tim, Personal interview, October 2005.

# COUNTERINSURGENCY IN THE BATTLE OF THE CASBAH

## A REASSESSMENT FOR THE NEW MILLENIUM AND ITS NEW WARS

Anton Menning

The Algerian conflict of 1954–1962, memorably termed by Alistair Horne “a savage war of peace,” left a mixed legacy to counterinsurgency (COIN) warfare. On the one hand, the French lost, and their withdrawal from Algeria came amidst bitter recriminations over inhumane methods and tactics that played a substantial role in turning French domestic opinion against the war. Indeed, the film re-enactment of “The Battle of Algiers” has become something of a parable on “how not to” conduct counterinsurgency operations. On the other hand, Algeria—even more than Indochina—crystallized French thinking about counterinsurgency, contributing substantially to theoretical classics that remain important points of departure for the “how to” explicit in contemporary doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

Whatever the contradictions inherent in the French counterinsurgency legacy, the Algerian conflict continues to merit attention on several counts. First, new materials illuminate both the excesses and the successes while helping to differentiate between the two.<sup>2</sup> Second, the sordid side of French methods, including torture and summary executions, has

eclipsed an important success story in which other and less controversial measures and techniques played major—if not decisive—roles in choking out a full-blown insurgency. And, third, the Algerian conflict affords valuable insight into a version of counterinsurgency in which the struggle “for hearts and minds,” while important in the longer run, was less immediately salient than population control and unity among military, intelligence, and police efforts.

Without dwelling on the spectacular or denying the negative, the following remarks highlight less controversial aspects of French counterinsurgency strategies and techniques during “The Battle of the Casbah,” probably the most important chapter in the larger Battle of Algiers. Much of the action is seen through the eyes of two key participants, then-Lieutenant Colonel Roger Trinquier and then-Major Paul Aussaresses. These two officers worked closely together, and they symbolize both sides—the theoretical and the excessive—of the French COIN coin. Trinquier’s theoretical classic, *Modern Warfare*, based partially on his experiences in Algeria and published before (1961) the French withdrawal, outlines French counterinsurgency doctrine during the battle of Algiers. Meanwhile, Aussaresses’ recent and controversial memoir, *The Battle of the Casbah*, unrepentantly details the role played by the Action Service of the SDECE (*Service de Documentation Exterieur et de Contre-*

<sup>1</sup> The premier examples are David Galula, *Counter-insurgency Warfare* (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1964), and Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare* (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1964). The linkages between Indochina and Algeria are described in Peter Paret, *French Revolutionary Warfare from Indochina to Algeria* (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1964).

<sup>2</sup> Of special note are Paul Aussaresses, *The Battle of the Casbah* (New York: Enigma, 2002), and Ted Morgan, *My Battle of Algiers* (New York: Harper Collins, 2005).

*Espionnage*) in combating the Algerian insurgency. Because Trinquier was an intelligence officer and a liaison between French paratroopers and Aussaresses' Action Service, whose stock in trade was intelligence, both officers' accounts stress the overriding significance of intelligence. Aussaresses, meanwhile, shows that excesses tragically had their place. However, their role in larger theoretical and practical perspective likely imparted only momentum and a nasty edge to more prosaic and highly effective counterinsurgency measures. Both Trinquier and Aussaresses, for example, repeatedly emphasize the importance of population control and show that it was attainable without staggering numbers of troops and with *support from the population the military was seeking to control*.

## BACKGROUND

The Algerian War was an insurgency of incredible brutality fought between independence-minded Algerians and French colonials with substantial support from the French government. At the beginning of the conflict, the FLN (*Front Liberation Nationale*) was a fragmented insurgency organization without significant popular support. An intensive FLN campaign of violence aimed at both French colonials and fellow Algerians succeeded in terrorizing the native Muslim population into compliance and tacit support. At the same time, random FLN violence provoked French authorities into a cycle of ever tightening control measures over Muslims, further driving them to the insurgent movement. The *colons*, or French settlers, responded to FLN outrages with violence of their own. By the end of 1956, the country had

descended into a state of civil war that permeated even the capital, Algiers.<sup>3</sup>

At the time, Algiers was a city of just under one million inhabitants, comprised overwhelmingly of *colons*, a rarity in a country dominated by native Algerians. Because Algiers was the economic and administrative center of the entire country, to lose the city meant losing the war. The strategic importance of the city was not lost on the FLN leadership. Its trump card in the dangerous insurgency game was the Casbah, 45 acres of twisting alleyways, cramped quarters, and 80,000 Muslim inhabitants who made it one of the most densely populated areas on earth.<sup>4</sup> If the insurgents could destabilize and control Algiers from bases inside the Casbah, the rest of the country would be theirs and the movement for independence realized. A terrorist bomb exploded in the middle of Algiers commanded far more attention than any series of insurgent actions in the countryside. Therefore, on 7 January 1957, the French fed elite soldiers from the 10<sup>th</sup> paratroop division (DP) under Brigadier General Jacques Massu into the cauldron that was Algiers. Many of these paratroopers and their officers were veterans of Indochina, where they had learned revolutionary war, or what Trinquier calls "modern war," the hard way. French authorities also committed the SDECE to what grimly became known as "The Battle of Algiers."

## OPPOSING FORCE STRUCTURES

FLN leadership consisted of a five-member *Comite de coordination et d'execution* (CCE.) When the CCE elected to target Algiers, it created the Autonomous Zone of Algiers, or

<sup>3</sup> Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace* (New York: Viking Press, 1977), pp. 128-146.

<sup>4</sup> Morgan p. 105.

ZAA, for action within the capital city. Four figures dominated the ZAA council: a politico-military leader, a political assistant, a military assistant, and an assistant for external liaison and intelligence. They divided Algiers into three regions, with each region further subdivided into 10 zones. In turn, each zone consisted of 34 districts. A political organization within each district bore responsibility for political indoctrination and the collection of taxes, supplies, and intelligence. Trinquier was to observe that:

The structure was based on the demi-cell of three men, then the cell, the demi-group, the group, and the sub-district. Normally numbering 127 men, all were under the control of the district leader<sup>5</sup>.

With nearly 1,500 active members, the FLN/ZAA terrorist network in Algiers relied on classic terrorist cell organization. The military branch consisted of perhaps a hundred gunmen. The bombers comprised a separate group, answering only to the ZAA council through a series of letter boxes. This group was rigidly compartmentalized among bomb-builders, explosive suppliers, and bomb throwers. FLN sympathizers in Algiers numbered between 4,500 and 5,000. They were important intelligence assets, with the ability to penetrate nearly every segment of Algiers society.<sup>6</sup>

French COIN elements in Algiers wore three faces: local police, paratroopers, and SDECE personnel. The local police numbered almost 1,000. They were overworked and overtaxed in the maintenance of law and order, and their ranks were riddled with FLN

sympathizers and intelligence agents. Indeed, French authorities only grudgingly considered the police an operational asset in conducting counterinsurgency operations.<sup>7</sup> Military assets included four undermanned regiments of paratroopers numbering in all about 3,200 soldiers, little more than one-half their authorized strength.<sup>8</sup> The number of SDECE personnel remains uncertain, but they included penetration agents, a battalion of commandos in reserve, and experienced leaders like Aussaresses.

## MODERN WAR DEFINED

On the basis of what occurred in Indochina and what he recently experienced in Algeria, Trinquier defined the nature of modern revolutionary warfare. He wrote:

Warfare is now an interlocking system of actions—political, economic, psychological, military—that aims at the overthrow of the established authority in a country and its replacement by another regime. To achieve this end, the aggressor tries to exploit the internal tensions of the country attacked—ideological, social, religious, economic—any conflict liable to have a profound influence on the population to be conquered.<sup>9</sup>

He argued that enemy forces were structured according to a non-traditional format as “an armed clandestine organization whose essential role is to impose its will upon the population.” For Trinquier, victory in counterinsurgency

<sup>5</sup> Trinquier, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Kee, “Algiers-1957: An Approach to Urban Counterinsurgency,” *Military Review*, LIV, no.4 (1974), pp. 74-75.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Morgan, p. 116.

<sup>9</sup> Trinquier, p. 6.

came “only through the complete destruction of that organization.”<sup>10</sup> In today’s parlance, he probably would have defined the insurgency’s politico–military leadership as the enemy center of gravity.

Within the struggle for politico–military ascendancy, terrorism became the method or tactic of choice for enemy combatants in Trinquier’s version of modern war. “The goal of modern war is the control of the population...terrorism is a particularly appropriate weapon, since it aims directly at the inhabitant,” he asserted.<sup>11</sup> According to Trinquier’s logic, when police forces fail to contain terrorism, the population loses confidence in the state and is inexorably drawn towards the terrorists, for they alone can protect the population.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, Trinquier held that:

the terrorist should not be considered an ordinary criminal. Actually he fights within the framework of his organization, without personal interest, for a cause he considers noble and for a respectable ideal, the same as soldiers in the armies confronting him.<sup>13</sup>

From this assertion flow several important intelligence–related considerations. First, it is important to understand the mindset, rationale, and organization behind the actions of the terrorist. Second, it is futile to expect too much from the interrogations of individual members of terrorist organizations. Because terrorist cells are rigidly compartmentalized, financiers know little or nothing about bomb–makers.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 8-9.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

However, what remains significant is that processors of information about the individual terrorist retain the ability “to place him precisely within the diagram of the organization to which he belongs.”<sup>14</sup>

## IMPORTANT PRECONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

Trinquier held that a legal basis for counterinsurgency operations must be established before initiating action. An important consideration inherent in modern asymmetrical struggle is the understanding that insurgents are likely to use cherished democratic freedoms against their more liberal–minded adversaries. In other words, terrorists hide behind—indeed, draw much of their strength from—freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of movement. The legal rights characteristic of most western societies—due process, innocence until proven guilty, burden of proof resting with the prosecution—all work in the terrorists’ favor, making apprehension and conviction difficult. This difficulty was not lost on Trinquier:

The fact that modern warfare is not officially declared, that a state of war is not generally proclaimed, permits the adversary to continue to take advantage of peacetime legislation, to pursue his activities both openly and secretly. He will strive by every means to preserve the fiction of peace, which is so essential to his design.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

From this understanding flows the necessity before counterinsurgency operations to declare a state of war or its equivalent. Wartime exigency provides a legal basis for the imposition of military tribunals, martial law, and population control measures. Before what became the Battle of Algiers, Paul Aussaresses met with Paul Teitgen, the General Secretary of the Prefecture, to obtain his signature for an order that would establish a curfew and place all detainees for questioning under house arrest. Teitgen's acquiescence, in the words of Aussaresses, "legitimized our initiatives."<sup>16</sup> Trinquier then quotes an FLN member's lament, "we are no longer protected by legality," along with the supplication, "we ask all of our friends to do the impossible to have legality re-established; otherwise we are lost."<sup>17</sup>

Paradoxically for the counterinsurgency cause, a declaration of war carries grave political, economic and social implications. Politicians naturally avoid declarations of war and states of emergency. However, an entrenched insurgency is a direct threat to the very existence of legitimate authority. If the will to oppose an insurgency is not embraced at the highest levels, then counterinsurgency forces cannot effectively pursue their legitimate politico-military objectives with any predictable degree of success.

A second—and perhaps regrettable—requirement for the successful pursuit of counterinsurgency operations is the necessity for large detention centers. At least initially, various population control measures, including I.D. cards, curfews and casual interrogations, promise to yield an inordinately large number of detainees. In healthy contrast with Aussaresses, Trinquier specifies that detention

measures and facilities must correspond with requirements of the Geneva Conventions regarding treatment of enemy combatants. Otherwise, enemy propaganda will exploit any inhumane treatment of detainees to undermine the forces of law and order. Even before the battle of Algiers, the SDECE established a prison facility in the suburbs for the processing and interrogation of detainees. If they were deemed innocent, they were set free; if they were found guilty of assisting the FLN, they were shipped to other detention camps in the south of Algeria. Unfortunately for the larger French cause, the methods and results of interrogations often did not accord with the Geneva Conventions, a fact that probably explains Trinquier's after-the-fact emphasis.

A third precondition for successful counterinsurgency operations is absolute unity of effort. Once General Massu received orders for the 10<sup>th</sup> DP to counter terrorists in Algiers, he set up an intelligence unit with two deputies. Aussaresses was in charge of action implementation, while Trinquier was responsible for intelligence. Under orders from Massu, Aussaresses fashioned a counterinsurgency team of approximately 20 members, comprised of SDECE Action Service personnel and paratroop officers. A company of paratroops provided a mobile strike force strong enough to deal with most unforeseen contingencies. Both Aussaresses and Trinquier stress the need for what they termed an Intelligence-Action Service. Intelligence and action had an almost seamless relationship. Working as a team, the Action Service quickly exploited information gathered by the Intelligence Service. Moreover, Aussaresses notes that he and Trinquier were "both staunch non-conformists and displayed a lot of independent thinking." Creativity and open-

<sup>16</sup> Aussaresses, p. 84.

<sup>17</sup> Trinquier, p. 47.



mindedness were important characteristics of the SDECE Intelligence–Action Service, although the historian might argue they were carried too far in important instances. In more positive perspective, one of Aussaresses' team members was a former *fellagha*, or FLN fighter, who had changed sides. His linguistic skills and knowledge of terrorist tactics proved immensely valuable throughout the campaign. From the beginning of the counterinsurgency effort, Aussaresses specified that his team was to operate on a 24-hour basis, with the majority of raids and sweeps occurring during the night, when a curfew was in effect to minimize unwarranted population movements.<sup>18</sup>

Why did Massu choose Aussaresses and Trinquier as his principal deputies? Trinquier had commanded a force of 20,000 *maquis* fighters during the Indochina war. Their tactics were largely successful, fighting the Vietminh through indigenous organization and leadership, but Trinquier's force was left to wither on the vine after the French left Indochina. Massu described Trinquier as having "a complicated and sometimes unfathomable turn of mind, a tortuous craftiness well attuned to the job at hand."<sup>19</sup> Massu and Trinquier enjoyed an excellent personal relationship, while Trinquier had extensive experience in special operations. Aussaresses writes, "he [Trinquier] was a smart soldier with a lot of curiosity and imagination in all his initiatives."<sup>20</sup>

Aussaresses was chosen because of his counterinsurgency experience. He had arrived in Algeria in early 1955 to serve as an intelligence officer with military units stationed

in Philippeville, some 350 kilometers east of Algiers. In August, he successfully uncovered and opposed an FLN attack designed to take Philippeville and massacre its citizens. Thanks to Aussaresses' intelligence skills, the attack was repulsed, with 134 FLN killed and several hundred wounded.<sup>21</sup> When Massu learned of this success, he submitted a by-name request for Aussaresses to serve in Algiers.<sup>22</sup>

## POPULATION CONTROL MEASURES

Because control of the population is the ultimate goal of modern insurgency-style warfare, security of the population is of primary importance in counterinsurgency operations. Trinquier holds that the population must have the means to protect itself from insurgents, but the same time he stresses control. In his words, "control of masses through a tight organization, often through several parallel organizations is the master weapon of modern war."<sup>23</sup> Trinquier proposes establishment of a homegrown, grassroots organization that allows the population to organize, protect itself, and aid parallel organizations in the counterinsurgency fight. Aussaresses' Action–Service was one of the "parallel organizations" in Algiers. The local police—whatever their adequacy and competence—were another "parallel organization" vital to counterinsurgency operations. The police often possessed files on known insurgents. One of the Aussaresses' first actions was to meet with police department heads, secure their cooperation, and obtain their intelligence files. The Action Service, with intelligence provided by indigenous organizations and with the help

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<sup>18</sup> Aussaresses, pp. 70-93.

<sup>19</sup> Morgan, p. 137.

<sup>20</sup> Aussaresses, p. 70.

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>23</sup> Trinquier, p. 30.

of police files, acquired many of the tools required to crush the FLN insurgency in Algiers.

Possession of these tools went hand-in-hand with measures to fashion an indigenous organization to influence and control the population. Trinquier offers a blueprint for building such an indigenous organization:

First we designate an energetic and intelligent man in each city who will, with one or more reliable assistants, build the projected organization with a minimum of help from the authorities. The principal is very simple. The designated leader divides the city into districts, at the head of which he places a chief and two or three assistants. These, in turn, divide the district into sub-districts and designate a chief and several assistants for each of them. Finally, each building or group of houses receives a chief and two or three assistants who will be in direct contact with the populace.<sup>24</sup>

When insurgents are already strongly entrenched and the population fears for its safety, Trinquier specifies construction of the organization from the ground up, with the help of loyal policemen who are in daily contact with the people.

Implementation of a census was an integral part of Trinquier's formula for building an indigenous organization. On the basis of the Algerian experience, he outlined the process:

First, they conduct a careful census of the entire population. The basic leader of the organization structure

will be the head of the family. He is made responsible for all inhabitants of his apartment or house, and for keeping up to date the list established at the time of the census. During the taking of the census, we designate at the next echelon a chief of a group of houses, who will be responsible for a certain number of heads of family, four or five at most. Finally, when the census is completed and a close relationship established with the population, chiefs of sub-districts will be designated.<sup>25</sup>

In the Algerian case, the sub-district leaders had strong ties to the community, ties which made leaving the community undesirable. Also, there was no district head above the sub-district leaders, as "his role is too important for him to be easily commanded, and he will be too vulnerable a target for the enemy."<sup>26</sup>

The census card issued to Algerians bore the resident's photograph, a house group number (3), a letter designating the sub-district (B), the number of the district (2), and letter designating the city (A). Thus, the resident's census number would be A.2.B.3.<sup>27</sup> The system for numbering houses and buildings owed its origins to Napoleon, with Trinquier, a student of military history, adapting it to Algiers. Census cards became the basis for a card catalogue with information pertaining to each resident listed. Two separate persons had to vouch for an individual before he received an identity card. The census thus became a means to establish a record of residents, their ties to the community, and their actions and

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid..

affiliations. The resulting record could be updated and searched at any time.

The census was crucial for reasons other than raw information and the establishment of an indigenous organization. The mere act of conducting a census facilitated counterinsurgency efforts. Details about the population began to emerge. Who lived where, and with what ties to the community? Where did the inhabitants work? Discrepancies soon became apparent and were investigated by various means, including direct interrogation. Investigation of false claims from the head of a household might result in a number of arrests and possible military actions, thus enabling authorities to take the fight to the insurgent and to exercise limited initiative that was impossible before the census. Also, the population began to feel first-hand the imposition of law and order.

Once identity cards were issued, police and soldiers established checkpoints at effective sites throughout the city. Those without identity cards were arrested for questioning. People traveling or residing within an area without good reason were subject to direct interrogation at checkpoints. Those without satisfactory explanation became subjects of more intensive interrogation. Checkpoints also provided an opportunity for use of intelligence agents. Ausaresses staffed checkpoints with former insurgents who had changed their allegiance. With their own identities camouflaged, they identified insurgents moving through checkpoints. Those identified were arrested and interrogated.

Once an indigenous intelligence organization began to function, it worked closely with army, police and SDECE forces through a “Bureau of the Inhabitants

Organization and Control.” This bureau maintained direct liaison with the aforementioned indigenous organizations. In case of an emergency such as a terrorist bombing or gunfight, the indigenous organization had the capacity to provide precise information and intelligence to the police and military.<sup>28</sup> In addition, because the indigenous component of the intelligence service was staffed and controlled on a house-by-house, person-by-person basis, the foundations for the so-called “Ilot System” were now in place. Under this system, one person in each family group became responsible for knowing the exact location of all other family members. The family member reported to a floor chief (in the case of an apartment) or a block chief. The block chief reported to the sub-district head and so on. By using this system, the authorities were able to determine the whereabouts of any individual within minutes.<sup>29</sup>

In addition, interrogation became a powerful instrument in counterinsurgency. Even without torture and other dubious techniques, a substantial percentage of the population denounced insurgents out of fear, patriotism, revenge or retribution. Torture notwithstanding, people often talked without coercion. They even became employable as double-agents, depending on the assessment of intelligence officers. Essentially, a whole series of mutually-reinforcing measures, including imposition of a census, the organization of indigenous intelligence sources and forces, and the establishment of checkpoints, facilitated interrogations to

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>29</sup> James Price, “Algeria (1954-62),” in D. M. Condit, et al., *Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict*, Volume III, *The Experience in Africa and Latin America* (Washington, D. C.: American University, 1968), p. 194.

provide intelligence and to focus tactical actions. Previous experience had taught the French that counterinsurgency efforts were doomed to failure without sound intelligence.

## QUADRILLAGE

The 10<sup>th</sup> DP consisted of four regiments, three of which were stationed in Algiers. The fourth remained in reserve just outside the city limits. A fifth unit, the 1<sup>st</sup> REP, or *Regiment Etranger de Parachutistes*, deployed with the 10<sup>th</sup> DP in defense of the city. In addition, the 11<sup>th</sup> Shock Battalion, a parachute battalion comprised of SDECE commandos, remained in reserve near Algiers to provide emergency support. The city was divided into four districts, with Colonel Marcel Bigeard's 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment Colonial Parachutistes (RPC) assigned to deal with the volatile Casbah.<sup>30</sup> Bigeard had fought at Dien Bien Phu, and many of his troops were hardened Indochina veterans. It would be no exaggeration to assert that the 10<sup>th</sup> DP and its supporting units represented the cream of the French Army.

