



More Winners

On February 4, 2010, we published Small Wars Journal [Vol 6 No. 1](#) with the winners from Question 2 of our recent [writing competition](#). Here is Issue No. 2 with the winners from Question 1 and select others.

We are figuratively and literally overwhelmed with submissions of quality content. Look for the next issue on/about April 1, 2010 – no fooling. We will continue to publish some works in single article, too, as quickly as we can.

- Dave & Bill

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“Being Feared and Not Being Hated Can Go Together Very Well”

The Problem of Population Control and Legitimacy in Stability Operations

by Dr. Wayne Wei-siang Hsieh
Grand Prize Winner, Question #1

The rhetoric of a “whole of government” approach, while important and necessary, sometimes reflects unrealistic expectations of what civilian expertise can actually accomplish in a “non-permissive environment” (i.e. active war zones). It can also distract policymakers and U.S. Government agents on the ground from the crucial role physical security plays in counterinsurgency, population control, and the delivery of civilian assistance. While much official policy guidance recognizes this importance (including the excellent interagency USG Counterinsurgency Guide),¹ there remains a dangerous temptation to believe that non-military expertise can exist outside of a larger counterinsurgency strategy, or even substitute for sustained efforts at establishing population control. My own experience as a one-man civilian

Provincial Reconstruction Team representative in a single district of Salah ad Din province in Iraq, in conjunction with other reporting on the difficulties of managing civilian assistance in war zones, indicates that while non-military efforts are indispensable for a successful counterinsurgency, they are impossible in isolation. Furthermore, in an environment such as that of Afghanistan at the time of the writing of this article, they cannot be practically paired with an exclusively counterterrorism strategy.

In the important case of Afghanistan, such an attempt at detaching civilian assistance from a larger counterinsurgency strategy seems to be under consideration. According to the *Washington Post*, “although Obama’s top advisers disagree over whether to adopt a counterterrorism strategy or a counterinsurgency approach in Afghanistan, they have generally reached a consensus on other matters, officials said. That consensus emphasizes the importance of training Afghan security and police forces, as well as improving efforts to build effec-

¹ United States Government Interagency Counterinsurgency Initiative, *U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide* ([Washington, DC]: Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, 2009), <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/119629.pdf> (accessed November 29, 2009), 17.

tive government institutions.”¹ In perhaps the most eloquent argument against the implementation of the comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy called for by GEN Stanley McChrystal, Rory Stewart has argued for a two pronged strategy focused on “development and counter-terrorism. . . . If the West believed it essential to exclude Al-Qaida from Afghanistan, then they could do it with special forces. . . . At the same time the West should provide generous development assistance – not only to keep consent for the counter-terrorism operations, but as an end in itself. . . . good projects could continue to be undertaken in electricity, water, irrigation, health, education, agriculture, rural development and in other areas favored by development agencies.” In Stewart’s view, the idea of building a centralized and democratic Afghan state remains a fool’s errand, and “we should not control and cannot predict the future of Afghanistan. It may in the future become more violent, or find a decentralized equilibrium or a new national unity, but if its communities continue to want to work with us, we can, over 30 years, encourage the more positive trends in Afghan society and help to contain the more negative.”²

Stewart proposes a possible troop footprint of approximately 20,000 troops, which matches Austin Long’s open-source estimate of 13,000 military personnel to support a strict counterterrorism mission.³ While a controversial debates flares in the fall of 2009 over troop levels and the virtues or vices of GEN McChrystal’s proposal for a comprehensive and man-power intensive counterinsurgency strategy, there seems little debate over the value of civil assistance, and some of the most cogent criticism of a counterinsurgency strategy remains committed to a significant program of development assistance. Indeed, in Pakistan, the U.S. Government hopes to conduct a comprehensive development program in conjunction with a counter-terrorism program of Predator drone strikes, due in part to the absence of significant numbers of western ground forces in the country. Due to concerns regarding the diversion of civilian assistance, the proposed Kerry-Lugar bill even at-

¹ Anne E. Kornblut and Scott Wilson, “Obama Focuses on Civilian Effort in Afghanistan Strategy Review,” *Washington Post*, October 15, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/14/AR2009101403801.html> (accessed November 29, 2009).

² Rory Stewart, “The Irresistible Illusion,” *London Review of Books* 31 (July 9, 2009), <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v31/n13/rory-stewart/the-irresistible-illusion> (accessed November 29, 2009).

³ Austin Long, “What a CT Mission in Afghanistan Would Actually Look Like,” http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/10/13/what_a_ct_mission_in_afghanistan_would_actually_look_like (accessed November 29, 2009).



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tempts to separate U.S. development assistance from Pakistani military control, despite the unavoidable importance of the Pakistani army to counterinsurgency in areas such as Waziristan and Swat.⁴

In Pakistan, political realities on the ground in conjunction with the presence of a weak if still functioning state makes the separation of development assistance from counterinsurgency possible; even assuming this will lead to success in Pakistan, no one should believe that such an arrangement could work in Afghanistan. While current U.S. Government counterinsurgency doctrine and policy rightly resists the idea that “clear-hold-

⁴ Karen DeYoung, “U.S. Seeks to Ease Pakistanis’ Concerns Before Obama Signs Aid Bill,” *Washington Post*, October 14, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/14/AR2009101400060.html> (accessed November 29, 2009)

build” requires military and non-military operations to occur in chronological sequence, and that these efforts should in fact occur concurrently,¹ non-military forms of assistance remain dependent on military operations, in the sense that they are literally impossible in the absence of a larger military apparatus that can provide life support, transportation, and physical security for civilian officials. The USG Counterinsurgency Guide recognizes this fundamental reality, but there remains a powerful and misleading temptation to believe that civilian expertise can supplant and replace military resources and efforts. The obvious strain on the American military from repeated Iraq and Afghanistan deployments, combined with a lower degree of mobilization among non-military organs of the U.S. Government, only furthers this misperception.

Furthermore, the reality remains that security should be the primary line of operations, because without it, no other efforts can proceed. Current USG COIN doctrine, with its focus on “population protection” and “security” sometimes evades the fundamental truth that the crucial issue is population *control*—a fact more or less explicitly recognized in some policy guidance, but frequently obscured by “hearts and minds” rhetoric, and emphasis on the delivery of “essential” government services and sustainable economic development. In the first place, sustainable service delivery and economic development simply cannot occur in a chaotic security environment—the region of Iraq the author served in had far more private (and sustainable) economic development than the rest of Salah ad Din province, because the district benefited from a relatively benign security environment, which allowed Tuz Khormatu to benefit from the district’s naturally profitable position astride the Kirkuk-Baghdad road and along east-west routes used by some Iranian pilgrims. This economic development occurred in spite of various failed U.S. Government efforts, including ones supervised by the author, to bring a microfinance program to Tuz, which floundered due to frictions among local Iraqis and increasingly stringent regulations on USG funding for such efforts. The same basic truth applied to Tuz’s essential services, which while weak and problematic, functioned far better than services in those sections of Iraq plagued by more serious (and sometimes catastrophic) security problems.

Rhetoric about “hearts and minds” also further obscures the nature of governmental legitimacy and the role a relative monopoly of violence

plays in establishing legitimacy. Population control requires above all else acquiescence to authority, and in the interim period when U.S. Government forces must establish de facto control in the name of a host government, fear remains a legitimate tool for obtaining that acquiescence. The U.S. Government must avoid the hatred of a host population above all else, but as Machiavelli pointed out, we should not confuse fear with hatred. In Machiavelli’s view, “being feared and not being hated can go together very well.”² For Machiavelli, this in practical terms meant leaving the population’s property and womenfolk unmolested, while giving at least some due process for capital punishment—cultural contexts different from Renaissance Florence will have their own lists of behavior to avoid, but the general point remains. Americans should also not forget that in its own history, Federal supremacy only found vindication in a very large Civil War where a fifth of the southern white military population perished, with a total casualty total numbering around 620,000.³

Among the four traits of legitimacy highlighted by U.S. Army guidance for stability operations—respect for human rights, democratic responsiveness, exercise of effective sovereignty, and limitations on the reach of government—only one involves the maintenance of public order, and even that item embraces the “rule of law” and anticorruption.⁴ Such aspirations remain unobjectionable, and they should remain long-term objectives of U.S. foreign policy, but in chaotic environments such as Iraq and Afghanistan, they can be problematic. Indeed, FM3-07 recognizes that reality on the following page, with wise advice regarding expectations management,⁵ but precisely those sorts of problems remain in the public sphere.