Bigeard quickly took steps to begin pacification of the Casbah. He strung barbed-wire around the entire area and regulated movement in and out with manned checkpoints. At the checkpoints his troops—later in company with informants—examined documents, questioned individuals about their reasons for traveling throughout the city, and looked for suspicious behavior. Aussaresses' curfew received vigorous enforcement, with shootings of those caught outside after nightfall. In addition, Bigeard's regiment patrolled the Casbah by zones on a 24-hour basis. In the words of John Talbot, author of *The War Without a Name*, the army "expected to

piece together thousands of bits of information to reveal the structure of the clandestine organization."<sup>31</sup> To this end, Bigeard organized his command as an intelligence network. Each company commander became an interrogator, with assistance from sergeants and platoon leaders. In addition, a liaison was provided to each police precinct, ready to handle denunciations and to interrogate any suspects the police might round up. Each police precinct furnished a detective to the regiment who worked alongside the intelligence officer. The regiment handled routine interrogations. If a suspect was deemed important, he was dispatched to Aussaresses' team for further questioning. Bigeard maintained close communications with Aussaresses at all times. Each morning Aussaresses received a report on the previous night's action.

The paratroops conducted frequent surprise sweeps, or *ratissage* operations. At times, the sweeps were based on intelligence gleaned from interrogations, at other times the sweeps were random. When conducting the sweeps, the troops cordoned off apartment buildings and sometimes entire blocks, with soldiers stationed at the perimeters while each building underwent minute search. Due attention fell on census cards, and any person outside his listed residence was interrogated on the spot. If no suitable explanation was forthcoming, the person was detained and sent to headquarters for further interrogation. What we now know as information operations was an essential part of *ratissage* operations. The people whose homes were searched knew exactly why they were subjected to such treatment. Clear explanations helped mitigate some of the damage done by intrusive

<sup>30</sup> Morgan, p. 116.

<sup>31</sup> John Talbot, *The War Without a Name* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.), p. 85.

searches. Additionally, French troops observed local decorum while entering the homes of the indigenous population.

Within the larger picture of which *ratissage* operations were an integral part, the goal of the *Quadrillage* system was security. Constant patrolling, raids and identity checkpoints put teeth into the security program. However, *Quadrillage* served another purpose. That was to put French troops in direct contact with the Moslem population, attempting to foster relationships between the local populace and the occupying forces. Paratroopers renovated schools, established medical clinics, and built orphanages. In addition, military teams provided housing and employment for refugees crowding into the city.<sup>32</sup> These actions contrasted sharply with raids and intense security measures. The object was to show a softer side of the French military presence and to demonstrate to the populace that there were two faces to the counterinsurgency coin. As the British were demonstrating almost simultaneously in Malaya, the winning of hearts and minds remained important to any counterinsurgency campaign. However, the French also realized that security and population control were primary, the *sine qua non* of effective counterinsurgency operations.

## BREAKING THE BACK OF THE INSURGENCY

In insurgency warfare's "interlocking system of actions" seemingly non-military events often assume unexpected significance. During the Battle of Algiers, the FLN called for a general strike to begin on 28 January 1957, and last for eight days. The strike date coincided

with the opening day of United Nations debate on the Algerian question. By showing its internal solidarity and power, the FLN hoped to draw attention to itself and influence the U.N. debate. The FLN leadership used pamphlets to advertise the strike.<sup>33</sup> Countering the proposed strike consumed Aouissas' attention.

On the eve of the strike, Aouissas examined the list of suspected FLN sympathizers he had compiled from police records and interrogations. Then he cross-referenced this list with lists of employees of various public utilities—water, gas, electric, postal service, transportation, and so forth. The next morning he dispatched paratroopers to the utilities to take roll. Because of the census, Aouissas and the paratroopers knew where absentee employees resided. In his words, the paratroopers "quickly visited the homes of the strikers and dragged them rather roughly to their jobs."<sup>34</sup> Paratroopers also forcibly opened closed shops. If shopkeepers failed to show, their shops were looted. In the case of striking longshoremen, Aouissas rounded up 200 detainees and escorted them to the docks under a guard of airborne sappers. The detainees unloaded cargoes without delay, and the harbormaster even paid the detainees for their work. Paratroopers escorted children to their schools. In this manner, the strike was broken in less than an hour.<sup>35</sup> What the FLN had planned as a show of force and solidarity ended in failure. In addition, intelligence from interrogations, followed by a paratroop intrusion into the Casbah netted substantial French gains. Over 1,000 strikers were interrogated, and the resulting intelligence

<sup>32</sup> Kee, pp. 80-81.

<sup>33</sup> Aouissas, pp. 77-78.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.

enabled Bigeard's forces to begin cracking the terrorist cell structure within the Casbah.<sup>36</sup>

By the end of February 1957, the Battle of Algiers was over, following the arrest of 23 gunmen, 51 terrorist cell chiefs, and 174 terrorist tax collectors. In just under two months, the 10<sup>th</sup> DP and the Action Service had smashed the FLN network and driven its survivors into Tunisia.<sup>37</sup> In the words of one terrorist, "the organization that we so painfully succeeded in building up has been destroyed."<sup>38</sup> Aussaresses commented, "we knew it because quite simply nothing was happening there anymore. The spectacular attacks had stopped and the arrests were dwindling."<sup>39</sup> Only one para regiment remained in Algiers.

In August, Bigeard's forces arrested Gandriche Hacene, head of the Algiers east sector, code named "Zerrouk." He was "turned" and continued communicating through his wife with Yacef Saadi, the overall commander of the ZAA structure. In September, Yacef Saadi was arrested after a female agent followed Zerrouk's wife to his hiding place. Saadi then divulged the hideout of his second in command, Ali la Pointe, in an effort to save his own nephew, who was working as la Pointe's errand boy. When paratroopers detonated charges paced against la Pointe's door, a sympathetic explosion ignited bombs stored in the house.<sup>40</sup> Double agents, not torture, had provided the intelligence necessary for the capture of two major FLN leaders. Meanwhile, the terrorist network in Algiers had ceased to exist. In the end more than 40 percent of the Casbah's inhabitants underwent interrogation,

yielding valuable intelligence to accomplish the task.<sup>41</sup> Numbers alone suggest that the majority of them probably never witnessed torture.

## AFTERMATH

Still, the stench of torture and summary execution that accompanied many interrogations hung like a pall over the Action Service and the French paratroopers. During the Battle of Algiers, over 24,000 people had been arrested, and when this number was tallied with the numbers of those released and those still in detention, 3,024 persons were missing.<sup>42</sup> The 10<sup>th</sup> DP and the Action Service had received orders to pacify Algiers by any means necessary. The resulting and frequent application of inhumane techniques created a revulsion that continued to plague the French military and France itself right up to and beyond the time that DeGaulle opted for Algerian self-determination. However, unity of counterinsurgency effort, when coupled with the population control measures advocated by Trinquier and Aussaresses, had been instrumental in smashing the terrorist network. The challenge for future COIN operations remains how to employ analogous techniques without resort to the kind of inhumanities that aid and abet the attainment of long-term terrorist and insurgency objectives.

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<sup>36</sup> Morgan, p. 151.

<sup>37</sup> Kee, p. 78.

<sup>38</sup> Michael Clark, *Algeria in Turmoil* (New York: Praeger, 1969), p 159.

<sup>39</sup> Aussaresses, p. 148.

<sup>40</sup> Morgan, pp. 218-233.

<sup>41</sup> Kee, p. 82.

<sup>42</sup> Aussaresses, p. 163

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TACTICS AND TECHNIQUE OF SMALL WARS

Maj Harold H Utley, USMC

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The Navy, of which the Marine Corps is a part, is frequently called upon to undertake warlike operations when a state of war does not exist. One of the fundamental functions of the Navy is to safeguard American interests abroad, a duty which often necessitates a display of force, and sometimes, actual fighting. In most cases these operations are conducted for the purpose of restoring peace in a revolution-torn country and involve armed conflict with one of the political parties while the other party is not openly hostile to our forces.

The Marine Corps has as its secondary function (i. e. task): "As an adjunct of the Navy, to provide and maintain forces \* \* \*. (b) For emergency service in time of peace for the protection of the interests of the United States in foreign countries."

It is obvious that this subject is of prime importance to officers of the Marine Corps, and Naval officers since they may, either as commanders of squadrons and ships supporting such operations or as staff officers of such commanders, find it necessary to pass judgment upon plans for this type of operations, should likewise have more than a hazy knowledge of what has occurred in the past; and finally, it is believed that officers of

the Army cannot afford to wholly disregard this subject even though it is fundamentally a function of the Marine Corps, although it is true that the landing of a single armed soldier on foreign soil constitutes an act of war, whereas sailors and marines can operate all over the same country and suffer a considerable number of casualties while the nation concerned and our own are still at peace.

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*We must never, in our zeal for the perfection of plans for a Small War, overlook the fact that behind and over us is that force known as "Public Opinion in the United States."*

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This very fact—that no state of war exists—coupled with that mentioned before—that only a portion of the inhabitants are hostile—frequently gives to the operations a character differing radically from that where a formal state of war exists, they complicate the situation immeasurably.

Although each situation presents its own peculiar problems, they all have certain characteristics in common, and these can be studied and prepared for. The frequency with which they have occurred emphasizes the importance of making careful studies, of selecting most appropriate organization and equipment, and of undergoing adequate training, in order that we may be properly prepared when we encounter them.

This type of operations has been designated by many writers by the title "SMALL WARS," a term which has no connection whatsoever with the size of the force involved, the extent of the theater of operations, nor the length of time required to bring the operation to a close. In spite of its rather general use, the choice of the term does not appear to be a particularly happy one. Colonel C. E. Callwell, British Army, whose book, "Small Wars, Their Principles and Practices," has been a standard text on the subject for over a quarter of a century, says that the term is used "in default of a better one." In some cases it appears difficult to define precisely the line of demarkation between "Small Wars" and major conflicts, but generally speaking Small Wars are those operations in which a trained regular force is opposed by an irregular and comparatively untrained enemy. All of our campaigns against the Indians, the Boxer Rebellion, the Philippine Insurrection, the Punitive Expedition into Mexico in 1916, and the numerous campaigns and expeditions of the Marine Corps—except when serving with the Army in the Mexican and World Wars—fall under this category.

Replete as the records of the Marine Corps are with valuable historical examples, but few real studies seem to have been made of them. Prior to the World War we were satisfied to learn by experience, or perhaps it would be

more accurate to say we learned by precept and example from our commanders and senior lieutenants. In the days when Expeditions were the rule, and each year saw at least one Expedition depart from Norfolk or Philadelphia or Mare Island, that method was sufficient. But in the last ten years that has not been the situation, and not so very long ago every company officer in a good sized brigade was on his first expedition as an officer!

Then, too, we must realize that the distribution of high powered and automatic weapons has progressed to the point where it is the rule rather than the exception to find our potential opponents well armed with modern infantry weapons including high powered rifles, automatics, hand grenades and machine guns.

Small Wars may be divided into three broad classes according to the purpose for which they are waged. These are:

- Campaigns of Conquest or Annexation.
- Campaigns for the suppression of insurrection or lawlessness.
- Punitive Expeditions.

This classification will determine to a degree, but not entirely, the nature and the extent of the operations to be undertaken. In thus limiting, or qualifying, the above statement I am not following the reasoning of a number of eminent writers on this subject, but I believe that an examination of our own history will justify the qualification.

Our experience in Small Wars of the first class—Conquest or Annexation—has been limited, and probably will continue so, although some of our Indian Campaigns fall into this category. In this class of operations the objective is clearly defined, and is the defeat, capture or destruction of the opponent's armed force,



together with the occupation of his capital and other important centers, his vital areas.

Our forces, and especially our Navy and Marine Corps, have on numerous occasions, engaged in Small Wars of the second class—Suppression of Lawlessness or Insurrection (which of course includes the protection of life and property of foreign residents of the country or area in question)—and in all probability will continue to do so many times in the future. In some instances the mere occupation by an adequate force, sometimes as small as a section of the affected area will suffice, as for example the landing of two companies of Marines under (then) Major S. D. Butler, U.S.M.C., at Bluefields, Nicaragua, in 1910. In other cases it will be necessary to overrun the entire country, as in Haiti in 1915, or even to establish Military Government as in Santo Domingo in 1916 in order to carry out our mission.

In Small Wars of the third class—Punitive Expeditions—our experience has likewise been limited, but within recent years United States forces have engaged in two, and these differed widely in the extent of operations necessary and in the objective. In the landing at Vera Cruz, Mexico, in 1914, the seizure of that port and of a small amount of territory surrounding it was sufficient. In the case of the Pershing Punitive Expedition into Mexico the object sought was the destruction or breaking up of Villa's band or bands, and this required almost a year and the operation covered considerable territory.

Incidentally I found an account of one landing by Marines in foreign territory which probably falls under the third class, but is, I believe, unique in the annals of this or any other nation. On 21 September 1870 Lieutenant

Cochrane, U.S.M.C., landed at Honolulu, Hawaii, with "a corporal's guard" of Marines carrying only their sidearms (bayonets). They attacked the United States Consulate, overpowered the American Consul and the Vice Consul who offered some resistance, and halfmasted the colors over the consulate. These American officials had refused to half mast their colors in spite of the insistence of the Senior Naval Officer Present, Captain Truxton of the U. S. S. Jamestown, claiming that they had no official knowledge of the reason for half masting the flag and that the consul was senior to Captain Truxton anyhow. This incident<sup>1</sup> has no bearing on these studies, of course, and is mentioned merely as an example of the wide variety of causes which have led to the landing of Marines on foreign soil.

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*"That the friendship of the people of any occupied nation should be forfeited by the adoption of any unnecessarily harsh measures, is avowedly contrary to the policy of the United States."*

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The Rules of Land Warfare for the guidance of the combatants in Small Wars, or "wars that are not wars," have not been, and probably never will be written. When a situation arises not contemplated by the instructions issued, the only sound guide to action is a thorough knowledge of the mission of the whole force coupled with knowledge of the methods that have been used in the past by

<sup>1</sup> The foregoing resume is based on an article appearing in the Proceedings of the U. S. Naval Institute, Vol. 55, No. 314 April, 1929.

civilized nations in like situations. These comprise:

- The killing or wounding or capture of those opposed to us and the destruction of their property;
- The destruction of the property of those who aid or abet those hostile to us;
- The laying waste of entire sections inhabited by people generally supporting those hostile to us;
- The removal and dispersion of all of the inhabitants of an area of unrest.

The great disadvantage in the application of these measures, excepting the first, lies in the fact that their application will probably exasperate the people as a whole against us, and tend to forfeit their friendship permanently, as well as stir up more or less trouble for us among neighboring nations and at home. It would seem therefore that the first of the measures listed above would be the proper method to pursue, and that if in any given case harsher measures seem to be indicated it would devolve upon the more experienced officers, the seniors, to accept the responsibility of their rank, and after a careful estimate of all of the factors involved, to determine what should be done, always bearing in mind, of course, that the safety of our own troops is paramount. And it is likewise incumbent upon the juniors, especially when on detached duty, "on their own," to loyally carry out the spirit of such decisions of their seniors.

The late Lieutenant Colonel Ellis in his article<sup>2</sup> on the subject lays down this sound doctrine:

"That the friendship of the people of any occupied nation should be forfeited by the adoption of any unnecessarily harsh measures, is avowedly contrary to the policy of the United States."

When Uncle Sam occupies the territory of a small nation he wants to enforce his will, but he does not want any trouble, that is, anything that will cause undue comment among his own or foreign people. Such comments may not only cause countless "Investigations" at a more or less later date (there have been seven in Haiti in the fourteen years of occupation), but what is more important from our point of view, such comments in the Halls of Congress and in the press of our own and nearby countries are interpreted by the natives as having far greater weight than they really possess, are taken indeed as an indication of strong support for the forces arrayed against us, and thus serve to intensify and prolong the opposition we must overcome. Of course the leaders know better, but they are skilled in the use of propaganda for their own ends, and there will always be found so-called Americans who under one pretext or another will assist in originating and spreading tales of alleged "atrocities" said to have been committed by our troops. If we were at war, if the Laws of War applied, we could justly charge them—the originators and the publishers—with giving aid and comfort to the enemy. But in Small Wars we are at peace no matter how thickly the bullets are flying.

We must never, in our zeal for the perfection of plans for a Small War, overlook the fact that behind and over us is that force known as "Public Opinion in the United States." Colonel Ellis in his article referred to above discusses this factor as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> Bush Brigades, by Lieut. Col. E. H. Ellis, USMC., Marine Corps Gazette, March 1921

"Now this work of creating order out of chaos and showing small nations the way they should go is justly considered to be accomplished to the satisfaction of everybody, if it were not for the peculiar attitude of the American people themselves. As it is, just about the time that all is going well—when the ex-generals are busily engaged in weaving wonderful straw hats in the local fortaleza, and the farmers are planting the largest crop acreage in the history of the country, and the kids are all going to school, and the national lottery is being run on the square, and the anxious expression has faded from the faces of everybody in general, somebody rises up and yells in print: 'Marines are down in Jungleland! and killed a man in a war! and we didn't know anything about it!' Presto, the people mill around like liaison officers in a world war and inaugurate such a campaign of investigation, castigation, and restoration that the 'Hired Hessians' are forced to do the job over again—or yet."

As an illustration of the application of this factor let us examine two or three examples. In 1920 or thereabouts during the Second Haitian Insurrection, a number of bandits were located on the top of a hill between Le Trou and Fort Liberte in northern Haiti. (See Plate 1–2.) At the time two planes were based on Cap Haitien and both the senior aviator and the senior gendarme officer believed that aerial machinegunning would have but little effect but

that bombing would do the trick. The next higher commanders concurred, but the plan was disapproved at Port Au Prince. The planes machinegunned the hill and gendarme patrols attacked up every known trail with the result that the hill was occupied and one dead bandit found! But that particular moment was not one in which to lay ourselves open to the charge of bombing "innocent" inhabitants, no matter how justified the act might be under the Rules of War. The possible local success had to be sacrificed for the good of the whole command and of the Service in general. It was merely our time honored comrade "The Exigencies of the Service" in another guise.

Major Rowell reports<sup>3</sup> another and more striking instance:

"Early in February following the abandonment of Chipote by the outlaw forces, the undersigned leading a fully armed air patrol, discovered Sandino and his main column consisting of 150 armed men in the town of San Rafael Del Norte. As the horses were picketed and the bandits gathered in houses about the plaza, the opportunity to strike a most effective blow was very great. The planes flew within a few feet of the ground while the pilots and observers looked into the muzzles of the enemy rifles, but not a shot was fired. This rare opportunity was passed up because it was the policy of the Commanding General to avoid the possibility of injuring the lives and property of innocent persons by

<sup>3</sup> Annual Report of Aircraft Squadrons, Second Brigade, U. S. Marine Corps, 1 July 1927-20 June 1928, by Major R. E. Rowell, USMC., Marine Corps Gazette, December 1928.

refraining from attacks on towns. It so happened that the radical writer, Mr. Beals, was present interviewing Sandino at the very moment the planes arrived. At a later date I met Mr. Beals and urged him to include this incident, in which he was spared the danger of losing his life, among the list of 'atrocities' he was known to be seeking for publication. However, he found it convenient to omit this incident from the published account of his interview."

Likewise, in spite of its evident value in certain situations especially in aerial attacks, the use of any form of chemicals was forbidden in the Second Brigade in Nicaragua in 1928–1929, lest the attitude of our government be misconstrued. Even tear gas was included in the restriction. The five Central American States have signed a convention prohibiting the use of any form of Chemical Warfare among themselves, and it was felt best to respect this convention, and that the use of any form of chemicals was sure to be reported, and in uninformed or deliberately false accounts be cited as an example of the most inhumane tactics.

I cite these instances to illustrate and emphasize this point:

MEASURES JUSTIFIABLE IN A REGULAR WAR, TACTICALLY SOUND, AND PROBABLY THE MOST EFFICIENT AVAILABLE, MUST FREQUENTLY BE ELIMINATED FROM THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN AS NOT BEING IN ACCORD WITH PUBLIC POLICY IN THE EXISTING SITUATION.

It would be well to bear this point in mind when we are formulating plans, and also when engaged around the mess table in the time

honored sport of "Winning the War" and "Panning the Old Man" for not adopting more severe measures.