For example, recent proposals to extend counterinsurgency practices to policing reflect a fundamental misunderstanding of the coercive aspects of these sorts of operations. Spencer Ackerman, a noted national security journalist and blogger, has declared that “Petraeus, or one of his disciples, needs to come to Washington, D.C. – not to testify, but to lead the police force.” In Ackerman’s view, “the ‘soldiers aren’t cops’ argument isn’t going to fly here.”⁶ Another journalist and blogger,

² Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Harvey C. Mansfield, 2nd ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 67.

³ Drew Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, (New York: Vintage Civil War Library, 2009), xi.

⁴ Department of the Army Headquarters, *Stability Operations*, FM3-07, 1-29.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1-34.

⁶ Spencer Ackerman, “David Petraeus for D.C. Metro Police Chief,” *Attackerman*, November 20, 2009,

¹ Department of the Army Headquarters, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, FM3-24.2, 7-1.

Nathan Hodge, has felt obliged to do a rather hostile write-up on the phenomenon of informing domestic policing with counterinsurgency principles, including attempts to use counterinsurgency expertise from the Naval Postgraduate School in Salinas and speculation on how one might bring counterinsurgency to Oakland.¹ While some overlap obviously exists between counterinsurgency and policing, how does one transfer the potent effects of fear of death by Hellfire missile to the mean streets of Salina, CA? The short answer is that there is no such plausible transfer, and there is a difference between domestic policing in a liberal democracy and even stabilization operations, much less the highly lethal counterinsurgency efforts still going on in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We cannot ignore the lethal aspect of even the most well-intentioned and benign forms of stability operations. In challenging environments such as Afghanistan, where even “neutral” humanitarian organizations such as the United Nations come under attack as the agents of malicious western influence—see, for example, the various attacks on UN missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan—it is hard to imagine how development assistance could be paired with a purely counterterrorism approach. The great virtue of counterterrorism operations—their ostensibly lower cost and more modest objectives (i.e. killing or detaining high value targets)—also encapsulate serious limits. In the absence of an effort to establish population control, environments such as Afghanistan will prove to be barren environments for development assistance that could plausibly further American interests. When the well-informed Stewart talks about development assistance continuing “if its communities continue to want to work with us,” he presumably also realizes that “communities” encapsulates less some amorphous sense of public opinion, but structures of power and legitimacy based in part on fear. A solid numerical majority in some hardscrabble village may desire a well, but if the Taliban militia that controls the area sees such a project as a species of western encroachment, then no well will be built, no matter how well meaning and culturally adept a local aid professional might be.

<http://attackerman.firedoglake.com/2009/11/20/david-petraeus-for-d-c-metro-police-chief/> (accessed November 29, 2009).

¹ Nathan Hodge, “Counterinsurgency to Fight U.S. Crime? No, Thanks,” *Danger Room*, November 24, 2009, <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/11/counterinsurgency-to-fight-us-crime-no-thanks/> (accessed November 29, 2009).

In a scenario such as Afghanistan at the time of this article’s writing, U.S. Government forces will have to both compel and earn the acquiescence of the population to an authority that will be perceived to be foreign and alien, before indigenous governance can take hold. We should not delude ourselves with regards to how alien a foreign military presence must seem to a local population, and how friction-inducing even the most culturally astute and savvy forces can be. In order to make up for this “soft” legitimacy deficit, fear by necessity remains an indispensable tool of leverage. In its fundamental usefulness lies its profound danger, and without strict controls, counterinsurgent forces can easily push coercive measures into the realm of hatred-producing practices that are both morally dubious and strategically counterproductive. Indeed, because the almost universal tendency is to overuse coercion, almost all policy guidance should err on the “soft” side, and for this reason, I remain fundamentally sympathetic to current COIN guidance within the military, which takes this approach. Nevertheless, doctrine and practice must recognize the need to combine both lethal and non-lethal operations, and FM3-07 wisely declares that “in the conduct of full spectrum operations, an inherent, complementary relationship exists between lethal and nonlethal actions; every situation requires a different combination of violence and restraint.”²

Some of those lethal actions involve intrusive, violent, and disruptive actions that result in fatalities and detentions that do not and should not correspond to domestic law enforcement. In environments like pre-Security Agreement Iraq and current-day Afghanistan, this remains an unpleasant reality for those who want to focus only on development and more obviously benevolent pursuits. When the author went through his PRT training, he was correctly instructed in how to deal with requests from local contacts to find the status of a relative who had been detained by Coalition Forces in Iraq—and this was a course for civilian experts engaged in non-lethal operations.

Indeed, even in the Tuz district, which was relatively secure, the author still remembers facilitating a visit by a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers representative with regards to a school construction project in a small Sunni Arab village called Hafriah, which had had security issues in the past—earlier in my tour, a mukhtar from the village had been assassinated for supporting the Government of Iraq Reconciliation process, and a U.S. Army patrol placing barriers for provincial election

² Department of the Army, *Stability Operations*, 2-1.

security had also been shot at without effect. I and my military colleagues were inspecting the school site when I spotted an older Iraq gentleman holding a piece of paper looking as if he was caught between two desires—one to approach us, and the other to hang back—and considering the appearance of my military colleagues, with all their body armor and the paraphernalia of war, this was a not unreasonable reaction. I had my Army-issue body armor on, but continue to wonder if my obvious civilian status might have made the party less intimidating. Regardless, I gestured to the gentleman to indicate he should feel free to approach, and he did, with the all-too-common story of a son detained by Coalition Forces. My military colleagues dutifully took down his information, we dutifully made sure he had already pursued the case through local Iraqi Police channels, and we all went on our respective ways.

For all I know, the gentleman's son was a hardened and murderous insurgent, but the point is that there is no way to sugarcoat the gap that must exist between the foreign forces who in the dead of night take men away, and the population for whom these are brothers, sons, and fathers. Indeed, I still vividly remember stories about how my PRT Team Leader had to help manage the fallout of U.S. forces inadvertently killing the son of the provincial governor during a raid. This presents a difficult—if manageable—problem (and in the case of the provincial governor, much effort by American civilian and military leaders did repair the breach), because lethal force remains an indispensable part of both counterinsurgency and stabilization operations. It is telling that GEN McChrystal, who has incurred some criticism for putting restrictions on the use of air power and lethal force as the ISAF commander in Afghanistan, superintended the most lethal of “kinetic” operations in Iraq conducted by Joint Special Operations Command during the Surge years of 2007-8.¹

As ISAF commander in Afghanistan, GEN McChrystal hopes to find the right balance of “violence and restraint” for the circumstances he finds himself in, but however much he tips the scale toward “restraint,” some measure of violence will be necessary. And I would argue, precisely because of the cultural and linguistic gap that separates ISAF forces from the Afghan population, more “violence” will be needed to acquire the ne-

cessary leverage to overcome the resistance of insurgent groups than would be required by indigenous forces in a more conventional law enforcement setting. Without more organic sources of legitimacy during the early phases of a counterinsurgency, the counterinsurgent will have to use the ability to maintain public order by force to gain enough leverage to control the population before a host nation's more culturally acceptable forces can establish control of the population. This harsh reality need not compromise the ethical and strategic worth of any given counterinsurgency effort, but both counterinsurgency and stability operations should not be confused with social work or even policing in a liberal democracy.