Some writers have held that in Small Wars only a limited number of the principles of war apply. The implication is that the remainder may be disregarded. With such a doctrine we cannot agree, although of course in each situation arising in Small Wars, as in every other situation, whether in the map problem room or in the field, some of the Principles will predominate. It is believed that a careful analysis of those occasions where it is alleged

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*I met [the radical writer] Mr. Beals and urged him to include this incident, in which he was spared the danger of losing his life, among the list of 'atrocities' he was known to be seeking for publication. However, he found it convenient to omit this incident from the published account.*

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that the Principles were disregarded will show that the Principles as a whole were not violated with success. The fact that due to difference in weapons, terrain, hostile methods of fighting, etc., the manner of applying the principles –the Tactics–will sometimes vary from the accepted doctrine for Major Warfare must not be confused with the non-application of the Principles of War.

Any Small War prosecuted to the point of the complete occupation of the country will

encounter the following sequence of hostile operations:

- a A more or less serious attempt to prevent the landing or movement across the border.
- b Some resistance at the outskirts of, or in the city followed by a dash for the inaccessible portions of the country.
- c Mobilization and operations of small bands acting generally in concert, if not under a single acknowledged leader.
- d Guerrilla operations of small groups of outlaws (ladrones, cacos, bandits) raiding, robbing, and destroying wherever opportunity offers, but rarely engaging in combat unless in comparatively overwhelming strength, from an ambush, or when surprised.

Of these the first is least frequently encountered.

From our point of view our own operations in Small Wars divide themselves into phases which may be considered as analogous to the phases of the development of infantry for combat.

a	<i>Preparation.</i> All movements, etc., prior to entering the territory of the foreign country, i. e. landing or crossing the border.	<i>Forming for Attack.</i>
b	<i>Landing.</i> Capture or occupation of one or more ports or border towns.	<i>Assault.</i>
c	<i>Hostilities.</i> Destruction of hostile forces and occupation of vital areas.	<i>Advancing the Attack</i>
d	<i>Pacification.</i> Running down guerrilla bands and more completely occupying the country.	<i>Pursuit.</i>

After which it passes out of the province of these studies and into the realm of Military

Government, or else resolves itself into a matter of "sitting on the lid" until the force is withdrawn.

In our operations in the past many instances will be found where one or more of these phases was nonexistent, but the sequence of those that did occur does not vary.




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*We must realize that the distribution of high powered and automatic weapons has progressed to the point where it is the rule rather than the exception to find our potential opponents well armed with modern infantry weapons including high powered rifles, automatics, hand grenades and machine guns.*

*Maj Uteley  
May, 1931*

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## SMALL WARS EVENTS CALENDAR

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17 – 18 October – [Achieving Joint Rapid Response](#) (Conference); Brussels, Belgium. Sponsored by StrategicFora. This conference will focus on the importance of joint efforts in combating threats and the challenges of interoperability in inter-agency operations – from the strategic to the tactical levels. Participate and gain valuable insight from experts world-wide – from military, civil/policing organizations, academia and industry – on the policies, standards, operations and equipment required for successful joint expeditionary maneuvers.

30 – 31 October – [Urban Operations 2006](#) (Conference); London, United Kingdom. Sponsored by Defence IQ. Defence IQ's 4th annual Urban Operations event presents a range of insights from across the domain to include: how recent lessons learned in theatre are affecting training methods and Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs), the impact on ground forces of Urban Close Air Support (CAS) and Urban ISTAR, how changing requirements are affecting the equipment market and how recent lessons learned are changing the acquisition process to produce new business opportunities.

27 – 30 November – [Army Science Conference](#) (Conference); Orlando, Florida. The 25th Army Science Conference (ASC), sponsored by the [Assistant Secretary of the Army \(Acquisition, Logistics and Technology\)](#), will be held at the Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida, November 27–30, 2006. The conference theme is "***Transformational Army Science and Technology – Charting the future of S&T for the Soldier.***" The conference will feature talks by prominent individuals from the U.S. and Allied governments, academia and industry – included in the list of speakers are eight Nobel Prize winners – and presentations of papers and posters judged as best among those submitted by scientists and engineers from government, industry and academia.

4 – 7 December – [The Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference \(I/ITSEC\)](#) (Conference); Orlando, Florida. The Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference (I/ITSEC) promotes cooperation among the Armed Services, Industry, Academia and various Government agencies in pursuit of improved training and education programs, identification of common training issues and development of multiservice programs. Initiated in 1966 as the Naval Training Device Center/Industry Conference, the conference has evolved and expanded through increased participation by the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Industry. In 1979 it became known as the Interservice/Industry Training Equipment Conference.

# POLITICS, WAR, AND GENOCIDE IN RWANDA

## 10 YEARS LATER

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas P. Odom, U.S. Army (ret.)

Twelve years have passed since the Rwandan Genocide. Despite the passage of time, some memories are never dulled; Rwanda has been that way for me. I fear, however, the opposite is true for those not directly touched by the Rwandan tragedy or its expansion into a greater Central African War; very few Americans are cognizant those combined conflicts have claimed somewhere in the vicinity of 4 million dead since 1994.

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*Anyone who dismisses the Rwandan struggle as another case of "Africans killing Africans" clearly starts from a position of ignorance.*

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Recently the films *Hotel Rwanda* and *Sometimes in April* resurfaced the Rwandan genocide. Both are admirable efforts. *Hotel Rwanda*, centered on the exploits of a very courageous Paul Rusesabagina, is a story of personal bravery resisting genocide at time when the rest of the world looked away. I believe *Sometimes in April* better captures the tragedy of Rwanda as genocide tore apart families, the Rwandan people, and Rwanda, again as the world determinedly looked away. Both films are but start points in understanding what happened in Rwanda. Greater understanding demands a more in depth

examination of Rwandan events; gratefully there is a growing body of literature to support such a quest.

### THINKING THE UNTHINKABLE

Before going any further, I would challenge those reading this essay to answer a simple question: is future genocide possible? My answer to that question is not only is genocide possible, it is likely. Man's capacity for genocide is as human as his capacity for mercy. Genocide is the brass ring of conflict resolution. It is not at all "unthinkable" if one is thinking clearly.

Understanding genocide using Rwanda, as a test case is best accomplished in stages. I suggest first understanding the roots of the political conflict, that conflict's transition into civil war, the mechanics of the genocide and its effects, and finally its aftermath.

### WHEN HISTORY, RACE, AND ETHNICITY ARE ALL POLITICAL

Anyone who dismisses the Rwandan struggle as another case of "Africans killing Africans" clearly starts from a position of ignorance. As an African Foreign Area Officer, I specialized in the study of such conflicts and their resolutions. I also encountered the "Africans killing Africans" paradigm repeatedly in dealing with senior officers and policy officials throughout my career, especially in Rwanda after operations in Somalia ran off the

proverbial track. I would recommend Mahmood Mamdani's *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* to anyone looking for in depths study of the roots of the Rwandan political conflict.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mamdani is a Ugandan political scientist who analyzed the Rwandan tragedy in a historical, political, and regional context. His analysis in distinguishing the critical differences between race and ethnicity as they apply to Rwanda is groundbreaking and without peer. Mamdani explains how genocide became a logical solution to a political struggle. I warn the reader in advance that Mamdani's work is not light reading; it is however worth the effort.

## RWANDA AS THE SWITZERLAND OF AFRICA

Those of us old enough may remember that Beirut was once commonly referred to as the "Paris" of the Middle East because its urbane, sophisticated lifestyle and confessional politics allowed severe religious and cultural schisms to be plastered over, largely with money. When things fell apart in Lebanon, Beirut crashed the hardest. The very same phenomenon applied to Rwanda; it appeared to be a success story set against a backdrop of failing or near failing African states. Given that it is a mountainous country, heavily populated, and intensively farmed, Rwanda was often referred to as the "Switzerland of Africa," by Western observers or the small group of Westerners who actually lived there.

Rosamond Halsey Carr's *Land of a Thousand Hills, My Life in Rwanda* is a

testament to that view.<sup>2</sup> Roz is one of the few Americans (and fewer American women) who have made their lives in Africa. You cannot understand what Rwanda was prior to 1990 without reading her book. Roz's home was made famous in the film, *Gorillas in the Mist*, about Dian Fossey; I can personally attest that Roz's beautiful gardens in 1994 made the reality of Rwanda very distant.

That sense of unreality as it affected Western policy toward Rwanda is best explained by Robert E. Gribbin's *In the Aftermath of Genocide: the U.S. Role in Rwanda*.<sup>3</sup> He was U.S. Ambassador in Kigali from 1996 to 1998 and overlapped with my final three months as U.S. Defense Attaché. Ambassador Gribbin's introduction of the reader to the complexity of Rwanda is masterful. Gribbin was the U.S. Department of State desk officer for the country and then Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) in the late 1970s. He also served as DCM in Uganda in 1988–1991; he arranged then Major Paul Kagame's student assignment to the US Army Command and General Staff College.

## INVASION AND CIVIL WAR

The October 1, 1990 invasion of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) interjected an external political force into a Rwandan political pot already at boiling point. Ambassador Gribbin's book is quite revealing in his treatment of the RPF's origins, its leaders' relationships with the Ugandan President, and the RPF's decision to invade. Another source is Coin M. Waugh's *Paul Kagame and Rwanda: Power, Genocide, and the Rwandan Patriotic*

<sup>1</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> Rosamond Halsey Carr with Ann Howard Halsey, *Land of a Thousand Hills: My Life in Rwanda* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999).

<sup>3</sup> Robert E. Gribbin, *In the Aftermath of Genocide: the U.S. Role in Rwanda* (Lincoln, Nebraska: iUniverse, 2005)



*Front*.<sup>4</sup> Waugh worked in Rwanda with the NGO International Organization for Migration (IOM). The strength of his book lies in its initial chapters on Kagame and the origins of the RPF; Waugh got. As a writer, what I as a historian would have loved to have – direct access to Kagame. Waugh also offers details on the RPF military campaign not found elsewhere. Dr. Mamdani in analyzing the RPF decision to invade Rwanda as set against Ugandan ethnic politics places the war in its regional ethnic context.

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*Prunier's critical contribution is documenting France's absolute commitment to keeping Rwanda in the Francophone bloc, even if it came to supporting forces preparing and then executing genocide*

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## ARUSHA AND INTERNAL POLITICAL WARS

In looking at the resultant political negotiations at Arusha and the internal political struggles between emerging Hutu parties and the single-party Presidential regime of Habyarimana, one has to begin considering the foundations of the genocide. Ambassador Gribbin, Colin Waugh, and Dr. Mamdani all offer interesting perspectives on the Arusha Accords and the violent emergence of Hutu Power from Rwanda's shift toward democracy. Gribbin's

<sup>4</sup> Colin M. Waugh, *Paul Kagame and Rwanda: Power, Genocide, and the Rwandan Patriotic Front* (Jefferson, North Carolina: MacFarland and Company, Inc., Publishers, 2004).

analysis of the RPF's skills in negotiating a victory is excellent. He points out correctly the RPF domination of the bargaining table accelerated the forces of Hutu extremism.

At this stage I would add in another author, Gérard Prunier and his *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*.<sup>5</sup> Prunier is a French political analyst with a background in Ugandan politics. One cannot fully understand the maneuvering of the Habyarimana regime against its internal challengers and the threat from the RPF without understanding the role of France and the French view toward Francophone Africa. Prunier's critical contribution is documenting France's absolute commitment to keeping Rwanda in the Francophone bloc, even if it came to supporting forces preparing and then executing genocide.

## THE GENOCIDE AND THE CIVIL WAR

Preparation for genocide calls forth the mechanics in setting the stage for genocide and then executing that genocide. The Human Rights Watch and *Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits L'Homme* book, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda*, examines this process in detail.<sup>6</sup> Alison Des Forges was the book's principal author. A long-term scholar on Rwandan culture, politics, and history, she headed the investigative team. Her writing on the history of Rwanda from pre-colonial to the post-genocide is a concise amalgamation of the larger body of scholarship on a very political subject. But the central strength of this work is its meticulous detail on the execution of the genocide. It is the closest

<sup>5</sup> Gérard Prunier, *The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

<sup>6</sup> Human Rights Watch and Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits l'Homme, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda* (London and New York: Human Rights Watch; and Paris: Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits l'Homme, 1999).

thing to a day-by-day account of the genocide as it unfolded. I would say the work has two weaknesses: first as a team effort based on thousands of field reports, it reads much of the time like a logbook, with little emotion attached to its text. Second in addressing the RPF's behavior in the war and the immediate aftermath, the book openly states it has no good documentation and then makes claims that have been disputed by others (including me).

Prunier's writing on the genocide and the civil war is equally insightful and more thematic, making it more readable and easier to grasp. Where he excels is his discussion of Operation Turquoise, the French intervention. Where he falls seriously short is his absolute dismissal of UNAMIR in doing anything constructive. Then strangely in reissuing his book with an added chapter, Prunier revises his earlier (accurate as far as I am concerned) writings on the subject of RPF atrocities making essentially revisionist claims based on the same doubtful sources. I would also say that Prunier's writing on the genocide avoids the human perspective in favor of drier--though often rightfully sarcastic--political analysis.

## THE HUMAN ASPECTS OF GENOCIDE

There are two works out there I believe fully capture the insanity and the horror of the genocide. And both have won well-deserved awards. The first is Philip Gourevitch's *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families, Stories From Rwanda*.<sup>7</sup> I do not claim to be an unbiased reviewer when it

comes to this book. I met Philip in his first visit to Rwanda and we would talk on various occasions. I was the military intelligence officer in Goma who called Washington DC from the middle of the defeated ex-FAR referred to by Philip on page 165. And my Navy Chief, Michael "Micky" Dunham was the source of the often quoted "genocide is a cheese sandwich" metaphor, pp. 170-171.<sup>8</sup> Philip was one of the few journalists who came to Rwanda and stayed long enough to develop an accurate picture of events. Put another way, Philip earned the right to write what he did. He was our "embed." If there is any weakness in Philip's work, it lies in

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*Too many observers--including military officers--do not understand that "Force Commanders" in UN operations like Rwanda do not have what we consider basic command authority*

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his style. He is a classic storyteller and he loves to weave stories inside stories, adding emotion and depth to his work even as he gives researchers headaches. I hope that someday he goes back and reissues the book with an index.

My other favorite is Lieutenant General Roméo Dallaire's *Shake Hands with the Devil, the Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*.<sup>9</sup> General Dallaire was the Force Commander for the first United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR 1). The book is both condemnation

<sup>7</sup> Philip Gourevitch, *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families, Stories From Rwanda* (New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 1998)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 165, 170-171.

<sup>9</sup> Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil, the Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* (New York: Carol and Graf Publishers, 2005).

and testimony for the human spirit. Dallaire spares no one including himself for allowing the genocide to unfold in Rwanda. His writing also testifies to the spirit of those willing to act when others did not. Some 400 UNAMIR soldiers, many unarmed observers, stayed in Rwanda and saved thousands of lives. As a work of military history, the book is very much a commander's diary--complete with his darkest fears, doubts, and angers. Too many observers--including military officers--do not understand that "Force Commanders" in UN operations like Rwanda do not have what we consider basic command authority, even within the deployed forces, as witnessed by the unilateral withdrawal of Belgian and Bangladeshi forces by their national governments. Although General Dallaire had trained Canadian troops for U.N. missions, he had never deployed on an operational U.N. mission as a U.N. soldier. He had to learn by doing in an extremely complex arena, one not given to Western style of command. Moreover, Dallaire was saddled with an incompetent political counterpart: Jacques-Roger Booh Booh was the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for UNAMIR 1. All of this made Dallaire's mission more difficult, a challenge he took head on even as he internalized them personally. Nothing speaks louder on this than his failed efforts to secure permission to preempt the genocide and his anguish over that failure. I believe that Dallaire could have preempted the genocide with the forces he had in hand--if their national command authorities and U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) had supported him. That is, however, a very doubtful "if" because DPKO repeatedly shied from placing forces at risk, hesitation supported by the U.S. and Great Britain. Finally, this book is a milestone in addressing the issue of combat stress.

Dallaire's near death from attempted suicide documents how torn this senior officer was when he left Rwanda.

## THE AFTERMATH OF GENOCIDE AND CIVIL WAR

First of all, there is a very large and dangerously incorrect assumption in discussing an aftermath to the Rwandan Civil War. In 2006 I still hold, as I did in 1994, that the Civil War did not end with the end of the genocide. The Rwandan civil war morphed into an insurgency and then morphed again into a full-blown regional war that lingers on today. But one can discuss an aftermath to genocide with a backdrop of ongoing civil war. That is my litmus test on books out there that cover this period: do they set the post-genocide period against the back drop of ongoing civil war? Most of the ones I have mentioned above do, some more effectively than others. Certainly Ambassador Gribbin's book is the best on the issue of U.S. policy after 1996 because that is when he became the U.S. Ambassador in Rwanda. His description of July 1994 to that period is equally accurate when it comes to U.S. policy. Waugh's book, *Paul Kagame and Rwanda*, is especially useful because he had access to the inner RPF circles when he was writing his book. Prunier's book is quite good in addressing the issue of the refugee camps as a threat. He does a poor job, however, in describing UNAMIR 2 or Operation Support Hope. His greatest strength is his focus on France's continued support to the extremists after they were in exile.

My final addition to this list of recommended works is that of Shaharyar Khan,

*The Shallow Graves of Rwanda*.<sup>10</sup> Ambassador Khan was the second Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) in Rwanda. His position made him the political head of UNAMIR 2. An experienced diplomat, Khan's insights into the workings of the U.N. in the field is illuminating, especially when set against post-genocide Rwanda. Khan as SRSG for UNAMIR 2 was everything his predecessor, Jacques-Roger Booh Booh, was not. This book in many ways serves as a political and diplomatic partner to Dallaire's work. Like Dallaire, Khan had never been inside the U.N. in the field and he shared

many of Dallaire's frustrations.

## SUGGESTIONS TO THE READER

As I close this essay, I will finish with some suggestions to the reader interested in the Rwandan genocide. First and foremost is that you read various viewpoints to synthesize and develop your own viewpoint. What I offered above relates my own reading to date; as a participant in these events and an author, I am still learning. Second, I would suggest to you (as does Prunier) that all writers on issues Rwandan, including me, do end up taking sides. Your measure of our writings is whether we present a case or simply offer emotions. That is often a difficult measure to take, as genocide is an extremely emotional topic. Neither General Dallaire nor I can distance ourselves from Rwanda. Third, I would say that the full story has yet to be told. Others are writing their experiences: David Rawson, U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda before, during, and after the genocide has a book underway, one that I hope to see soon. There will be others. Finally I would warn all against wishing away genocide as a phenomenon or trivializing its

<sup>10</sup> Shaharyar Khan, *The Shallow Graves of Rwanda* (New York: I.B. Tauris, Publishers, 2000).

horrors. Genocide is definitely not a "cheese sandwich."<sup>11</sup>

*Lieutenant Colonel Odom was the U.S. Defense Attaché in Kinshasa, Zaire from October 1993 to September 1994. He led the U.S. Embassy response to the Goma refugee crisis and served as the point man for Operation Support Hope. From September 1994 through March 1996, Colonel Odom was the acting U.S. Defense Attaché in Kigali, Rwanda. He is the author of Journey into Darkness: Genocide in Rwanda with a foreword by General (ret) Dennis J. Reimer (College Station, Texas: TAMU Press, 2005). See Military Review, January-February 2006, for a review of his book.*

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*I believe that Dallaire could have preempted the genocide with the forces he had in hand--if their national command authorities and U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) had supported him.*

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<sup>11</sup> Gourevitch, 170-171.

## WHY SMALL WARS THEORY STILL MATTERS:

### THE EXTENSION OF THE PRINCIPLES ON IRREGULAR WARFARE AND NON-TRADITIONAL MISSIONS OF THE *SMALL WARS MANUAL* TO THE CONTEMPORARY BATTLESPACE”

Major Keith F. Kopets, U.S. Marine Corps

#### PREFACE

The theory of the *Small Wars Manual* remains valid today for contemporary irregular warfare and non-traditional military missions.

This paper argues the importance of small wars theory today. It examines the first chapter of the *Small Wars Manual* from a 21st century perspective and extracts the immutable principles of small wars. Providing the context is American foreign policy and national security strategy. Sources for this study included works on the contemporary battlespace, recent operations, and doctrine for small wars. What are small wars? What is small wars theory? Why is small wars theory important? What are small wars today? What is the nature of contemporary small wars? What makes contemporary small wars different from the small wars covered in the *Small Wars Manual*? What are the implications? These are the questions under discussion.

The nature of small wars dictates that institutional change cannot keep pace with the threat. Small wars are wars over people. They are contests in achieving psychological ascendancy, not fire superiority. Changes in the world, such as globalization, economic interdependence, international financial markets, and dual-use technology, have enabled rogue transnational organizations to

challenge the United States on the operational level of war by asymmetrical means. For example, a criminal organization can link together separate tactical acts of terrorism in different locations to fulfill a larger strategy of advancing its interests. That same organization can also use the exposure offered by the media or Internet to derive strategically meaningful results from single tactical actions such as kidnapping or assassination.

Small wars represent the most prevalent form of conflict in the world today. Small wars are also the form of conflict the United States is most likely to face in the future. Small wars theory, therefore, matters more in the 21st century than it did in 1940.

## WHY SMALL WARS THEORY STILL MATTERS

### INTRODUCTION

The small wars theory contained in the Marine Corps *Small Wars Manual* remains valid for contemporary irregular warfare and non-traditional military missions. The inquiry guiding this paper follows the thesis: How do the principles of the *Small Wars Manual* extend to the contemporary battlespace?

There are five sections to this study. What is theory and why is it important? What

are small wars and what are the principles of the *Small Wars Manual*? This essay answers these questions here in the opening section. The discussion then moves to case studies of two contemporary small wars—Lebanon and Somalia—to determine how the principles of small wars apply today. The third section analyzes the changes in small wars. How do the small wars from which the *Small Wars Manual* derived its principles compare with contemporary small wars? Using the analytical framework of ends, ways, and means, the analysis covers the changes in small wars from then to now. Finally, the last two sections identify the immutable principles of small wars, discuss their implications, and offer some conclusions.

## THE USE OF MILITARY THEORY

What is military theory and why is it important? Theory is a set of statements, principles, or axioms that attempt to explain observed phenomena. A theory is also an expectation of what should happen. Theory is important because it is a comprehensive means of making the complex comprehensible. It is also a bridge to formal doctrine.<sup>1</sup> Experience and case studies are the observed phenomena; they provide the empirical data for theory, which provides the basis for study, understanding, and action. Sound theory outlasts doctrine. Theory, in sum, is a prism of thought aimed at the mental processes of analysis and judgment.

Theory is also a field of study, a collection of related subsets. Small wars theory as a field

of study includes, for example, the subset of foreign internal defense against insurgency, guerrilla war, and revolution. Other subsets include strategy, psychology, military government, and civil–military relations.

It is easier to just ask why we should study small wars than it is to engage in an abstract exploration of theory. There are two reasons we should study small wars. First, from an enemy standpoint, small wars are effective. For this reason and many others, small wars are the most probable form of conflict the United States will face in the future.<sup>2</sup> The second reason we should study small wars is more practical and relates to the challenges facing military commanders today. That is, theories, checklists, and categorizations do not defeat insurgencies or reconstruct governments. Theory alone does not tell the company commander, battalion commander, or individual Marine how to conduct negotiations with tribal sheikhs, clan leaders, or local elders. Military doctrine is insufficient for the tasks facing tactical commanders today, such as teaching civics or Robert’s Rules of Order to a local population that has lived for generations under a repressive autocracy. Tables of organization

<sup>1</sup>. *Joint Pub 1-02 Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, D.C.: 2001, as amended through 31 August 2005) defines doctrine as the “fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application.”

<sup>2</sup>. Col. T. X. Hammes, “Why Study Small Wars?” *Small Wars Journal*, April 2005. Also see, by the same author, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2004), especially chapters 14 (pp. 207-21) and 15 (pp. 224-45). One of Colonel Hammes’s chief arguments is a familiar one involving America’s obsession with finding technological solutions to human problems (e.g., war). Regarding future conflict, see, for example, Maj. Robert M. Cassidy, U.S. Army, “Why Great Powers Fight Small Wars Badly,” *Military Review* 82 (September–October 2000): 42; and Ian Beckett, “The Future of Insurgency,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 16 (March 2005): 22-36. Both Cassidy and Beckett say asymmetrical conflict is the most probable form of conflict the United States will face. Cassidy offers three reasons in support of his argument: The United States has a disproportionate advantage in technology and firepower; economic interdependence of the major powers prevents those nations from going to war with each other; and U.S. dominance in conventional battle in the Middle East in 1991 taught opponents not to fight America on America’s terms.

and equipment designed for warfighting do not lend themselves to non-traditional missions.

## SMALL WARS THEORY

What is small wars theory? The answer to this question requires some parameters and also builds on the previous discussion of theory. One must consider small wars theory as a *study of related subjects*. The appropriate questions, then, are: What are the subsets or subjects of small wars? What are the principles of each subject? In other words, for example, counterinsurgency is a subset of small wars. What are the principles of counterinsurgency?

Identifying all the subjects of small wars and extracting their principles is beyond the scope of this study. This paper limits its discussion to the principles contained in the opening chapter of the 1940 *Small Wars Manual*, and will make frequent reference to those principles in the text and notes.

The first chapter alone of the *Small Wars Manual* contains 28 subsets of small wars theory. The most important subjects include the definition of small wars, the distinguishing characteristics of small wars, the purpose for U.S. intervention in small wars and types of intervention, the strategy and psychology of small wars, and the classes of small wars.

What is a “small war?” The term itself is unquestionably vague and elastic. It is a term in which the adjective modifies the noun so energetically as to undermine the nature of the thing. “Small war” dates back to the 18th century as the literal translation of the Spanish word *guerilla*. Yet the usage of *small* in “small wars” has evolved in military vocabulary as an adjective for the asymmetrical, irregular, or

hybrid.<sup>3</sup> *Small* is used most often by, or pertaining to the intervening force. For the enemy or forces against the intervention, there is nothing small about the nature of their opposition. Their commitment is total, as evidenced by the willingness to drive an explosive-laden truck into the Marine Barracks in Beirut or smash passenger airplanes into the towers of the World Trade Center in New York.

What exactly is *small* in a small war? Is it the level of commitment in national resources? Is it the political will of the intervening force? What exactly is a *small war*? Admitting the vagueness of the term “small wars,” the authors of the 1940 manual offered a definition that still applies today:

Small wars are operations undertaken under executive authority, wherein military force is combined with diplomatic pressure in the internal or external affairs of another state whose government is unstable, inadequate, or unsatisfactory for the preservation of life and of such interests as are determined by the foreign policy of our nation.<sup>4</sup>

What differentiates small wars from conventional conflict? In conventional war, the commitment of military forces is usually a last resort and comes after the United States has exhausted diplomatic means of solving the problem. In small wars, however, the United States commits forces while continuing to seek diplomatic solutions. According to the *Small Wars Manual*, “small war situations are usually a

<sup>3</sup>. “Hybrid” a recent addition to the vocabulary of small wars. See: Lt. Gen. James N. Mattis and Lt. Col. Frank G. Hoffman, “Future Warfare: The Rise of Hybrid Wars” *United States Naval Institute Proceedings* 131 (November 2005): 18-19.

<sup>4</sup>. U.S. Marine Corps, *FMFRP 12-15 Small Wars Manual (SWM)*(Washington, D.C.: 1990), I-1-1.

phase of, or an operation taking place concurrently with, diplomatic effort.”<sup>5</sup> Diplomacy and military action, then, are components of the same objective in small wars, with those agencies of the U.S. government responsible for determining foreign policy and national security strategy overseeing operations.

Small wars are interventions. The *Small Wars Manual* offers two basic types of interventions—intervention in the *internal* affairs of another state or intervention in the *external* affairs of another state—and discusses a host of reasons why the United States would intervene. For example, the United States could intervene in the internal affairs of another state to support the central government against revolution. Or the United States could intervene in the external affairs of another state to fulfill a treaty obligation.<sup>6</sup>

Strategy derives from the political purpose for intervention. For instance, if the United States was intervening in the internal affairs of a state to quash insurgency, strategic planning required a study of the indigenous people, especially those opposing the intervention.

The campaign plan and strategy must be adapted to the character of the people encountered.... the military strategy of the campaign and the tactics employed by the commander in the field must be

adapted to the situation in order to accomplish the mission without delay.... The strategy of this type of warfare will be strongly influenced by the probable nature of the contemplated operations. In regular warfare the decision will be gained on known fronts and probably limited theaters of operations; but in small wars no defined battle front exists and the theater of the operations may be the whole length and breadth of the land.<sup>7</sup>

Small wars are asymmetrical contests of wills. They are wars over people. Tactics in small wars are a means of achieving psychological ascendancy, not fire superiority or control of terrain. Moreover, the presence of military forces in small wars is to facilitate a diplomatic solution. The influence of Sun Tzu is evident in the related passage of the *Small Wars Manual*: “A Force Commander who gains his objective in a small war without firing a shot has attained far greater success than one who resorted to the use of force.”

Classifying small wars is problematic. Small wars are episodic; no two are alike. This was a dilemma the *Small Wars Manual* recognized:

The legal and military features of each small war present distinctive characteristics which make the segregation of all them into fixed classifications an extremely difficult problem. There are so many combinations of conditions that a simple classification of small wars

<sup>5</sup>. *SWM*, I-1-7.

<sup>6</sup>. Section II, “Basis of the Strategy,” *SWM*, I-1-7:

Intervention in the internal affairs of a state may be undertaken to restore order, to sustain governmental authority, to obtain redress, or to enforce the fulfillment of obligations binding between the two states. Intervention in the external affairs of a state may be the result of a treaty which authorizes one state to aid another as a matter of political expediency, to avoid more serious consequences when the interests of other states are involved, or to gain certain advantages not obtainable otherwise. It may be simply an intervention to enforce certain opinions or to propagate certain doctrines, principles or standards.

<sup>7</sup>. *SWM*, I-1-8.



is possible only when one is limited to specific features in his study.<sup>8</sup>

This subject is a bridge to discussing the *Small Wars Manual* itself. Who were its authors? How did they approach the subject matter? What was their research methodology?

## THE SMALL WARS MANUAL<sup>9</sup>

The origin of the *Small Wars Manual* is a case study in the development of military doctrine. Its publication is an example of how the experience, study, and professional discourse of junior officers can shape an institution.<sup>10</sup> The *Small Wars Manual* did not start as a sanctioned project by the Marine Corps but instead grew out of the unofficial efforts of officers including Maj. Samuel M. Harrington and Maj. Harold H. Utlely.

As a student at the Field Officers Course in Quantico, Harrington drafted a study entitled the “The Strategy and Tactics of Small Wars,” which appeared in the *Marine Corps Gazette* and became the basis for more detailed writing on subject. Utlely had served in Cuba (1908), Haiti (1915–1917, 1919–1921), and Nicaragua (1928–1929). Upon his return, he began to

<sup>8</sup>. *SWM*, I-1-2.

<sup>9</sup>. On the writing of the 1940 *Small Wars Manual*, see: Jon T. Hoffman, “Small Wars” and “*Small Wars Manual*,” in *The War of 1898 and U.S. Interventions, 1898-1934: An Encyclopedia*, Benjamin R. Beede, ed. (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1994), 511-6; Ronald Schaffer, “The 1940 Small Wars Manual and the ‘Lessons of History,’” *Military Affairs* 36 (April 1972): 46-51; Kenneth J. Clifford, *Progress and Purpose: A Developmental History of the United States Marine Corps, 1900-1970* (Washington, D.C.: History and Museums Division, U.S. Marine Corps, 1973), 37; and Keith B. Bickel, *Mars Learning: The Marine Corps Development of Small Wars Doctrine, 1915-1940* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2001).

For detail on the interventions used by the authors of the *Small Wars Manual*, see Capt. Harry Allanson Ellsworth, *One Hundred Eighty Landings of the United States Marines, 1800-1934* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1974).

<sup>10</sup>. General William DePuy and the U.S. Army’s development of its doctrine for Airland Battle after Vietnam is an example of a parallel contemporary development. See: Paul Herbert, *Deciding What Has to be Done: General William E. DePuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100-5, Operations* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1988), 61-107.

research the history of minor conflict and correspond with other Marine officers who had served in similar campaigns. The *Marine Corps Gazette* published the first three chapters of his “Tactics and Techniques of Small Wars,” which brought Utlely to the attention of senior officers, and in turn resulted in the official sanction of a project to produce a comprehensive study of small wars.<sup>11</sup>

The efforts at a comprehensive text for small wars by Marine Corps Schools during the 1930s went through a number of iterations. The enduring result of these efforts is the 1940 *Small Wars Manual*, 428 pages of text presented in 15 chapters. The 1940 edition represents a revision of *Small Wars Operations* (1935).

Abstract theory needs some form of concrete expression. This is the same dilemma Clausewitz faced in drafting *On War* and a dilemma particularly acute in small wars theory because of the complexity and episodic nature of the subject matter. The *Small Wars Manual* of 1940 removed the appendices of *Small Wars Operations* (1935), which had listed more than 100 interventions from combating piracy off the coast of Florida at Amelia Island (1811) to the protection of American interests in Haiti (1914–1934). In trying to produce timeless principles out of episodic events while avoiding the overreliance of operational solutions to political problems—a criticism of the classic work on small wars by Sir Charles Callwell—the authors of the 1940 *Small Wars Manual* eliminated the empirical data to support their arguments. This also resulted in a missed

<sup>11</sup>. Maj. Samuel M. Harrington, “The Strategy and Tactics of Small Wars,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 6 (December 1921): 478, 483-4, 486-8; Harold H. Utlely, “An Introduction to the Tactics and Techniques of Small Wars,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, part 1, 16 (May 1931), 50-53; part 2, 18 (Aug 1933), 44-48; part 3, 18 (Nov 1922), 43-46.

opportunity to chart a course for further study.<sup>12</sup>

## SMALL WARS TODAY<sup>13</sup>

### LEBANON: 1982–1984<sup>14</sup>

The current Global War on Terrorism has part of its roots in Lebanon in the early 1980s. President Reagan sent Marines to Beirut in August 1982 as part of a multinational humanitarian and peacekeeping mission. The deployment was to last no more than 30 days. Instead, the result was an 18-month commitment during which terrorists bombed the American embassy, killing 63 people, and then bombed the Marine Barracks six months later, killing 241 Americans.<sup>15</sup>

Members of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) used Lebanon as base from which to attack northern settlements of Israel. Lebanon itself was mid-way through a 15-year civil war and lacked a stable government. Israel invaded Lebanon in June 1982 and surrounded the 9,000 PLO soldiers under Yasir Arafat in

West Beirut.<sup>16</sup> Caught between the Israeli army and the PLO were the 500,000 citizens of West Beirut. Upon the recommendations of Special Envoy Philip Habib, President Reagan committed the 32d Marine Amphibious Unit to a multinational intervention force including French and Italian soldiers.

The mission was to evacuate the PLO. The presence of the PLO in Lebanon and their attacks across the southern border were the reason for the invasion by Israel. Evacuating the PLO was to result in the pullback of the Israeli Defense Force. From the start, senior officers were wary of the operation. The commitment of American forces to a coalition under the banner of the United Nations came against the recommendations of the Pentagon. For example, the Commandant of the Marine Corps expressed his reservations in a memorandum to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs:

I am concerned about the military aspects of the ongoing evacuation planning for Lebanon.... It appears the political considerations may be leading to the neglect of sound military planning.... The mission of the [Multinational Force] is vague and ill-defined. It does not prescribe the extent and limits of participation and it is not clear whether the force is an evacuation or a peacekeeping forces. With no unity of command, there is no single military or political authority.... the capability for making timely, important decisions

<sup>12</sup>. Col. Charles E. Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice*, 3d ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996). This is a reprint of the 1906 edition, with an introduction from Dr. Douglas Porch, Center of Contemporary Conflict, Naval Postgraduate School.

<sup>13</sup>. The selection of Lebanon and Somalia as case studies is representative of contemporary small wars but not comprehensive. The Small Wars Center of Excellence, for example, lists 17 small wars in North America alone since 1980. See: [http://www.smallwars.quantico.usmc.mil/sw\\_past.asp](http://www.smallwars.quantico.usmc.mil/sw_past.asp).

<sup>14</sup>. Sources on Lebanon include: Benis M. Frank, *U.S. Marines in Lebanon, 1982-1984* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1987); David K. Hall, "Lebanon Revisited," in *Case Studies in Policy Making and Implementation, vol. II: U.S. Contingency Operations*, eds. Richard J. Norton and James F. Miskel (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1996), 68-97; "United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)," in *The Blue Helmets: A Review of United Nations Peace-Keeping*, 3d ed, U.S. Department of Public Information (New York: United Nations, 1996), 83-112; Mona Ghali, "United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon: 1978-Present," in *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping: Case Studies and Comparative Analysis*, ed. William J. Durch (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 181-205. I also consulted the collection of official correspondence and action reports in the Lebanon Collection, Marine Corps University Archives, Gray Research Center, Quantico, Va.

<sup>15</sup>. The embassy bombing took place on 18 April 1983. The bombing of the Marine Barracks took place on 23 October 1983.

<sup>16</sup>. For a short background to the rise of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Hizbullah, and the events leading up to Israel's invasion of southern Lebanon, see: James S. Corum and Wray R. Johnson, *Airpower in Small Wars: Fighting Insurgents and Terrorists* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2003), 398-417.

is questionable. The potential for confusion is considerable.<sup>17</sup>

After the successful evacuation of more than 75,000 members of the PLO, and after the assassination of newly elected President of Lebanon Bashir Gemayel on 14 September 1982, U.S. forces returned to Beirut at the invitation of Amin Gemayel. The mission this time was to establish “presence” and support the central government by training the Lebanese Armed Forces.

Lebanon shows how the international setting today affects small wars. Neighboring Arab states blamed the United States for failing to prevent the invasion by Israel, while the media depicted Lebanese civilian casualties from the Israeli siege of Beirut. These were triggers for the intervention. There was no joint doctrine or formal training for the missions undertaken, nor were there clear lines of command between Washington and the commanders on the ground. The net effect was American forces under fire, under peacetime rules of engagement, with nebulous objectives, and conflicting lines of diplomatic and military authority back to Washington.

Lebanon was an American intervention in the internal affairs of another state undertaken under executive authority. The U.S. government combined military force with diplomatic pressure in the affairs of another state whose government was unstable and inadequate. In short, Lebanon is a contemporary operation that validates the principles of the *Small Wars Manual*.

<sup>17</sup> Memo, CMC to CJCS of 9 Aug 1982, subj: Lebanon Planning, in Lebanon Collection.

## SOMALIA: 1992–1994<sup>18</sup>

There are similarities and differences between Lebanon and Somalia. Unlike the Lebanese, the Somalis shared a single background, a single language, and a single religion (Sunni Islam). Yet the social divisions in Somalia—family, sub clan, and family—were as great as those between the Moslems and Christians in Lebanon, if not greater. More than a dozen gangs and militias in Somalia used food and weapons to compete for power. If Lebanon was civil war, Somalia was the absence of law altogether.

Snipers, terrorists, and mob violence were part of the operating environments in Lebanon and Somalia, as were refugees and displaced persons. The following are excerpts from two weeks in Somalia out of the operations log of Task Force Mogadishu:

- Local (CARE) [NGO relief] worker accidentally killed at port.
- TF Mogadishu suppressed sniper fire vic hill 104 unknown Somali casualties.
- Team Secure fires shots at Somali during robbery of newsmen near airport, unknown Somali casualties.

<sup>18</sup> Sources on Somalia include: Robert B. Oakley, “The Urban Area During Support Missions Case Study: Mogadishu—The Strategic Level,” in *Capital Preservation: Preparing for Urban Operations in the Twenty-First Century*, Proceedings of the RAND-Arroyo-TRADOC-MCWL-OSD Urban Operations Conference, March 22-23, 2000, ed. Russ Glenn (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001), 309-54; Anthony C. Zinni, “It’s Not Nice and Neat,” *Proceedings* 121 (August 1995): 26-30; Zinni, “Non-traditional Missions: Their Nature, and the Need for Cultural Awareness and Flexible Thinking,” in *Capital “W” War: A Case for Strategic Principles of War (Because Wars Are Conflicts of Societies, Not Tactical Exercises Writ Large)*, Perspectives on Warfighting, No. 6, by Joe Strange (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps University, 1998), 247-83; Tom Clancy, with Gen. Tony Zinni and Tony Koltz, *Battle Ready* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 2004), 229-302; “United Nations Operation in Somalia I and II (UNOSOM I and II),” in *Blue Helmets*, 287-318; James Dobbins, et al., *America’s Role in Nation Building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003), 55-70; and Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 322-24. I also consulted the collection of official correspondence and action reports in the Somalia Collection, Marine Corps University Archives, Gray Research Center, Quantico, Va.

- C 1/7 ambushed returning from weapons seizure. Estimated 3 Somali casualties.
- 4yr old child killed in Bale Dogle by illum round.<sup>19</sup>

Cultural issues, such as recognition of tribal factions and affronts to local society, were dominant features of the terrain in Lebanon and Somalia. The bombings in Beirut occurred, in part, because Lebanese Moslems viewed American support of the Christian-dominated government as tacit support of Maronite Christians in the ongoing civil war. A warning of the *Small Wars Manual* had gone overlooked:

The people of many countries take their religion as seriously as their politics. Consequently members of the United States should avoid any attitude that tends to indicate criticism or lack of respect for the religious beliefs and practices observed by the native inhabitants.<sup>20</sup>

Warring clans in Somalia vied for public recognition by the United States. Centers of gravity in Lebanon and Somalia were not military forces, but people—both the locals in the host nation and the American people in the United States, whose support influenced the actions of the U.S. government.