Indeed, only by better understanding the potent role fear plays in producing legitimacy can U.S. Government agents fully understand the ability of insurgents to control a population. Insurgents might have certain advantages in appealing to cultural legitimacy—a common language and culture, for example—but as the Iraqi experience with Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) had shown, insurgents sometimes bring their own radically foreign ideologies into the human terrain of a population in play between insurgents and counterinsurgents. In such cases, insurgents can also use fear as a tool for producing enough acquiescence to gain the legitimacy necessary for population control, although as Al Qaeda in Iraq shows, insurgents must also avoid the mistake of transforming fear into hate. While I have been generally impressed by my Army colleagues' counterinsurgency awareness, I have also detected a frustration among some with local passivity in the face of insurgent intimidation—a perception that certainly has echoes stateside—indeed, powerful ones both among those in and out of uniform.

The longer we use the rhetoric of hearts and minds, with its emphasis on the idea that good intentions mixed with financial generosity should somehow magically translate into legitimacy and cooperation from foreign peoples struggling in between insurgent and counterinsurgent forces, the longer we obscure the importance of fear in determining where a vulnerable population casts its lot. The population in a contested area has no prospect of returning to a secure home where their families reside—they must make careful calculations with regards to their allegiances, and at stake are the lives of both themselves and their kinfolk. In addition to providing a credible degree of protection from insurgents, the counterinsurgent must also compete in the arena of fear—there is no need to elicit the same degree of fear as an insurgent might

¹ Bob Woodward, “Why Did Violence Plummet? It Wasn't Just the Surge,” *Washington Post*, September 8, 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/09/07/AR2008090701847.html> (accessed November 29, 2009).

inspire, but *enough* fear must be extracted to acquire the acquiescence necessary for legitimacy and population control. The counterinsurgent must strive to present concrete benefits to a population—benefits best provided in many cases by “soft” civilian expertise—along with some measure of protection from insurgent abuse and retaliation, but it must also present a credible threat of sanctions for those who choose the path of insurgency. Whether it be fear of indefinite detention in some prison at Bagram, or a bomb plummeting out of the sky on an insurgent’s head, the counterinsurgent must present a credible threat of potentially lethal consequences for actively resisting the legitimacy of the counterinsurgent.

Finding the best “combination of violence and restraint” is obviously a difficult problem, but once again, as the Stability Operations manual recognizes, “an inherent, complementary relationship exists between lethal and nonlethal actions.” Not only does an attempt to detach development assistance from lethal counterinsurgency operations on the ground in an environment such as current-day Afghanistan flounder on practical problems with physical security for civilian aid officials and potential Afghan partners, they also misunderstand the nature of population control and legitimacy. In environments such as Afghanistan and, to a lesser extent, Iraq, insurgent groups see any form of western aid as inherently illegitimate, and such developmental assistance requires the protection of a counterinsurgent that can use some measure of lethal force to control the population.

As someone who worked in the non-lethal side of stability operations at the company level, and who fully believes in its importance, it is important to highlight the symbiotic importance of lethal and non-lethal operations in these difficult environments.

* * *

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He immigrated to the United States as an infant from Taiwan and grew up in Alhambra—a suburb of Los Angeles with a large overseas Chinese population. From Alhambra High School he went on to Yale University, B.A. in History (2000), and University of Virginia, PhD in History (2004). He joined the U.S. Naval Academy History Department in 2005.

From July 2008 to June 2009, Hsieh was on interagency detail with the U.S. State Department in Iraq, where he served as the Tuz Satellite Lead for the Salah ad Din Provincial Reconstruction Team. The most important of his duties centered on facilitating ethnic and political reconciliation in the Tuz district (approximately 150,000 inhabitants). He received a Commander's Award for Civilian Service from 3 BSTB (Department of the Army), and a Meritorious Honor Award from the U.S. Department of State (Embassy Baghdad).

The SWJ Writing Competition

This issue presents the prize winners for Question 1 of our first writing competition, along with other selected works. Question 2 winners were published in [Vol 6 No. 1](#). Question 1, as it was put forward at <http://smallwarsjournal.com/competition> was:

Security vs. [Jobs & Services & etc.] -- horse and cart, or chicken and egg?

The “security is the military’s job” camp at one extreme expects more order than can be obtained by kinetic measures without a scorched earth approach. Alternately, it demands that the armed forces exceed their organizational mandate in early phases and then obediently (and wastefully?) hop back into their military box until things go awry again. Other camps may err by expecting too much from non-military actors in non-permissive environments, understating the risks non-military actors already do or should accept, or tinkering with building massive non-lethal expeditionary capabilities that may be unsustainable.