Lebanon and Somalia renew the debate over intervention and strategy in small wars. The basic intervention model of the *Small Wars Manual* remains valid but deserves elaboration. Contemporary American military intervention includes preventing famine, genocide, or ethnic

conflict; interposing force between two factions after ceasefire or truce; interrupting or stopping the flow of supplies, material, or personnel; exacting revenge or imposing punishment; and establishing or supporting the sovereignty of a central government.<sup>21</sup>

Strategy is a product of the authority and purpose for intervention, as well as a bridge to the objectives of the intervening force. Strategy is the coordinated and integrated use of various means to achieve objectives. As the *Small Wars Manual* pointed out, military means alone can be insufficient:

The application of purely military measures may not, by itself restore peace and orderly government because the fundamental causes of the condition of unrest may be economic, political, or social.<sup>22</sup>

Objectives are supposed to flow from strategy, with the environment driving the nature of the operations. This logic from the *Small Wars Manual* is still true in the abstract. But it does not do justice to the true complexity for the operational and tactical commander on the ground. Political objectives in Somalia, as in Lebanon, did not translate well into military tasks. Marine Gen. Anthony C. Zinni, drawing on his experiences in Somalia, northern Iraq, and the former Soviet Union, discussed the challenge:

We have a military mind-set that begins by taking a mission,

<sup>19</sup>. TF Mogadishu memo dtd 14 Jan 93, subj: Analysis of Possible Reasons for Attacks upon U.S. Marines Operating in Mogadishu, item 33, Somalia Collection. The period covered is 28 December 1992 to 12 January 1993.

<sup>20</sup>. *SWM*, I-1-31.

<sup>21</sup>. This is an abbreviated and arbitrary list. For full-length treatment, see: Richard N. Haass, *Intervention: The Use of American Military Force in the Post-Cold War World* (Washington, D.C.: A Carnegie Endowment Book, 1994). Chapter three, “The Vocabulary of Intervention,” contains Haass’s model for intervention today. A former member of the National Security Council staff during the 1990s, Haass posits 11 purposes: deterrence, preventive attacks, compellence, punitive attacks, peacekeeping, warfighting, peacemaking, nation-building, interdiction, humanitarian assistance, and rescue.

<sup>22</sup>. *SWM* I-1-9.

analyzing it, drawing from it specified or implied tasks, and then going about our military requirements to meet those tasks. Never ever do you get a mission that you can deal with in this manner. The missions are vague; they're fuzzy; whatever the conditions are that got you in there quickly either change on the ground or weren't relevant or applicable to begin with. You're ability to distill military tasks from these political objectives just isn't there.<sup>23</sup>

Lebanon and Somalia show that political purposes for intervention did not translate into attainable military objectives. Lebanon started as an evacuation, and then the objectives expanded to presence and peacekeeping. The U.S. government changed the mission without first understanding what these objectives truly meant in light of the situation on the ground. Military forces in Somalia were there initially to protect the delivery of food and humanitarian aid. The mission changed to nation building. Lebanon and Somalia also demonstrate the distinctive characteristics of small wars. Lebanon was an ideological war; Somalia was an ethnic war.

Small wars, as General Zinni's comments show, are about initiative, creativity, and adaptation to the asymmetrical in the face of complexity and uncertainty. The *Small Wars Manual* believed operations would only grow more challenging and complex:

If Marines have become accustomed to easy victories over irregulars in

<sup>23</sup> Zinni, "Non-Traditional Military Missions," 252. General Zinni's description of military planning follows current doctrine in Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 5-1, *Marine Corps Planning Process* (Washington, D.C.: HQMC, 2000).

the past, they must now prepare themselves for the increased effort which will be necessary to insure victory in the future. The future opponent may be as well armed as they are; he will be able to concentrate a numerical superiority against isolated detachments at the time and place he chooses; as in the past he will have a thorough knowledge of the trails, the country, and the inhabitants; and he will have the inherent ability to withstand all the natural obstacles, such as climate and disease.... All these natural advantages, combining primitive cunning and modern armament, will weigh heavily in the balance against the advantage of the Marine forces in organization, equipment, intelligence, and discipline, if a careless audacity is permitted to warp good judgment.<sup>24</sup>

Lebanon and Somalia, in summary, demonstrate the dynamics and complexity of contemporary small wars.

## 1940 SMALL WARS VS. CONTEMPORARY SMALL WARS<sup>25</sup>

This section compares U.S. objectives, concepts, and resources for the small wars of 1940 with American ends, ways, and means for contemporary small wars.

<sup>24</sup> *SWM*, I-1-6.

<sup>25</sup> I owe a debt of thanks to my mentor on this project, Col. John L. Mayer, USMC, for the idea of using this framework for comparing the content of the *Small Wars Manual* with contemporary small wars. I also relied on the discussion of the ends-ways-means paradigm by Dr. David Jablonsky (Colonel, U.S. Army, Retired), "Why is Strategy Difficult," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Policy and Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr. (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, July 2004), 69-78.

## ENDS: THE OBJECTIVES

The difference in U.S. objectives for small wars is a distillation of the differences in foreign policy and national security strategy. The pretext for the interventions of the *Small Wars Manual* was the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 and the Roosevelt Corollary of 1904. These executive orders or proclamations were shorthand for the U.S. version of colonialism in the Western Hemisphere. American foreign policy sought to expand American commercial interests in Latin America and keep out European hegemony and Axis subversion.

Global politics has changed, with the landscape of the contemporary battle space changing accordingly. The intervention in Lebanon took place during the Cold War. Affecting U.S. operations on the ground were the geopolitics of Soviet-backed Syria opposing American-armed Israel in the midst of a Lebanese Christian-Moslem civil war.

Washington committed forces in Beirut for stability and support.<sup>26</sup> Evacuating the PLO from Lebanon would remove right authority for the Israeli invasion and siege of Beirut. Training and equipping the Lebanese Armed Forces at the request of President Amin Gemayel would help the government reestablish sovereign control. These were the intended consequences. The unintended consequence of assisting the government was the appearance of siding with the Lebanese Christians. The unintended consequence of maintaining presence after evacuating the PLO was becoming a target of Hizbullah.

<sup>26</sup> My use of the terms “stability” and “support” to characterize operations in Lebanon is from current U.S. Army service doctrine in *Field Manual 3-07, Stability Operations and Support Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, U.S. Department of the Army, 20 February 2003).

Intervention in Somalia occurred in the aftermath of the Cold War, with the primacy of the United States assured and the implications of the break up of the Soviet bloc unclear. What role the conventional forces of the U.S. military would play was also unclear. Part of foreign policy is the goals the United States seeks to attain abroad. In Somalia, the United States sought to increase its prestige in the eyes of the international community by committing U.S. forces to peacekeeping and humanitarian operations with the United Nations.<sup>27</sup>

Humanitarian relief, however, expanded to the unrealistic objective of rebuilding the economic and political structure of Somalia. As in Lebanon, the end of the American intervention in Somalia bore little resemblance to the original justification for the commitment of forces. More than a decade later, Somalia remains a nation without an effective central government.

The 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act created the requirement for the President to produce annual statements of national security strategy to assist Congress in matching the budget of an administration to its stated strategy.<sup>28</sup> U.S. involvement in small

<sup>27</sup> On foreign policy and national security strategy in the early 1990s, see, for example: Donald E. Nuechterlein, *America Recommitted: A Superpower Assesses Its Role in a Turbulent World*, 2d ed. (Lexington, KY, University of Kentucky Press, 2001), 233-4; Steven W. Hook and John W. Spanier, *American Foreign Policy Since World War II*, 16th ed. (Washington: CQ Press, 2004), 284-7; William H. Lewis, “Peacekeeping: The Deepening Debate,” in *American Defense Policy*, 7th ed, eds. Peter, L. Hays, et al. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 401-6.

<sup>28</sup> The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (PL 99-433, 1 October 1986) is contained in 10 U.S.C. 161 et seq. Section 603 contains the reporting requirements of the President on national security strategy. President George H. W. Bush produced one NSS (1991). From 1995-2000, President Clinton produced six NSSs. President George W. Bush has produced one (2002). For the limitations of the NSS and a critical analysis, see Robert H. Dorff, “The Current U.S. National Security Strategy and Policy: A Brief Appraisal.” In *The Search for Security: A U.S. Grand Strategy for the*

wars now occurs within the context defined in the grand strategy documents produced by the executive branch, which include the *National Security Strategy* and the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*.<sup>29</sup>

## WAYS: THE CONCEPTS

The difference in the concept of small wars is the cumulative effect of the differences in organization, doctrine, legislation, treaty alliances, cooperative security, and membership in the United Nations. Concepts, in short, refer to the rules governing the employment of U.S. forces in small wars.

The machinery of the U.S. government today for the deployment of forces and command and control of operations is complicated. There were eight layers in the chain of command between the President and the Marine battalion commander on the ground in Lebanon. This complex arrangement led to the 1986 Goldwater–Nichols legislation to reform the Department of Defense.<sup>30</sup> This changed command and control in small wars at the operational level. Unified combatant commands with subordinate joint task force headquarters now oversee military operations during intervention. By comparison, the *Small Wars Manual* bases its description of command

relationships on the Navy Regulations of 1920: “The operations of the Force are directed by the Office of the Naval Operations direct or through the local naval Commander if he is senior to the Force Commander.”<sup>31</sup>

Somalia triggered the release of Joint Publication 3–07, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War* (JP 3–07, MOOTW).<sup>32</sup> This was a title as problematic as “small wars.” For one, “other than war” implies missions outside the core competencies of a warfighting organization. Second, while “small wars” at least implies the potential for armed combat, MOOTW does not. Moreover, examination of the 16 types of MOOTW operations in chapter III of JP 3–07 reveals a striking similarity to the 18 missions in the appendix of *Small Wars Operations* (1935), with the difference in language and scope reflecting the change in foreign policy and the place of the United States in world.<sup>33</sup>

Chapter III of *JP 3–07 MOOTW* (June 1995) lists 15 types of operations: arms control,

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*Twenty-First Century*, ed. Max G. Manwaring, et al. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 21–31.

Also see: John Lewis Gaddis, “A Grand Strategy of Transformation,” in *American Defense Policy*, 8th ed., ed. Paul J. Bolt, Damon V. Coletta, and Collins G. Shackelford, Jr. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 35–39; and Stephen D. Biddle, *American Grand Strategy After 9/11: An Assessment* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, April 2005). Biddle argues that the scope, end state, and enemy in the war on terror is unclear, and that the U.S. government needs to resolve these ambiguities in grand strategy.

<sup>29</sup>. The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (September 2002); *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (February 2003); *National Strategy for Homeland Security* (July 2002); and *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq* (November 2005).

<sup>30</sup>. On the influence of Beirut on Goldwater–Nichols, see James R. Locher III, *Victory on the Potomac: The Goldwater–Nichols Act Unifies the Pentagon* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 142–63.

<sup>31</sup>. See *SWM I-1-3*, “Some legal aspects of small wars,” and I-1-4, “Functions of headquarters Marine Corps.”

<sup>32</sup>. For a discussion of the paradigm shift in small wars doctrine to MOOTW triggered by Somalia, see: Wray R. Johnson, *Vietnam and American Doctrine for Small Wars* (Bangkok, Thailand: White Lotus Co., Ltd., 2001), 141–62.

<sup>33</sup>. Current U.S. joint doctrine for small wars includes: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Pub (JP) 3–03 Doctrine for Joint Interdiction Operations* (Washington, D.C.: 10 April 1997); *JP 3–07 Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War* (MOOTW) (Washington, D.C.: 16 June 1995); *JP 3–07.1 Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense (FID)* (Washington, D.C.: 26 June 1996); *JP 3–07.3 Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Peace Operations* (Washington, D.C.: 12 February 1999).

The appropriate U.S. Army service doctrine for small wars is U.S. Department of the Army, *FM 3–07, Stability Operations and Support Operations* (February 2003), and *FM(I) 3–07.22, Counterinsurgency Operations* (October 2004).

The Marine Corps has no separate service doctrine for MOOTW, but covers the subject in chapter 10 of *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1–0 Operations*. Washington, D.C.: 2001. *MCDP 1–0* does quote from the *Small Wars Manual*, but is primarily an endorsement of the same 16 types of MOOTW operations contained in *JP-07*. Moreover, the Marine Corps Warfighting Publication for counterinsurgency, *MCWP 3–33.5, Counterinsurgency Operations*, remains, essentially, a reprint of the original July 1973 manual by the same name. *The Small Wars Manual* remains in print, and the Marine Corps considers it a reference publication.

combating terrorism, DOD support to counterdrug operations, enforcement of sanctions/maritime intercept operations, enforcing exclusion zones, ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight, humanitarian assistance, military support to civil authorities, nation assistance/support to counterinsurgency, noncombatant evacuation operations, peace operations, protection of shipping, recovery operations, show of force operations, strikes and raids. *Small Wars Operations* (1935) offered the following categories of small wars missions:

- Display of naval force to secure protection of American citizens.
- Use of Navy to protect American interests.
- Ultimatum demanding satisfaction delivered before landing made.
- American Forces landed in cooperation with other powers for the protection of foreigners.
- Simple protection of American citizens located in disturbed areas.
- Reestablishment of American legation, collection of indemnities and protection of minister.
- Protection of custom-house at the instance of regular local officials.
- Invasion of foreign territory for protection of American citizens and American territory.
- Operations of American forces landed on foreign soil for the protection of American Interests:
  - Forces merely land and apparently undertake no hostile measures.
  - Forces conducted belligerent operations.
  - Establishment of presumed regular government.
  - Suppression of local riots.
- To enforce demands for amends for certain affronts and indignities committed against the United States.
- Securing an indemnity.
- Destruction of pirates infesting certain areas, whether nationals of the disturbed area or not.
- Punishment for murder of American citizens.
 

Punishment for insults or injuries to American citizens or American officers, such injuries not resulting in death.

  - Landing of American forces in times of foreign revolutions:
    - Without the invitation of either faction.
    - At the insistence of the regular local officials.
    - Interference between two fighting factions.
  - Landing of American forces in time of war between two foreign nations.

Somalia also led to executive orders on multilateral peace operations and interagency coordination.<sup>34</sup> The directive on multilateral operations established criteria for committing forces in support of the United Nations. Public opinion would be one of the primary considerations in deciding to commit forces:

To sustain U.S. support for UN peace operations, Congress and the American people must understand and accept the potential value of such operations as tools of U.S. interests. Congress and the American people must also be genuine participants in the processes that support U.S.

<sup>34</sup>. Those directives were Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25 “Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations” (May 1994); and PDD 56, “Managing Complex Contingency Operations” (May 1997).



decision-making on new and on-going peace operations. Traditionally, the Executive branch has not solicited the involvement of Congress or the American people on matters related to UN peacekeeping. This lack of communication is not desirable in an era when peace operations have become more numerous, complex, and expensive. The Clinton Administration is committed to working with Congress to improve and regularize communication and consultation on these important issues.

The post conflict phase of ongoing operations in Afghanistan and Iraq has added more vocabulary to the lexicon of small wars. In November 2005, the Department of Defense published DoD Directive 3000.05, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*. This resolved ambiguity by making stability operations a core competency of the U.S. military.<sup>35</sup>

Yet this directive all but promises a repeat of the frustrations General Zinni and others felt in Somalia. The short term objectives of stability operations in DoD Directive 3000.05 include providing security for the population, restoring essential services, and providing humanitarian relief. The long term objectives entail helping the host nation develop the capacity for securing essential services, a viable market economy, rule of law, democratic institutions, and a robust civil society. The specific tasks these objectives require include:

- Help rebuild indigenous institutions including various types of security forces, correctional facilities, and judicial systems necessary to secure and stabilize the environment.
- Help revive or build the private sector, including encouraging citizen-driven, bottom-up economic activity and constructing necessary infrastructure.
- Aid in the development of representative governmental institutions.

The absence of a declaration of war was a distinguishing feature of 1940 small wars. Another point of distinction was the role of the President. According to the *Small Wars Manual*, “The very inception of small wars, as a rule, is an official act of the Chief Executive who personally gives instructions without action of Congress.”<sup>36</sup> Such is no longer the case. Although authority for U.S. interventions has remained in the executive branch, Congress reasserted itself in foreign affairs after Vietnam by passing the War Powers Resolution in 1973.<sup>37</sup>

This legislation was supposed to be a mechanism in the spirit of the Constitution, through which Congress and the President would confer before the decision to commit troops. Occurring after a period in which Presidents Truman and Johnson committed the United States to conflict in Asia without a declaration of war from Congress, the War Powers Resolution was also an attempt to limit presidential warmaking power. Under debate was the constitutional authority of the Congress under article I, section 8—to provide for the

<sup>36</sup> See *SWM*, I-1-3 (Legal Aspects) and I-1-4 (Functions of Headquarters Marine Corps).

<sup>37</sup> The War Powers Resolution (PL 93-148, 7 November 1973) is contained in 50 U.S.C. §§ 1541-1548. The best study of Presidential warmaking power is Louis Fisher, *Presidential War Power*, 2d ed. (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004). Fisher discusses the War Powers Resolution in pp. 144-53.

<sup>35</sup> DoD Directive 3000.05, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*, 28 November 2005.

common defense—against the authority of the President as commander in chief under article II, section 2. Congress passed the War Powers Resolution over presidential veto. Section 3 contained the intent of the legislators:

The President in every possible instance shall consult with Congress before introducing United States Armed Forces into hostilities or into situation where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances, and after every such introduction shall consult regularly with the Congress until United States Armed Forces are no longer engaged in hostilities or have been removed from such situations.

Contrary to its intended purpose, the War Powers Resolution ceded statutory authority to the President to go to war for 30 days without Congressional consent.

A trend since the War Powers Resolution and the end of the Cold War has been consultation with the United Nations and a move towards multilateral support.<sup>38</sup> The reason for this is twofold. First, multilateral support is a way of furthering the legitimacy of American foreign policy in the eyes of the international community. Second, multilateral operations are a way of sharing the burden for resources.

<sup>38</sup> For a discussion of the United Nations Participation Act (PL 79-264, 20 December 1945), see Fisher, *Presidential War Power*, 81-96. On the added complexity of multinational interventions, see: Andrew J. Goodpaster, *When Diplomacy is Not Enough: Managing Multinational Military Interventions* (New York: Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, July 1996).

## MEANS: THE RESOURCES

The difference in resources is the difference in the elements of U.S. national power, technology, and the international system of globalization. This part uses the principles of small wars theory to trace the changes in resources.

Small wars are protracted struggles over people. This means public opinion and support are critical resources. Whereas the President could act unilaterally in 1940 small wars by ordering a landing, he cannot do so today without the support of Congress or the American people. The effect of media coverage of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam is an example of the effect of public opinion on the exercise of presidential power. Public opinion influenced the withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Lebanon and Somalia. After Somalia, public wariness of operations with the United Nations affected U.S. actions (or inactions) towards Rwanda in 1994. Media depictions of the abduction and execution of four private American contractors in Fallujah, Iraq, March 2004, moved officials in Washington to press for a conventional attack on the city against the advice the military commanders on the ground, who viewed such an attack as counterproductive.<sup>39</sup> Public opinion is also affecting U.S. actions towards the current genocide in the western Sudanese region of Darfur in Africa.

Small wars are wars over the local populace. People are still the chief resource in

<sup>39</sup> On the effects of the media on Tet, see, for example: Peter Braestrup, *Big Story: How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet 1968 in Vietnam and Washington* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1977); and Don Oberdorfer, *Tet: The Story of a Battle and its Historic Aftermath* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1971). For an account of the incident involving the contractors at Fallujah, Iraq, and the after effects, see: Bing West, *No True Glory: A Frontline Account of the Battle for Fallujah* (New York: Bantam, 2005).

small wars. Peacekeeping, counterinsurgency, reconstruction, and establishing effective governance center on people as objectives, not battle with uniformed armed forces. Terrorism, ambushes, attacks on local citizens, and the improvised use of weaponry in small wars are not new.<sup>40</sup> But given the unmatched conventional military resources of the United States today, these tactics have broadened enough in scope to become a threat to national security.<sup>41</sup>

Military action does not cure political, social, or economic problems. In other words, small wars require political, social, and economic resources. This is an enduring principle. The amount and availability of these resources, however, is much greater today.

The environmental and humanitarian disaster in Somalia attracted the resources of international and nongovernmental relief organizations. By March 1993, there were more than 40 such groups in Somalia. This does not include the other agencies of the U.S. government, as well as private military companies or contractors. Civilian professionals and non-military agencies, in short, are most capable of performing many of the tasks in small wars. Military forces today require a separate command and control apparatus to make use of their resources.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup>. *SWM*, I-1-8: “Frequently irregulars kill and rob peaceful citizens in order to obtain supplies which are then secreted in remote strongholds.”

<sup>41</sup>. For example, see the current U.S. grand strategy documents previously cited in note 29.