What does security really mean in a small war, how much is needed when, and how do you make meaningful security gains through the pragmatic application of affordable capabilities? How does security relate as an intermediate objective or an end state? Cite examples of real successes or failures.

No Silver Bullet:

Establishing Enduring Governance and Security through Micro Level Actions

by Brad Fultz

Honorable Mention, Question #1

What does security mean in a small war?

There is a popular axiom in the combat arms community: 'Fire without movement is wasted ammunition, and movement without fire is suicide. This adage drives home the lessons of fire and maneuver to the small unit leader. Similar to this is another proposed moral of small wars: effective governance without established security is impossible, and establishing security without effective governance is a waste of time and unnecessary risk to combat troops lives. Security in small wars is directly connected to governmental progress. The two are inseparable. Security establishment, at all levels of operations, from the squad to the brigade must directly support the goal of establishing effective governance. Security in a small war means that institutions are able to conduct business in a manner that contributes to effective governance in accordance with local norms. To accomplish this, institutions must be developed at the *local level with local support*. Providing the ability for local governance to take place is the true measure of security in small wars. By using the limited resources at hand of the US military it is essential that security is established at the grassroots level, just like governance must be established at the grassroots level. The top-down method of governance and security establishment is antithetical to the realities of the traditional societies in which the US is currently conducting operations, and is a massive waste of resources. Only when security and governance are established at the local level, can these successes be transferred to centralized control, and not the other way around.

Three case studies illustrate the inseparable connection between local security and effective local governance. The awakening in Western Iraq in 2006, The First Anglo-Afghan War between 1839 and 1842, and the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan during the 1980's provide the experience for the case studies. The security or governance debate is not a question of chicken or egg, but a statement of cooperation and interdependence between the various agencies within the US bureau-

cracy that ultimately lead to a successful counter-insurgency campaign.

Iraq Awakening 2006

In August 2006 Marine Colonel Peter Devlin, the senior Marine Intelligence Officer in Anbar wrote an eye raising classified document that circulated amongst ranking military and civilian decision makers and was leaked to Tom Ricks of the *Washington Times*. The basic outline of the paper stated that the war in the Al-Anbar province was on a dire course, it suggested that if significant steps were not taken to improve security and governance immediately, the Al-Anbar province would be lost to the Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) network, the principal local alternative organization.¹ In December of 2006, about three months following Colonel Devlin's report, *Time Magazine* online ran an article titled "Turning Iraq's Tribes against Al-Qaeda." The article outlined Army Brigade Commander Colonel Sean McFarland's agreement with Sheikh Abdul Sittar that began the cooperation between US and Iraqi tribal forces. This partnership contributed greatly to the end of the insurgency in Al-Anbar province.² What is it that caused the rapid change in the insurgency, from near defeat at the hands of AQI to victory? It is believed that the Sunni-Shia split and the civil war that resulted was a prime motivating factor. It is also widely reported and accepted that the extremist interpretation of Islam coupled with the severe violence used by AQI was a primary motivator behind the tribal shift in loyalties. However, without viewing this transition from a grassroots political or from governance standpoint and fully appreciating the motivations behind the aligning of the tribes with their previous enemy, any assessment is incomplete.

¹ Ricks, Tom. "Situation Called Dire in West Iraq". Washington Post. 11 September 2006. Accessed on 22 September 2009.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/09/10/AR2006091001204.html>

² Kukis, Mark. "Turning Iraq's tribes against Al-Qaeda." Time.com. 26 December 2006. Accessed on 22 September 2009.