<sup>42</sup>. Task Force Mogadishu, a provisional regimental-sized organization of about 1,800 Marines and 1,800 Coalition soldiers, used Civil Military Operations Teams (CMOT) to assist neighborhood leaders, police representatives, religious groups, and other locals in Mogadishu. See: Dep, I MEF(Fwd) AAR for Task Force Mogadishu, 31 Jan 93, and Operations Other Than War presentation by Brig. Gen. Bedard at Commander’s Conference, 6 Mar 95. Both in Somalia Collection. For in-depth treatment of interagency coordination in small wars, see Denise Marsh, “Relationship with the Interagency,” master’s thesis, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Quantico, Va., 2006.

Opponents in small wars have access to the same technology as the United States. This was not true in 1940 small wars but it is true today. The change is due to globalization, the transnational rapid integration of information, technology, and capital. Globalization is also the trade, exchange, or interdependence of goods, information, and ideas, and thus the enabler for opponents to acquire economic, informational, and technology resources.<sup>43</sup>

## SUMMARY

The publication of the *Small Wars Manual* in 1940 was due in part to the *absence* of theory, doctrine, or formal written concepts of the subject. Since then, analysis shows that American objectives, concepts, and resources for small wars have endured, adapted, or changed completely.

## IMMUTABLE PRINCIPLES OF SMALL WARS

Immutable principles are the connecting tissue between 1940 small wars and contemporary small wars. Based on examination of the 1940 principles contained in the *Small Wars Manual* and the comparative analysis of the previous section, this study has identified the following immutable principles:

- Small wars are an asymmetrical contest of opposing wills.
- Small wars are interventions involving U.S. military forces.
- The foreign policy and national security strategy of the executive branch provides the pretext for intervention.

<sup>43</sup>. Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization*, updated and expanded edition (New York: Anchor Books, 2000).

- The intervention often occurs after the root cause has developed—often over a period of a number of years.
- The intervention occurs in regions where the host nation lacks effective governance or the resources to solve the problem.
- There is no archetype small war. Small wars are complex, unique, and episodic.<sup>44</sup>
- Small wars are the most prevalent form of conflict in the world, and are the type the United States is most likely to face in the future.<sup>45</sup>
- Small wars are real wars. They combine the measured application of force, or threat of force, or simply the presence of force with diplomacy.
- For the enemy forces opposing the intervention—for the terrorists, insurgents, and revolutionaries—small wars are *total war*.
- Small wars are wars over people. They are contests in achieving psychological ascendancy, not fire superiority.<sup>46</sup>
- Small wars follow the law of unintended consequences: Military tasks must align with political objectives.
- Centers of gravity, vulnerabilities, resources, missions, objectives (political and military), measures of effectiveness, and lines of operations in small wars are completely different from those in conventional conflict.
- The opposing forces in Iraq, for example, have no army or state; they do not wear uniforms and use fear and terrorism as weapons.<sup>47</sup> Centers of gravity are the people. “People” or maintaining the Clausewitzian trinity includes the United States. Without the support of the American people, the United States cannot maintain a protracted military presence abroad.
- Diplomatic, economic, informational, finance, and law enforcement resources are more important than conventional military functions such as fires and maneuver.
- Resettling refugees, distributing food, constructing refugee camps, appointing judges, establishing judiciary committees and prison systems, providing medical assistance, managing newspapers, and running radio stations are examples of tasks Marines have performed in small wars.
- Planning is continuous in small wars, as are reassessments and changes in strategy.
- Ongoing operations in Iraq have shown the enemy can change tactics in a week.
- Small wars require initiative, innovation, creativity, and flexibility. As such, they continue to present the greatest challenges to leadership.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> . “There are so many combinations of conditions that a simple classification of small wars is possible only when one is limited to specific features in his study.” *SWM* I-1-2.

<sup>45</sup> . See note 2 above and *SWM* I-1-1, I-1-3. Small wars represent, the authors wrote,

... the normal and frequent operations of the Marine Corps.... in spite of the varying trend of the foreign policy of succeeding administrations, this government has interposed or intervened in the affairs of other states with remarkable regularity, and it may be anticipated that the same general procedure will be followed in the future.

<sup>46</sup> . The study of psychology in small wars warrants separate treatment. See Maj. Nicholas Davis, “Small War Psychology: The Handrail of the Three-Block War,” master’s thesis, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Quantico, Va., 2006.

<sup>47</sup> . This was a tactic the authors of the *Small Wars Manual* also observed in their section on national war, *SWM* I-1-9: “In warfare of this kind, members of native forces will suddenly become innocent peasant workers when it suits their fancy and convenience.”

<sup>48</sup> . *SWM* I-1-6:

Small wars demand the highest type of leadership directed by intelligence, resourcefulness, and ingenuity. Small wars are conceived in uncertainty, are conducted often with precarious responsibility and doubtful authority, and under indeterminate orders lacking specific instructions.

The Marine Corps “Three Block War” concept of the late 1990s used three contiguous city blocks as a geographic construct. Within those three city blocks, Marine Commandant Charles C. Krulak predicted, Marines would encounter a dynamic force continuum from

- The intervening force in small wars must maintain momentum. Indecisiveness and loss of initiative signal weakness to the enemy.
- Small wars require unity of effort and constant coordination. Personalities and local relations among military commanders, diplomats, and representatives from the host region are more important than processes.

## IMPLICATIONS

### NATURE OF SMALL WARS

The nature of small wars is that institutional change cannot keep pace with enemy adaptation. Changes in the world have enabled rogue transnational organizations to challenge the United States on the operational level of war by asymmetrical means. For example, a criminal organization can link together separate tactical acts of terrorism in different locations to fulfill a larger strategy of advancing its interests. That same organization can also use the exposure offered by the media or Internet to derive strategically meaningful results from single tactical actions such as kidnapping or assassination. The implication is that small wars now have the potential of threatening the survival of the United States.

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peacekeeping to combat and a range of attendant operations from civil law and order to running the local radio station. Just as the *Small Wars Manual* did, the Three Block War concept emphasized the importance of small unit leadership. Recent studies and reports on operations in Iraq have validated the importance of small unit leadership.

See: Gen. Charles C. Krulak, "The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War," *Marines*, January 1999. On small unit leadership in Iraq, see: Sgt. Earl J. Catagnus, et al., "Infantry Squad Tactics," *Marine Corps Gazette* 89 (September 2005): 80-89; *Report on Non-Commissioned Officers Lessons Learned Conference, 9-10 August 2005* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned); James E Szepesy, "The Strategic Corporal and the Emerging Battlefield: The Nexus Between the USMC's Three Block War Concept and Network Centric Warfare," M.A. thesis, The Fletcher School, Tufts University, March 2005.

## AMERICAN COMMITMENT OF FORCES IN SMALL WARS

Although small wars now have the potential of threatening the survival of the United States, small wars are still primarily vital or second-tier interests of American national security strategy.<sup>49</sup> Therefore the United States cannot afford to commit a large military force in pursuit of protracted victory. This implies a gamble for the United States. Does the country employ a large military force in pursuit of quick victory or seek protracted gains using a smaller slice of its military forces?

Moreover, the tendency of the United States to intervene multilaterally has implications for military effectiveness. By mixing different military cultures, resources, and capabilities, coalition operations add a layer of complexity.

### MILITARY DOCTRINE

The implication of small wars theory as a collection of related military activities is that the Marine Corps should not seek a single-volume authoritative and comprehensive text on small wars. The *Small Wars Manual* represents such an attempt. In fact, the *Small Wars Manual* still represents the best attempt thus far. Relevant and effective small wars doctrine will only come through the component parts of the subject matter. In other words, just as conventional military doctrine has separate manuals for armored, mechanized, and engineer operations, so too should doctrine for small wars have separate yet related texts for counterinsurgency, military government, and training foreign militaries.

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<sup>49</sup> . For an analytical framework of U.S. national interests, see Nuechterlein, *America Recommitted*, 12-31.

## CONCLUSION

This paper set out to argue the importance of small wars theory today. It examined the first chapter of the *Small Wars Manual* from a 21st century perspective and extracted the immutable principles of small wars. Providing the context was American foreign policy and national security strategy. Sources for this study included works on the contemporary battlespace, recent operations, and doctrine for small wars. The findings were twofold: First, small wars represent the most prevalent form of conflict in the world today. Second, small wars are the form of conflict the United States is most likely to face in the future.

Small wars theory, therefore, matters more in the 21st century than it did in 1940.

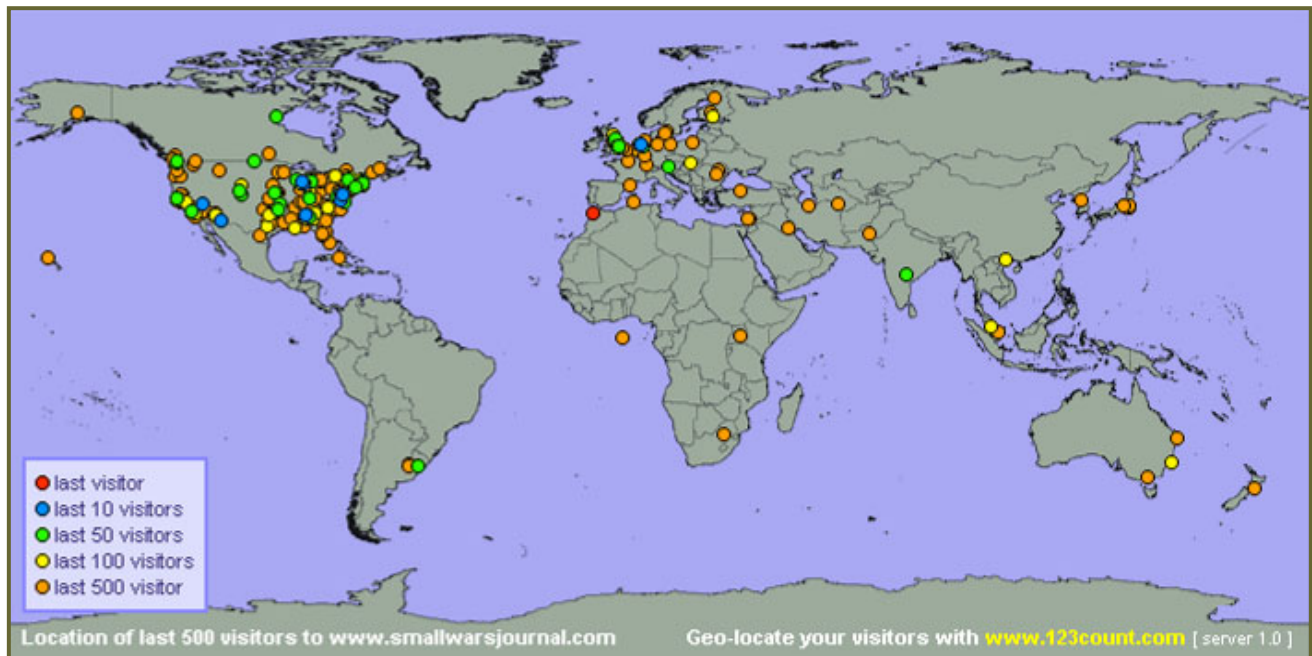
The elasticity of the term “small wars” seems wholly appropriate for a subject whose inherent complexity resists all attempts at simple classification or analysis. This was the biggest challenge confronting this study, as well as the most important lesson for the author.

*Maj Kopets wrote this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Masters of Military Studies while a student at USMC Command and Staff College.*

Please view the complete thesis online at [www.smallwarsjournal.com](http://www.smallwarsjournal.com) for the author’s full notes and credits.

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# THE MARINE CORPS' SMALL WARS MANUAL AND COLONEL C.E. CALLWELL'S SMALL WARS

## RELEVANT TO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY OR IRRELEVANT ANACHRONISMS?

Major John P. Sullivan, Jr., USMC

### SUMMARY

Although written in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the U.S. Marine Corps' Small Wars Manual and Colonel C.E. Callwell's Small Wars provide keen insight into the conduct of small wars. Hence, both are highly relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Today, illegal immigration, international crime, weapons and drug proliferation, and Islamic totalitarianism threaten the United States' national interests at home and abroad. In this environment, military professionals are looking for previous experiences for insight to successfully engaging these irregular threats. The U.S. Marine Corps' Small Wars Manual and Colonel C.E. Callwell's Small Wars are receiving unprecedented attention. Small Wars, first published in 1896, and the Small Wars Manual, produced in 1940, were minor classics in their time, but are these two texts relevant to 21<sup>st</sup> century confrontations?

Looking across the warfighting functions or battlefield operating systems, one can readily see that elements of Colonel C.E. Callwell's Small Wars and the U.S. Marine Corps' Small Wars Manual are either being employed or have potential for employment in recent or current small wars. These works provide proven methods for organizing the unconventional battlefield, offensively bringing an elusive enemy to battle, effectively

disarming the population, successfully establishing a native force, and much more. Wise military professionals, who realize that historically they are more likely to be charged with the arduous task of fighting in a small war than with the conventional conflict, will seek guidance from the many lessons learned that are encapsulated in these two classics.

More than advocating professional study of the Small Wars Manual and Callwell's Small Wars, this paper also identifies elements of modern small wars that are not adequately reflected in these writings. Technology, globalization, changes in world demographics, and the complexities of civil-military affairs have altered the nature of small wars.

**Appendix A – Elements of Modern Small Wars That Are Not in These Writings** broadly identifies areas where the utility of these documents is lacking. It provides the reader with considerations for future professional study, writing, and discourse.

The American and European armies gained a plethora of valuable lessons in their collective experience in small wars during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The wisdom found in the Small Wars Manual and Small Wars compels military professionals to seek guidance from these masterpieces and thus acquire a greater understanding of how to approach

contemporary irregular conflicts. More than period pieces, they are essential elements to 21<sup>st</sup> century contemporary, professional military study and discussion. Collectively, they form a sound foundation for understanding effective means for prosecuting “small wars”.

## INTRODUCTION

### BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE SMALL WARS MANUAL AND SMALL WARS

The United States Marine Corps’ final edition of the Small Wars Manual was published in 1940 as a compilation of lessons learned from that service’s vast experience in conducting counterinsurgencies and peacekeeping operations primarily in Central America and the Caribbean during the period between the world wars. Today, it is published to ensure the retention and dissemination of useful information, but is not doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

Colonel C.E. Callwell’s Small Wars, which first appeared in 1896, is an analysis of imperial conflicts in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to his almost encyclopedic knowledge of colonial campaigns, Callwell, who was commissioned into the Royal Artillery in 1878, incorporated his personal experience in the Afghan War of 1880, the first Boer War (1880–1881), the Turko–Greek War of 1897, and the South African War (the second Boer War, 1899–1902) in the third and latest edition of Small Wars.<sup>2</sup> See **Appendix B– History of Small Wars & the Small Wars Manual** for additional information.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940 (Washington , D.C.: GPO, 1940), Foreword.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel C.E. Callwell, Small Wars: Their Principles & Practice, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), vi-vii.

#### Note to the Reader

The types of conflicts addressed in this paper have been referred to in many ways over the decades. They have been known as unconventional warfare, low intensity conflicts (LIC), military operations other than war (MOOTW), guerrilla warfare, and other similar designations. Today, irregular warfare has become the phrase of choice. While the reader may encounter allusions to several of these designations in the paper, the term “small wars” is used most frequently for it is the term used by Colonel Callwell and the writers of the Small Wars Manual.

## SMALL WARS DEFINED

The Small Wars Manual and Small Wars do not characterize conflicts as small wars based upon the size of the forces participating in them, the extent of their theater of operations, or their cost in property, money, or lives. The essence of a small war is its purpose and the circumstances surrounding its inception and conduct, the character of either one or all of the opposing forces as irregular forces, and the nature of the operations themselves. Small wars vary in degrees from simple demonstrative operations to military intervention in the fullest sense, short of a major effort in regular warfare against a first-rate national power.<sup>3</sup> See **Appendix C – Small Wars Definitions** for the definition of *small wars* as provided by the Small Wars Manual and Small Wars and the encompassed definitions of *military operations*

<sup>3</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 21. and U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 1-1 – 1-2.



*other than war (MOOTW)* and *low intensity conflict (LIC)* as provided by other authoritative references.

## UNIQUENESS OF SMALL WARS

Colonel Callwell and the authors of the Marine Corps' Small Wars Manual emphasize the uniqueness and complexity of small wars by contrasting them with conventional conflicts. The Small Wars Manual reminds the reader that although the immutable principles of war remain the basis of these operations, tremendous ingenuity is required in the application of these principles in small wars. As regular war never exactly takes the exact same form as previous conflicts, so, to an even greater degree, is each small war different from any conflict that precedes or follows; thus, the trap of fixating on stale and predictable tactics and techniques must be avoided.<sup>4</sup> In Small Wars, Colonel Callwell draws significant contrasts between the objectives of small wars and conventional campaigns. In the former, the defeat of a hostile army is not necessarily the primary objective, even if such a force exists. Moral effect in small wars is often more important than material success. Operational objectives are often so limited that they defy the principles of warfare.<sup>5</sup>

## PURPOSE AND APPROACH OF PAPER

Colonel C.E. Callwell's Small Wars and the U.S. Marine Corps' Small Wars Manual are classics of their time that provide utility to American servicemen charged with fighting irregular wars. This paper will use the warfighting functions or battlefield operating systems as the construct for identifying some of the many elements of these publications that

are relevant to the conduct of small wars today. By reviewing some of the lessons learned by the colonial powers during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the United States Marine Corps in its campaigns during the Interwar Period, valuable insight can be acquired into proven tactics and techniques for fighting small wars and the appetite for further study of these works will be whetted. While it is folly to expect current or future small wars to mirror previous conflicts, many of the lessons learned from successes and failures in previous small wars have utility today.

## RELEVANCY OF THESE LITERARY WORKS TO THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

### COMMAND AND CONTROL

#### REQUIREMENT FOR COMMANDERS TO BE DECISIVE

Even more so than conventional conflicts, Callwell asserts small wars are inherently shrouded in uncertainty. There is almost always doubt as to the fighting strength and quality of the enemy. Furthermore, the level and degree of support the population will provide the enemy is always doubtful. The counterinsurgency in Iraq exemplifies these truisms. The Small Wars Manual poignantly states:

Small wars demand the highest type of leadership directed by intelligence, resourcefulness, and ingenuity. Small wars are conceived in uncertainty, are conducted often with precarious responsibility and doubtful authority, under indeterminate orders lacking specific instructions.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 1-6.

<sup>5</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 42.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 1-6.

In environments like these, it is no wonder Small Wars identifies *indecisiveness in the commander over uncertainty as the primary reason well planned campaigns in fail.*<sup>7</sup>

### RIGHT-SIZING THE STAFF

A force, irrespective of its size, engaged in small wars is usually independently or semi-independently responsible for tactical, operational, and even strategic tasks in a vast area of operations (AO). Given the rapid and complex nature of small wars, the Small Wars Manual emphasizes that the need for a robust staff to conduct comprehensive planning must be balanced against the requirement to provide subordinates clear guidance and sufficient latitude and authorization to oversee the execution of the mission.<sup>8</sup>

In January 2002, Joint Task Force 510 (JTF-510) deployed under the command of Brigadier General Donald Wurster to advise and assist the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in their longstanding effort to defeat the Al Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). Designated as Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines (OEF-P) and conducted on the islands of Zamboanga and Basilan, JTF 510's operation initially entailed only 160 personnel in the field, later increased to 1,200. Although constrained by a force cap, the JTF sustained a hearty staff of 500 personnel to provide multi-faceted support to those charged with the accomplishment of this operation.<sup>9</sup> ***Because units assigned to small wars typically exercise broad spans of control and must pursue multi-faceted approaches to resolve complex civil and military challenges, hearty staffs are the norm.***

<sup>7</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 47.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 2-10 – 2-11.

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0HZY/is\\_1\\_17/ai\\_n954388](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0HZY/is_1_17/ai_n954388)  
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***However, these large, but capable, staffs must be used to enable and not micromanage subordinates in the field, for ultimately units in the field are the ones who will secure victory for the force.***

### ORGANIZING THE BATTLEFIELD FOR SUCCESS

Colonel Callwell stresses the importance of a beginning with a clear and determinate objective in small wars.<sup>10</sup> In terminology that is reminiscent of conducting an enemy center of gravity (COG) analysis in today's military vernacular, Callwell quotes Lord Wolseley, the famed British field marshal of the South African War, who said "your first object should be the capture of whatever they prize most, and the destruction or deprivation of which will probably bring the war most rapidly to a conclusion."<sup>11</sup> ***Today, forces conducting small wars establish a viable campaign objective and plan when they correctly identify and devise an approach to directly or indirectly eliminate the enemy's source of strength.***

Small wars are often characterized by guerrilla warfare, where the enemy repeatedly attacks with a small force in hope of achieving surprise and retreating before a decisive engagement can occur. Based upon Callwell's vast experience and study of small wars, a commander who has organized his force to rapidly and effectively respond to fleeting opportunities and is resolute enough to do so brings a successful conclusion to the campaign.<sup>12</sup> The Small Wars Manual and Small Wars assert small wars are successfully prosecuted when regimental or battalion-sized units are given administrative and tactical responsibility for areas that correspond to the

<sup>10</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 37.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 40.

<sup>12</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 126-129.

political subdivisions of the country.<sup>13</sup> By establishing advanced posts in these areas and employing mobile or flying columns to project military power from bases of operation and supply into the interior of the country, the enemy can be systematically defeated, security can be restored, and enemy resources can be eliminated.<sup>14</sup> Undoubtedly, the insurgency in Iraq would not be as virulent as it is today had U.S. forces planned and organized to swiftly defeat the small bands of armed resisters and looters that created chaos immediately after the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime.

### COMMAND AND CONTROL FUNCTIONS UNIQUE TO SMALL WARS

Depending upon the character of a small war, intervening forces may be required to perform tasks that are unconventional and largely unfamiliar. The Small Wars Manual addresses three of these oft-common characteristics in detail: working alongside or establishing an armed native force, establishing an interim military government, and supervising elections.

<sup>13</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 130-134 and U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 5-7, 5-15, 5-16. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment's operations in Tall Afar, Iraq are a current example of successfully applying these principles. See Ann Scott Tyson, "Ten Days in Tall Afar," *The Washington Post*, Sunday, 26 March 2006, Outlook section.

<sup>14</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 133-143 and U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 5-8 – 5-10. Mobile and flying columns are combined arms forces that operate at a distance from and independent of supporting units and are lightly equipped to ensure mobility. Flying columns are sufficiently strong enough to avoid being tied to a base of supplies by a fixed line of communications (LOC), whereas, mobile columns are more dependent upon their base of supplies. The columns may vary in size depending upon the enemy threat, the terrain, the type and conditions of transportation, and the means of communication. Generally, they will range in size from a reinforced company to a reinforced regiment, but the size found to be best adapted to such operations is a reinforced battalion. The column should be of sufficient strength to effectively cope with the largest enemy force likely to be encountered, yet, no larger than necessary to ensure maximization of its mobility. Columns should always carry one to two days of supplies and cash in small denominations for the purpose of purchasing subsistence and guides and interpreters, as necessary. Given the asymmetrical threat typically encountered in small wars, the column should move with all-around security.

Because the establishment of an efficient and well-trained native armed force, free from dictatorial control, is often a prerequisite for withdrawal in a small war, the Small Wars Manual outlines proven methods for planning, recruiting, and organizing constabulary forces for the purpose of assuming national military, organized reserve, and police responsibilities.<sup>15</sup> The ability of Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to recognize the cultural and language nuances of foreign fighters routinely validates the role native forces play in restoring security to troubled countries.

In instances where the government is deposed, such as in Afghanistan and Iraq, or merely ineffective, it may be necessary for an occupying force to establish an interim military government. While performing government functions at the local, provincial, or national level is a task that military professionals might find awkward, it is not uncommon for forces serving in small wars to have this significant responsibility. Guidance regarding the organization and functionality of law enforcement, public services and utilities, courts, commerce, and collection of public revenues is found in the Small Wars Manual.<sup>16</sup>

In operations where the establishment of a military government is necessary, as soon as practical U.S. efforts should shift toward the supervision of elections to rapidly transition authority to a popularly elected government. The Small Wars Manual recommends the employment of local civilians in this process to avoid the perception of undue U.S. military influence and to ensure language requirements are met. The manual also discusses the requirement to plan for security and the

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 12-1, 12-3, 12-5 - 12-12, 12-16.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 13-12 – 13-18.

prevention of voter intimidation. The Small Wars Manual even provides guidance on voter registration and the process now made familiar by elections in Iraq of having voters dip their fingers in fluid stain to prevent multiple voting.

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## MANEUVER

### OFFENSE – BRINGING THE ENEMY TO BATTLE

Callwell's assesses that the enemy in small wars inherently has the strategic advantage. This is because they generally operate in small formations, strike, and then quickly disperse. Such a foe is typically not dependent upon formal lines of communication or static command and control nodes. On the other hand, regular forces often have the tactical advantage, because they are usually better equipped, trained, and organized than the enemy.<sup>18</sup> Realizing the disparity between the occupying force's tactical capability and his own, the unconventional force will usually adopt a guerrilla strategy to attrite and harass the intervening force in a prolonged conflict with the ultimate goal of causing the intervening force to lose its military or political will to continue to aggressively prosecute the campaign.<sup>19</sup> *Because of these innate truths, regular forces should strive to bring irregular forces to battle as often and as decisively as possible by rapid movement and attack.*<sup>20</sup> Given the inherent difficulty in bringing the enemy to battle, Colonel Callwell insists the enemy should be destroyed with an enveloping attack or vigorous pursuit that cuts off his line of retreat. This entails more than simply defeating him.<sup>21</sup> Small Wars identifies several

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 14-34 - 14-36.

<sup>18</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 85-87, 90.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 99.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 91.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 106, 151-152, 207-209.

tactics focused upon the historically effective principals of surprise and deception to bring the foe to decisive battle.<sup>22</sup> Small Wars heralds raids as an effective application of surprise to rapidly and unexpectedly strike known enemy locations.<sup>23</sup> The Small Wars Manual outlines methods for rooting out known or possible enemy in houses, categorized as cordon and knock, or cordon and attack, missions in today's military terminology.<sup>24</sup>

Callwell advocates the use of feints to draw the enemy into combat.<sup>25</sup> In the weeks leading up to Operation AL FAJR, the assault to liberate the city of Fallujah, I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) employed this tactic on several occasions to attrite the enemy's forces and gain valuable intelligence regarding his defense of the city. Small Wars also suggests the Sun Tzu approach of enticing the enemy into open ground with a force that appears to be numerically inferior.<sup>26</sup> Likewise, feigning retreat or indecision could be enough to bring the enemy to action or cause him to attempt to defend an undefendable position. These deceptive tactics, coupled with an aggressively planned ambush, have the potential to obliterate the enemy's force and degrade his will to resist further.<sup>27</sup>

In emphasizing the importance of bringing the enemy to decisive action, Callwell provides a stern warning to avoid desultory action, as it is only likely to harden the enemy's resolve and damage the conventional force's perception in the eyes of the eminent

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 148, 240-244.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 245.

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 6-80.

<sup>25</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 227-228, 248-252.

<sup>26</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 102-103, 229, 231 and Samuel B. Griffith, Sun Tzu: The Art of War (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), 66.

<sup>27</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 235.

populace.<sup>28</sup> In April 2004, the United States' decision to attack insurgents in Fallujah, Iraq, in response to the brutal killing of four Blackwater USA security contractors, and then the subsequent cancellation of the operation is a contemporary violation of this wise warning. Because of this lack of political commitment, I MEF faced an enemy in November that year whose defenses and resolve had been hardened and who had expelled most of the city's uncooperative citizens.

### DEFENSE – ACTIVE VERSUS PASSIVE

Both the Small Wars Manual and Small Wars concede it may be nearly impossible at times to bring the enemy to action; however, the principle of offense must be pursued as long as there is armed resistance.<sup>29</sup> *Patrolling to deny the enemy key terrain and freedom of movement, generally regarded as a component of active defenses, may be the only effective form of offensive action open to the commander.* Passive defenses that merely guard key infrastructure will engender confidence in guerrilla forces and create the impression among the indigenous population that intervening forces are inferior to him. The enemy's opposition to the intervening force will increase to alarming levels as a passive defense aids his recruitment efforts and the people are encouraged to provide him tacit, if not active, support. Patrolling demonstrates an active and vigilant security presence that reassures the citizenry and dissuades the enemy. When defending key infrastructure, defensive forces must remain vigilant against enemy ruses and stratagems by creating heightened

expectations among the troops through regularly rehearsed immediate action drills.<sup>30</sup>

## FIRES / IO

### ARTILLERY

The Small Wars Manual points out that the function of artillery in small wars is virtually the same as in conventional conflicts.<sup>31</sup> Small Wars makes a minor but important distinction in the use of artillery in these unconventional engagements by emphasizing the need for artillery units to have increased mobility due to the often-encountered difficult terrain in small war theaters and the increased mobility of infantry units they are supporting.<sup>32</sup>

### AVIATION

The Small Wars Manual notes that air opposition is usually non-existent or negligible in small wars; also, that long-range bombers usually lack substantial targets. The manual accounts for the obvious exception of hardened enemy holdouts,<sup>33</sup> like the Tora Bora caves of Afghanistan. Building or upgrading airfields will often be required due to the inherent limitations of theaters where small wars are fought,<sup>34</sup> as exemplified by the preparatory efforts made in the initial stages of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. *Ultimately, air reconnaissance, close air support, and air transportation are the key aviation tasks in small wars.*

Due to the advisability of operating in multiple, small patrols, the number of reconnaissance aircraft required in small wars

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 100-101.

<sup>29</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 150, 236. and U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 6-5.

<sup>30</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 196-200. and U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 5-20, 6-87.

<sup>31</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 2-49.

<sup>32</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 438-439.

<sup>33</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 9-1.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 9-14.

is twice that for conventional operations.<sup>35</sup> When conducting aerial reconnaissance, intervening forces must be prepared to rapidly respond to fleeting opportunities by attacking the enemy when he is most vulnerable.<sup>36</sup> This requirement also necessitates consideration of equipping reconnaissance aircraft for kinetic action, as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) did unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in Afghanistan. With regards to close air support, the employment of small strike forces, usually consisting of only three or four aircraft, typifies small wars.<sup>37</sup> Air transportation of supplies and troops is a major consideration in small wars because of the enemy's frequent targeting and general lack of railroads, improved motor roads, and navigable waterways in austere locations where small wars are generally fought.<sup>38</sup> The significant improvised explosive device (IED) threat in Iraq ensures personnel are more frequently moved about the theater via helicopter than motorized convoys. The increased speed, range, payload, and acceleration and deceleration capability of the MV-22 Osprey will likely ensure the future viability of air transportation for Marine forces in small wars.

### INFORMATION OPERATIONS (IO)

Neither the Small Wars Manual nor Small Wars address information operations in the context of a coordinated plan or as a planned function. However, they both consistently discuss the importance of influencing the enemy to cease resistance and acquiring population support, explicitly or tacitly, of friendly efforts. Small Wars emphasizes the importance of the moral versus the physical

defeat of the enemy in unconventional wars in particular. By example, Callwell says overawing of the enemy is the goal in putting down rebellions.<sup>39</sup> Likewise, both encourage the use of misinformation to deceive and surprise the enemy. Callwell writes that the enemy is often vulnerable to misinformation because of his intrinsic reliance on human intelligence.<sup>40</sup> He also insists that many within the enemy's ranks can be persuaded to lay down their arms and not fight if they are convinced the occupying force is aggressive and resolute in its action and their reasons for fighting are being remedied.<sup>41</sup> The Small Wars Manual recommends the employment of local guides, interpreters, prominent indigenous civilians, and native troops in small wars for their inherent capabilities and for the positive message of support to the friendly cause their association communicates, which also raises the issue of protection.<sup>42</sup>

### FORCE PROTECTION

#### LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Small Wars perceptively notes that lines of communication (LOCs) are usually longer and more exposed to enemy action in small wars than in more linear conventional operations.<sup>43</sup> Because convoys of regular troops in small wars are susceptible to attack from any direction, the enemy should be denied all terrain from which he may inflict losses upon the column thus allowing friendly forces the advantage offered by their superior armament and accuracy of fire.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>35</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 2-3.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 9-22.

<sup>37</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 9-1.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 9-3.

<sup>39</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 42.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, 54.

<sup>41</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 76-78.

<sup>42</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 6-14.

<sup>43</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 115.

<sup>44</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 5-10 – 5-11.

Lines of communication in small wars are difficult to protect without a large commitment of additional forces due to the non-linear characteristic of the battlefield.<sup>1</sup> In fact, Callwell notes several examples where the number of forces protecting LOCs equated to or exceeded the number of troops designated for offensive action. For this reason, he recommends employing the aforementioned lightly supplied and self-sufficient flying columns between intermittently established bases. *By minimizing the number of bases, which can serve as points of refuge and resupply but also become targets for the enemy, the majority of forces can be dedicated to bringing the enemy to decisive action.*<sup>46</sup>

When flying columns deploy to execute an opportune attack, supporting forces can use hastily constructed defenses, termed laagers and zeribas, to protect the forces' impedimenta. Laagers, which use the forces' vehicles or other equipment to form a hastily prepared defense, and zeribas, which use abattis or other natural materials, provide minimal protection against fire and significant protection against enemy shock action.<sup>47</sup> Modern material and equipment such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and even concertina wire and sandbags, can further improve the protection afforded by these expedient defenses.

## POPULATION DISARMAMENT

The Small Wars Manual identifies population disarmament as the most vital step in the restoration of tranquility. It inherently

involves the responsibility to provide security for the indigenous people who have been disarmed and implies the presence of the arbiter's forces in sufficient numbers to guarantee safety. Considerable thought and planning must be given to developing procedures for collecting, storing or destroying, and accounting for acquired munitions. Following voluntary disarmament, often encouraged by financial compensation, occupation or native military forces or military or local police should confiscate clandestinely held arms.<sup>48</sup>

Because peaceful and law abiding citizens may be armed, the greatest tact and diplomacy should be exhibited in disarming the population. In some cases, tools necessary for citizens' livelihood might be exempted, for example shotguns for hunting small game and scythes for farming. Requests for retention of such items must be based upon the seriousness of the security situation, the validity of the request to retain weapons, and the character of the individual making it.<sup>49</sup> Thus, overzealous disarmament must be avoided. Concessions must be made to ensure the populace's cooperation, but obedience to wise laws and regulations.<sup>50</sup> Also, special consideration may have to be made to permit locals to protect themselves in remote areas. In fact, the intervening force's plan may involve arming reliable citizens in remote areas where the lawless operate in great numbers.<sup>51</sup> Aggressive and well-planned enforcement of an ordinance restricting the possession of arms will not affect active guerrillas, but can eliminate sources of supply and replenishment within the

<sup>1</sup> Callwell, *Small Wars*, 116-117.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 134. In early 1960, the French successfully employed mobile and flying columns during the Challe Offensive to root out and destroy the rural insurgency in Algeria.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 277-285. The terms "laagers" and "zeribas" have their origin in the Boer and Zulu wars.

<sup>48</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual*, 1940, 11-1, 11-4 – 11-6.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, 11-1 – 11-2. In some areas, forces disarming the populace will encounter significant cultural issues. The propensity of many citizens in the 19<sup>th</sup> century American west to carry pistols is an apt analogy.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*, 11-4.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, 11-4, 11-10.

country. *Disarmament efforts must be done in concert with border control to prevent rearming from without the country. This cannot be effectively accomplished without an adequately manned, equipped, and trained coast guard and border control force.*<sup>52</sup> In Iraq, given the insurgent's daily use of weapons and munitions against civilian and military targets, it is obvious U.S. and Iraqi security forces still have much work to do with regard to this most crucial task.

### SECURITY OF OPERATIONS

The asymmetric threat encountered in small wars requires particular attention to the security of one's force and the civilian populace. *A visible show of force, through active patrolling and armed presence,* will often dissuade belligerents from interfering with an election for example and instill confidence in voters.<sup>53</sup> When localized operations are conducted, a cordon system may be employed to secure the area while offensive action is pursued within the line. Placing a cordon of troops around an enemy-infested area and closing in while restoring order in the area or maintaining a stationary defensive barrier while patrols operate within the line are methods of employing this system. The blockhouse system is similar, but is defensive in nature. It involves the establishment of a line of defended localities and can be used to protect critical infrastructure or secure a static mission like the provision of humanitarian aid.<sup>54</sup> Operations in Iraq have employed both of these security methods.

When establishing force protection measures at refuge and resupply bases, Callwell

advises the extent of the security procedures be based upon the degree of isolation from other bases, nature of the theater of war, and strength of hostile resistance.<sup>55</sup> He also highlights unique security measures for night operations and maneuvers conducted in mountainous and jungle terrain.<sup>56</sup>

## INTELLIGENCE

### FRIENDLY COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION DIFFICULTIES

The difficulty of obtaining reliable and timely information in small wars can be divided into two areas – uncertainty about the theater and doubt with regards to the enemy. Small wars inherently break out unexpectedly in unforeseen places.<sup>57</sup> Obtaining the latest geographical, political, cultural, social, and security information of a small war theater of operations is often very difficult due to the undeveloped nature of the environment,<sup>58</sup> as U.S. forces encountered in 2001 when they prepared for the invasion of Afghanistan. Initially, uncertainty as to how intervening forces will access the theater prevails until basing, overflight, and ground movement authorizations have been secured. Undoubtedly, information compiled at the tactical level prior to arrival in theater will be incomplete and inaccurate; therefore, it must be supplemented by reconnaissance and research on the ground, and aggressively shared amongst units in the field.<sup>59</sup> As Callwell points out, in the early stages of the operation in particular, guides will prove invaluable,

<sup>55</sup> Callwell, *Small Wars*, 135.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 312, 364, 486.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 43-44.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 44.

<sup>59</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual*, 1940, 2-15.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, 11-10.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, 14-7.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 5-21.



especially in difficult jungle or mountainous terrain.<sup>60</sup>

The irregular force's general progression is to disperse into small guerrilla bands whose location, capability, and intent are difficult to determine.<sup>61</sup> Intervening forces are by necessity dependent upon human intelligence sources; however, they also are prone to enemy manipulation and intimidation.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, getting reliable and timely intelligence down to tactical units in the field is difficult due to the dispersion of the conventional force's units.<sup>63</sup> However, as Callwell aptly points out, *"In no class of warfare is a well organized and well served intelligence department more essential than in that against guerrillas."*<sup>64</sup> Conventional forces best overcome these distinct advantages by leveraging technologically superior collection capabilities, and developing and employing human intelligence sources.

## COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

Initially, irregular forces enjoy many advantages in the area of intelligence.<sup>65</sup> From the very nature of the campaign, their knowledge of the terrain, culture, and social characteristics of the theater are superior to that of the intervening force. Their understanding of the size, capabilities, intent, and location of the occupying force is simplified by its conventional formations. The press, which normally favors the conventional force, often inadvertently reveals important information to the enemy in reporting on the military operation.<sup>66</sup> Thus the dual challenge:

An intervening force must degrade the human intelligence capability of the enemy, while simultaneously developing its own. The Small Wars Manual asserts that *the guerrillas' intelligence system decreases in proportion to the mobility and number of the patrols employed in the theater of operations or the level of presence the conventional force has.*<sup>67</sup> Units whose operations are characterized by secrecy and rapidity of action, and who aggressively disperse the irregular force from place to place, will in time break down the enemy's intelligence system by forcing him to lose contact with his sources of information.<sup>68</sup> Avoiding routine actions, maintaining the security of communications, aggressively pursuing spies in and around bases, and distributing false information pertaining to operational details are additional ways to thwart guerrilla collection efforts.<sup>69</sup> The cooperation of the citizenry is integral to the success of an intervening force's counter-intelligence plan and development of its own human intelligence capability. The Small Wars Manual recommends the occupation force ensure the population understands that the purpose of the operation is to aid the country, goes to great length to make friends with the populace, and liberally uses intelligence funds to encourage citizens to provide information concerning the enemy.<sup>70</sup>

## LOGISTICS

### SUPPLY

Because small war theaters are austere and formidable, Colonel Callwell characterizes small wars as generally campaigns against

<sup>60</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 350-351, 365.

<sup>61</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 43. and U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 2-4, 2-15.

<sup>62</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 47, 50, 144.

<sup>63</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 2-16.

<sup>64</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 143.

<sup>65</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 2-3.

<sup>66</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 53-54.

<sup>67</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 6-5.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 2-3.

<sup>69</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 54, 459. and U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 2-3.

<sup>70</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 2-3.

nature rather than against hostile armies. For example, despite contemporary technological improvements over Callwell's era, when the theater of war is a desert for example, with only a few scattered sources of water, water is a matter of supply that has to be carried with or pushed to the force with considerable forethought, planning, and effort. From Callwell's point of view, the difficulties of small wars arise almost entirely from the challenges presented by the requirement to supply the force in these operations. *Supplying the force in small wars must be thoroughly planned, as it is at the root of most of the difficulties conventional forces have in these endeavors.*<sup>71</sup>

## MAINTENANCE

Motorization and mechanization of military forces were just occurring and had limited utility in the small wars theaters reflected in Small Wars and the Small Wars Manual. Beasts of burden and the cavalry's horses were more likely to be the forces' modes of transportation than the trucks, heavy equipment, and tanks that characterize the modern army. Although references to equipment maintenance are not directly presented in either of these texts, conceptually their allusions to the care of animals used in mounted detachments are similar to contemporary maintenance of mechanical equipment. Because of the harshness of typical small war theaters, the Small Wars Manual strongly encourages thoroughly inspecting the pack animal and its saddle, packs, harness, and shoeing before embarking on a march.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, the brutal climate and terrain of many small war theaters today necessitates thorough pre-operational checks of tactical and

commercial vehicles prior to beginning a convoy. The Small Wars Manual emphatically points out the prevention of injuries and disease in horses is far more important than their treatment.<sup>73</sup> Likewise, *preventative maintenance is imperative in arduous small war theaters, where receiving repair parts is often complicated by the lack of modern transportation and commercial systems, or existing infrastructure is vulnerable to attack.* A conventional force that neglects to properly maintain its equipment in harsh small war theaters will find itself vulnerable due to equipment malfunction or failure at the most inopportune time.