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1572796,00.html>

In November of 2005, during Operation Steel Curtain, while occupying a small house with my platoon outside of the city of Husaybah in far western Iraq, I held a meeting with three local leaders. These local leaders had three primary concerns. First, a generator belonging to the local mosque was missing since coalition forces had come through the village. Secondly, the Marines were taking local livestock to supplement their MRE diets and not paying for the valuable animals. Both concerns could be easily addressed. The third request however caught me off-guard. The local leaders demanded I do something pertaining to uncontrolled Iranian influence in Baghdad. The January 2005 elections and the October 2005 Constitutional Referendum were two major political events that took place and the lack of Sunni participation in these two rounds of elections had left the Sunni tribes out in the cold in the current Iraqi political system. It was becoming apparent that Baghdad was developing a constitutional political system with or without Sunni participation regardless of credibility. This was cause of considerable concern amongst those that had benefitted from the status quo under Saddam Hussein, and the instability following his downfall. Many other Sunnis simply feared a balance of power shift towards the Shia. Simply put, it was time to start participating in the democratic process out of fear of being left out of centralized decisions. This development was summed up lucidly by journalist Nir Rosen in his testimony to congress:

“And if war is politics by other means, then the Shiites won, they now control Iraq. Fortunately for the planners of the new strategy, events in the Iraqi civil war were working in their favor. The Sunnis had lost. They realized they could no longer fight the Americans and the Shiites, and many decided to side with the Americans, especially because many Sunnis identified their Shiite enemy with Iran, America’s sworn enemy as well”¹

Although Rosen’s testimony reflects the popular assessment of the divisions in Iraqi society, it does not completely answer the question as to why the tribes in Anbar finally decided to align themselves with the coalition and against AQI. Participating in the democratic process was not just a matter of creating civil participation amongst the local populous; it was changing local paradigms in the face of the current realities. The security and

governance situation at the local level was not conducive to advancing the interests of the Anbar tribes. Al-Qaeda of Iraq needed to be confronted.

The security situation in the Anbar Province demanded improvement in order for political progress to be made. The influence of tribal leaders that historically had deep economic and unofficial political interests in western Iraq was being severely threatened. Security and stability norms existing under the previous regime were not being replaced by the Marines and this vacuum enabled the AQI network to fill that void. This new, radical organization did not follow the traditional patterns of tribal Iraqis in to their new governance style, and they were also not including the historical power brokers in its regional emergence. This was a fundamental mistake made by AQI at the local level. Not only were tribal powers being cut out of politics in Baghdad, they were principally losing influence locally, and this is what drove the Sheikhs to their alliance with the Marines.² Hence of the three concerns of the local Sheikhs I sat down with in that dusty western town back in 2005, the first two were local concerns. Getting those answered had the potential to improve those gentlemen’s local influence. The events in Baghdad were and remain admittedly important; however it was the developments at the local, or grassroots level that understandably, held priority and led to action on the part of the tribes.

The shifting of power within the Anbar province, and not the missteps taken by a new, perceived illegitimate administration in Baghdad, enraged the tribal leaders in the Anbar province and led to a violent resistance from tribal members, many of whom were former soldiers under Sadaam Hussein. The empowering of traditionally lower classes, emergence of religious leaders having previously unknown influence, and the threat to informal business networks, not to mention protection of local women, motivated the unconventional alliance between the tribes and the Marines. The influence of AQI in the region was not only a threat to the coalition, but it also gave rise to those that are typically vulnerable to extremist recruitment, the poor, uneducated lower classes.³ This commissioned peasants to warrior and near heroic status. The increased influence given to Imams placed religious leaders in a position of power that

¹ Rosen, Nir. Prepared Testimony Before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. April 2008. Accessed on 22 Sept 2009. <http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2008/RosenTestimony080402p.pdf>

² “Tribal Movements and Sons of Iraq.” Institute for the Study of War. 2007-2009. accessed 28 Oct. 2009. <http://www.understandingwar.org/theme/tribal-movements-and-sons-of-iraq>

³ Munson, Pete. *Iraq in Transition*. Potomac Books 2009. Pg 214.

was foreign to the region. Previously religious leaders stayed in the mosque while the sheikhs conducted business.¹ The losers in this new power paradigm were those that had previously been the heads of the informal power structure, namely the sheikhs and other significant tribesman. Behind this former power structure was also the economic well-being of those with clout, to include smuggling, protection rackets and business interests that the instability created by AQI was interfering in. So both the local influence and economic interests of tribal leaders was being compromised by the presence of AQI.² Therefore, the awakening was not a result of top down centralized political decisions from Baghdad; it was the shift in the delicate local balance of power of Iraqi tribal society that led the Sheikhs to defend their turf for pragmatic motivations.