## TRANSPORTATION

During small wars in the past, every possible type of transportation known to mankind has been used, from dogs, elephants, camels, and porter service to railroad, aviation, and motor transportation.<sup>74</sup> Today, in many small war theaters, roads exist only in a few localities and are generally in a poor state of repair, especially during rainy seasons. Many of these theaters have airfields that are inadequate for sustained military use without significant maintenance and upgrade. Often, local economies cannot provide modern vehicles, ideally suited for typical small war missions. The Small Wars Manual notes, "Sudden demands by the occupation force on native means of transportation will usually exceed the supply, resulting in very high costs for transportation; but this cannot be avoided." In environments like these, transportation means other than tactical vehicles and military aircraft have to be considered.<sup>75</sup> In rural Afghanistan, Special Forces supporting

<sup>71</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 57-61.

<sup>72</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 7-15 – 7-16.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 7-17.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 3-18.

<sup>75</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 3-18 – 3-19.

Operation Enduring Freedom used horses to rove the countryside while directing operational fires.<sup>76</sup> Due to the limited availability of dump trucks on Basilan Island, construction materials were delivered in commercial vehicles similar to buses, called jeepneys, to support JTF-510's efforts in OEF-P.

## ENGINEERING

The Small Wars Manual identifies the construction, improvement, and maintenance of lines of communication as some of the most important factors in successful small wars campaigns.<sup>77</sup> Of a related nature, the manual outlines considerations for the construction of non-standard bridges, ferry sites, fords, and rafts.<sup>78</sup> Significant military and material resources often must be applied to these engineer efforts to maintain the mobility of intervening forces and improve the credibility and effectiveness of local governance in small war theaters. Survivability is also a related engineer task that must be considered.

One of the most urgent and colossal challenges in Iraq today is disposal of munitions that litter the country's remote areas. While contracted technicians are routinely hired to eliminate these stockpiles, military explosive ordnance and disposal (EOD) technicians have the dubious honor of getting rid of those explosives that have been weaponized by the enemy. The Small Wars Manual predicted the inevitability of this mission as it states: ***“Due to their widespread use in commercial and military functions, explosive materials are readily available for irregular force use; therefore,***

***counter-demolition capabilities must be planned”***.<sup>79</sup>

## HEALTH SERVICES

Because small and independent forces operating in austere environments typify conventional armies experiences in small wars, Colonel Callwell expresses concern about handling of the wounded.<sup>80</sup> These conflicts still require considerable planning and resources, to include additional medical personnel, to ensure the wounded receive adequate medical treatment within “the golden hour”.<sup>81</sup> The asymmetric threat encountered by forces in small war theaters also requires consideration of the prevention and treatment of psychological injuries. Furthermore, the lack of modern health standards and the prevalence of many communicable diseases in small war theaters necessitate the planning of comprehensive preventative medicine functions to aid the military force and the populace. ***Providing medical and dental care to citizens who do not have other sources of medical and dental attention is one of the strongest elements for gaining the confidence and friendship of the native inhabitants in the theater of operations.*** This can indeed aid in winning the peace.<sup>82</sup>

## GENERAL SERVICES

The need for a well-organized aggressive contracting capability is common to most small war theaters. Because the need for infrastructure improvements and the desire to provide stimuli to the local economy are often characteristics of small wars, the organized

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 2-42.

<sup>80</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 95, 212, 288.

<sup>81</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1940), 2-30.

<sup>82</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 2-48.

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/ending-freedom.htm>

<sup>77</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 2-42.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 6-91 – 6-94.

force should make provisions to hire local nationals (LNs) to perform various skilled and non-skilled tasks. When communicating directly with the public is desirable as it may be in counterinsurgencies, it might be necessary to execute contracts for handling certain official dispatches through radio or television. A contracting capability is valuable for acquiring a host of items in theater to include commercial vehicles, construction material, and even the right to use private property.<sup>83</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Looking across the warfighting functions or battlefield operating systems, Colonel C.E. Callwell's Small Wars and the U.S. Marine Corps' Small Wars Manual principles are either being employed or have potential for employment in recent or current small wars. In the context of today's national defense priorities, these publications are receiving unprecedented attention. The American and European armies garnered a host of valuable lessons in their collective experience in small wars during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The richness of the wisdom found in these works compels military professionals to seek guidance from these masterpieces to gain a greater understanding of how to approach contemporary small war conflicts. More than period pieces, they are essential elements to contemporary 21<sup>st</sup> century professional military study and discourse. However, experience of the past can only be tapped if commanders and staff officers know what occurred, and inquire or task subordinates to find relevant sources and assess their utility in current conflicts. Otherwise, the wheel keeps being reinvented. Colonel C.E. Callwell's Small Wars and the U.S. Marine Corps' Small Wars Manual outline

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 2-32, 2-45, 13-18.

principles from the past that have modern day applicability.

*Maj Sullivan wrote this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Masters of Military Studies while a student at USMC Command and Staff College.*

Please view the complete thesis online at [www.smallwarsjournal.com](http://www.smallwarsjournal.com) for the author's full notes and credits.

## APPENDIX A – ELEMENTS OF MODERN SMALL WARS THAT ARE NOT IN THESE WRITINGS

While the Small Wars Manual and Small Wars contain lessons learned by the European and American colonial experiences in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, they reflect the eras in which they were written. Although the core fundamentals of small wars are timeless, technology, globalization, changes in world demographics, and the complexities of civil-military affairs have altered the nature of small wars. In many ways these changes have further complicated the inherently complex composition of small wars. By broadly identifying areas where the Small Wars Manual and Small Wars do not reflect the contemporary aspects of current small wars, a greater appreciation can be acquired of the modern elements of these types of military commitments and a course direction for future study and discourse.

### INCREASED ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

#### TRANSPORTATION

Due to the undeveloped nature of many small war theaters at the time of the writing of the Small Wars Manual and Small Wars, the

works focus on beasts of burden such as donkeys, mules, and camels for logistical resupply. In discussing ground mobility, the works emphasize the role of cavalry. While aviation was beginning to prove its utility on the battlefield at the time of the writing of the Small Wars Manual, airpower capability had not fully developed. The enemy and friendly forces use of water transportation was confined to rivers.

While transportation infrastructure and modes remain meager in many small war theaters, motorized vehicles have reached many more areas of the world than they had in the early 1900s. The resulting increase in the convenience and speed of travel provided by various types of motor transportation has increased the complexity of the tasks performed by conventional forces in small wars. Intervention forces today must confront the increased lethality and rapidity of guerrilla action made possible by motorized transportation. Conventional forces devote considerable planning, training, and tactical effort to control the movement of the enemy by establishing deliberate and hasty vehicle checkpoints (VCPs). Units in Iraq must plan and train to counter the insurgents' weaponization of all types of motor transport in the form of vehicle borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs). Tanks, light reconnaissance vehicles, multi-role trucks, and heavy equipment have similarly increased the survivability, lethality, and rapidity of action of conventional forces in small wars. Although by effectively employing improvised explosive devices (IEDs), the enemy in Iraq and Afghanistan has degraded some of the advantages modern motor transportation provides intervention forces. Additionally, the increased utility of aviation, especially of UAVs, reduces response time and makes the

conventional force more effective in locating enemy holdouts.

### MODERN WEAPONS – WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION (WMDs) AND NON-LETHAL WEAPONS

The globalization of information and travel has increased the likelihood of weapons proliferation. Because of the world's increased interconnectivity, its most destructive weapons have increased potential to come into the possession of unconventional forces. While it is inconceivable U.S. forces would employ biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons in a small war, many of the nation's enemies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century small wars battlefield might employ these deadly weapons if they had them. The complexity and resource intensiveness of WMD searches and other actions to prevent proliferation that typify the modern threat obviously are not addressed in the Small Wars Manual or Small Wars.

*The potential for conventional forces to use non-lethal weapons in operations where the lines between hostile forces and civilians are blurred is significant.* The small wars environment where non-lethal weapons might have utility, as foreseen by the Small Wars Manual, has come to fruition.<sup>84</sup> In such conflicts, the strategic and practical reasons for using the minimum amount of force necessary when dealing with civilians are often just as important the legal and moral factors. Technological advances continue to make these weapons more practical, cost-effective, and, if used, less politically negative. Non-lethal weapons are being employed in modern small wars theaters and have increased viability for the future.

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 2-47.

## INFORMATION

Satellites, the Internet, cell phones, and television have increased the rapidity and breadth of information exchange. A commander in an operations center thousands of miles from the battlefield can receive and send timely information to units in the field because of such sophisticated command and control architecture. The nation's enemies in South America can instantaneously observe, receive, or share information pertaining to successful guerrilla tactics employed by similar foes in Asia. The media can feed real-time information from the modern battlefield to millions of viewers around the world.

***Information operations are no longer merely important. In small war theaters, in particular, they can be decisive.*** While the Small Wars Manual and Small Wars address the use of information, they do not treat it as a warfighting capability to be planned, synchronized, and protected. The effective use of information can influence the enemy to take action that is not in his best interest or the interest of his strategic goal. In counterinsurgencies, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief operations, the actions of the citizenry are often central. The ability to convey a message that supports a mission and deny the influence of the enemy's message on the populace will often mean the difference between success and failure.

Because of the inherent uncertainty that still prevails in small wars and the natural human inclination to eliminate uncertainty, modern conventional forces must be aware of the pitfall of "information overload". Ensuring the right information is available to enable the commander to make timely decisions, or

effective information management, is paramount in small wars.

The Small Wars Manual actually discourages commanders from engaging the press and recommends they report instances of negative press to higher authorities.<sup>85</sup> The contemporary commander must accept that the media can either be a tremendous asset in communicating the conventional force's message or a liability by publicizing the enemy's perspective. General Anthony Zinni, the former Central Command (CENTCOM) commander, often reminded his subordinate officers that the media is like terrain and weather: It is neither negative nor positive; the force that accepts its influence on the battlefield and best uses it gains a decided advantage.<sup>86</sup> ***Commanders in small wars must work with the media to ensure accurate, uncompromising, and reliable information pertaining to the intervening force's positive efforts, intentions, and goals are represented to the public.*** The first battle for Fallujah in April 2004 was prematurely aborted primarily because the insurgents more effectively communicated their message about the battle's events than did I MEF. Thus, the enemy can use information technology and his information plan against the United States and allied, coalition, or friendly forces.

## MODERN DEMOGRAPHICS

### INCREASED URBANIZATION

The Small Wars Manual and Small Wars entirely reflect small wars conducted in the rural regions of the world. Small Wars has a chapter devoted to both hills and brush warfare, but neither work addresses

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 1-30 – 1-31.

<sup>86</sup> <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/conversations/Zinni/zinni-con3.html>

insurgencies in metropolitan areas. However, urban insurgency was not notably successful in the 1960s and 1970s, leading increasingly towards a combination of rural and urban insurgent action in modernity.<sup>87</sup> Today, an insurgency marked by action in austere environments and metropolis sprawls is commonplace and a challenge that must be confronted.

### INCREASED ROLE OF IDEOLOGY, ETHNICITY, & THEOLOGY OVER NATIONALISM

Insurgencies have become increasingly motivated by ideology, theology, and ethnicity, and less so by nationalism.<sup>88</sup> The Small Wars Manual and Small Wars largely address conflicts fueled by nationalism, competition over limited resources, or struggles for political power. The increased role of ideology, religious beliefs, and the opposition to outside influence necessitates a deeper understanding of culture, religion, and a society's historical context. Small Wars is largely a reflection of European attempts to impose their culture and ideology on third world countries. The Small Wars Manual addresses the need to be respectful of religion and culture, and the importance of learning the local language to avoid becoming over reliant upon interpreters and guides.<sup>89</sup> In today's conflicts where ideology, religion, and ethnicity motivate suicide bombers, *appreciating a society's culture and religion is not enough. Military professionals must have a deep understanding of the society's culture, religion, and history of conflict.*

<sup>87</sup> Ian Beckett, "The Future of Insurgency", *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Vol. 16, No. 1, Mar 2005, p. 25.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>89</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940 (Washington , D.C.: GPO, 1940), 1-30 – 1-31.

### INCREASED YOUTH POPULATION

Consistent with traditional modus operandi, modern insurgencies target the civilian populace, in particular the youth.<sup>90</sup> Because insurgent leaders know they would risk destruction by confronting government and/or intervention forces conventionally, they attempt to demonstrate the ineffectiveness of a government or governing authority through guerrilla warfare or terrorism. The goal is to influence the population to actively or passively support their efforts.<sup>91</sup> Idealistic, impressionable, energetic, and often naïve, adolescents and young adults are at the greatest risk for manipulation by insurgent leaders. With even more numerous populations in the 15 to 29–age range expected in the next 20 years, many of the world's historically unstable or poor–developing countries are fertile ground for insurgencies.<sup>92</sup> The Small Wars Manual and Small Wars do not address the unique and complex challenges faced by military forces operating in small wars where a significant and growing proportion of the population is young.

### INCREASED ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL NON-STATE ACTORS

Increased globalization and the persistent presence of ungoverned areas have given rise to an amplified role for security and stability threats perpetuated by non–state entities. International terrorism, crime, and human and drug trafficking are commonplace in today's world and have increasingly threatened the

<sup>90</sup> Beckett, "The Future of Insurgency", *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 34.

<sup>91</sup> Bard E. O'Neill, Insurgency & Terrorism, Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare, (Brassey's (US), Inc., 1990), 70-73.

<sup>92</sup> John L. Helgeson, "The National Security Implications of Global Demographic Change." Denver World Affairs Council and the Better World Campaign, Denver, CO. 30 Apr. 2002. 21 Sept. 2005 <[http://www.cia.gov/nic/speeches\\_demochange.html](http://www.cia.gov/nic/speeches_demochange.html)>.

security and stability of well-established and modern societies. While criminal gangs and tribal, religious, and ethnic factions have always filled the void of ungoverned areas, the increased availability of transportation and information technology has increased the span of their virulent influence. While Al Qaeda is certainly not the only non-state organization whose international tentacles carry instability around the world, it is the one that is presently in the crosshairs of the United States. The Small Wars Manual and Small Wars do not reflect the challenges of conducting small wars that are transnational in scope.

### INCREASED ROLE OF INTER-AGENCIES

Small Wars, and to a lesser extent the Small Wars Manual, deal with colonial disorders as essentially a military problem with little regard for the legal, diplomatic, social, economic, or political aspects of small wars. Although their treatment of small wars as purely or primarily military conflicts reflects the American and European approach to small wars in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, modern conflicts are far more complex. Because many modern small wars arise out of grievances or perceived grievances with the government or an existing society, resolving those grievances almost always requires non-military national or transnational elements of power. In fact, in most instances the armed forces are not in a lead role and military action must support economic, legal, or political activities. *Neither of these works addresses the important and challenging role of inter-agency cooperation and synchronization.*

## APPENDIX B – HISTORY OF SMALL WARS & THE SMALL WARS MANUAL

The first edition of Small Wars, published in 1896, reflected Callwell's experiences in the Afghan War of 1880 and the first Boer War the following year, his study at the Army Staff College, Camberley, in 1886, and five years in the intelligence branch of the War Office. Callwell served with Greek forces in the Turko-Greek War of 1897, and joined the staff of Sir Redvers Buller on the outbreak of the South African War (second Boer War) in 1899, the year in which a second edition of Small Wars appeared. He fought in several of the major actions of that war while commanding a mobile column against Boer guerrillas. In 1906, Callwell published a third edition of Small Wars that incorporated the experiences of the South African War.<sup>93</sup> Like his illustrious contemporaries, A.T. Mahan and Julien Corbett, Callwell wrote about and reflected his time. However, his work does transcend the narrow boundaries of his historical era. Although Small Wars has never been viewed as official doctrine, the armed forces of western countries have generally treated it as recommended reading. Callwell is highly regarded and widely read today because he possessed a profound knowledge of the unconventional conflict of his day, offered interesting ways of thinking about such conflicts, and because the conditions in which small wars proliferate are multiplying, not decreasing.<sup>94</sup>

The Small Wars Manual was first published in 1940 as NAVMC 2890. It encapsulates the Marine Corps' experiences acquired during the Interwar Period in Haiti,

<sup>93</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, vi.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, vi-vii.



Nicaragua, Panama, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic. An internal debate within the Marine Corps ensued during the Interwar Period as to whether the Marine Corps should focus its doctrine, training, education, and systems acquisition on its historical role in small wars or its possible future in Pacific amphibious conflicts. Many in the traditional camp began to systematically analyze the character and requirements of operations short of war proper, or "Small Wars". Articles on the subject appeared regularly in *The Marine Corps Gazette*. Major S.M. Harrington of the Marine Corps Schools delivered a formal report to the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) entitled "The Strategy and Tactics of Small Wars" in 1921. In addition, Major C. J. Miller in 1923 wrote an 154 page report on the 2nd Marine Brigade's operations in the Dominican Republic titled "Diplomacy and Spurs in the Dominican Republic". The results of such efforts were encapsulated in Small Wars Operations with revisions in 1927 and 1935. The 1940 revision was renamed The Small Wars Manual.<sup>95</sup>

## THE SMALL WARS MANUAL AND SMALL WARS TODAY

American military interest in the study of small wars, training to perform their unique tasks, and overcoming their peculiar challenges, ebbs and flows with the perceived threat of irregular warfare to the national interests of the United States. Produced immediately before World War I, the third edition of Small Wars largely lay dormant during the Great War.<sup>96</sup> The Small Wars Manual, too, was overshadowed by world events

immediately following its production with the advent of World War II. Both of these works received little attention during the Cold War with the exception of the Vietnam years. The Marine Corps' renewed emphasis on the Small Wars Manual led to the employment of combined action platoons (CAPs), one of the few successes of the Vietnam War.<sup>97</sup> Today, illegal immigration, international crime, weapons and drug proliferation, and Islamic totalitarianism threaten the United States' national interests at home and abroad. In this environment, wise military professionals are looking for previous experiences to help in successfully combating these irregular threats. The study of small wars is once again in vogue. Although there are significant differences between their eras and the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Small Wars Manual and Small Wars encompass lessons learned from nearly a century of American and European small war experiences and are masterpieces too rich to be overlooked.



<sup>95</sup> Keith B. Bickel, Mars Learning. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2001) 135, 207-227.

<sup>96</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, vi-vii.

<sup>97</sup>

[http://www3.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML\\_docs/Texts/Scholarly/Brush\\_CAP\\_01.html](http://www3.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Texts/Scholarly/Brush_CAP_01.html)

## APPENDIX C – SMALL WARS & OTHER ASSOCIATED DEFINITIONS

### SMALL WARS

Small Wars Manual – Small wars are operations undertaken under executive authority, wherein military force is combined with diplomatic pressure in the internal or external affairs of another state whose government is unstable, inadequate, or unsatisfactory for the preservation of life and of such interests as are determined by the foreign policy of our Nation.<sup>98</sup>

Small Wars – Small wars include all campaigns other than those where both the opposing sides consist of regular troops. Small wars cover operations varying in their scope and in their conditions. Small wars denote operations of regular armies against irregular, or comparatively speaking irregular, forces.<sup>99</sup>

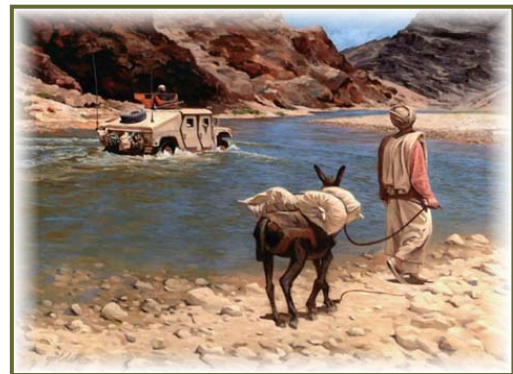
### MILITARY OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR (MOOTW)

DOD Dictionary of Military Terms – Operations that encompass the use of military capabilities across the range of military operations short of war. These military actions can be applied to complement any combination of the other instruments of national power and occur before, during, and after war.<sup>100</sup>

### LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT (LIC)

U.S. Army Field Manual 100-20 – a political-military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful

competition among states. It frequently involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies. Low-intensity conflict ranges from subversion to the use of the armed forces. It is waged by a combination of means, employing political, economic, informational, and military instruments. Low-intensity conflicts are often localized, generally in the Third World, but contain regional and global security implications.<sup>101</sup>



<sup>98</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Small Wars Manual, 1940, 1-1.

<sup>99</sup> Callwell, Small Wars, 21.

<sup>100</sup> <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/data/m/index.html>

<sup>101</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Low\\_intensity\\_conflict](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Low_intensity_conflict)