By mid 2006 the sheikhs across Anbar were losing considerable influence vis-à-vis AQI and consequently respect locally. David Kilcullen in his comprehensive look at insurgencies and counter insurgency strategy states “A sheikh is first and foremost a local politician whose power derives from his groups support.”³ If the influence (*wasta* or *nafooz* in Arabic and Dari) of the sheikh is jeopardized then he will align with whomever necessary in the name of tribal preservation. In this case study the existence of security and governance are directly related. Traditional Sunni power brokers (i.e. tribal leaders) had been pushed aside from the governing, or political process at the local level. The lack of security and the increasing presence and strength of the AQI network forced this upsetting of norms. This triggered frustration from the tribes and was one of the key variables leading to the tribal awakening.

Afghanistan

The first of the two case studies examines the British adventure in Afghanistan and illustrates how injecting a foreign presence into a traditional society causes a local uproar, and local problems. Newly created issues needed to be addressed at the local and unofficial level. History dictates that failure to do so results in disaster for the foreign variable. In the second case study investigating the Soviets, instillation of a non-religious, centrist top-

down communist system into a traditional society such as Afghanistan was a recipe for resistance. Additionally by adopting brutal means to suppress the insurgency, the resolve of the Mujihadeen simply grew stronger. Similar to the British so many years prior, the Soviets were forced to depart Afghanistan not having achieved their political goals.

In the shadows and distant mountain passes of 19th century Central Asia British adventurers squared off against Russian spies in the highly romanticized Great Game, however this was more than a game for those who participated. It was a dangerous endeavor of *realpolitik* that was imperialistic adventurism and greed hidden in hawkish rhetoric.⁴ In 1839, British forces under the command of Sirs McNaughton and Burnes accompanied Shah Shurja, an Afghan king who had been in exile for 30 years, and placed him back on the throne in Kabul unseating Dost Mohommad. What followed was nearly three years of occupation, known as the First Anglo Afghan War in which British forces held garrisons in Kabul, Kalat and Kandahar, and also defeating a strongpoint in the historical city of Ghazni. The British were most concerned with establishing a friendly government to serve as a buffer between Russia and India, but by applying alien norms to traditional methods of governance, it led to an absolute collapse of security for the British in Afghanistan, and therefore were unable to meet strategic objectives.

By 1840 the British dominated population centers considered central to controlling the country. In order to keep the tribes at bay, bribes and pay offs were used to purchase allegiance, but the tribes were not motivated by money alone. The *nafooz* or influence lost vis-à-vis the hated *farangee* (derogatory term for foreigner that is reserved solely for the British)⁵ enraged local tribesmen who adopted an anti-foreign cause rallying thousands to their resistance that continually challenged the British in the country. Tribal leaders were natural authority figures, but an illegitimate king supported by infidels and their advanced weaponry, replaced their positions of importance.

“The existence of a foreign army supporting the king also upset the balance by which Afghanistan had previously been governed. Tribal leaders who had formerly been essential supporters for their king...were now uncalled for. The (British)

¹ Kilcullen, David. *The Accidental Guerilla*. Oxford Press 2009. Pgs 79-83. Mr. Kilcullen claims in Afghanistan that the presence of the Taliban upsets the tribal norms, irresponsibly empowering religious leaders over tribal leaders, a similar phenomenon took place in Iraq.

² *ibid* Pg. 172

³ *ibid* Pg. 157

⁴ This subject is out of the scope of this paper but for an in-depth look at the Great Game see Peter Hopkirk's classic. *The Great Game*. Kodansha International Press. 1992.

⁵ Dupree, Louis. *Afghanistan*. Oxford Press 1997. P. 378

since first stepping foot in the country had (paid the tribes off) in every direction...but the unusual sense of uselessness amongst the tribes...did not sit well."¹

Although the British controlled the Afghan king in Kabul, they did not allow the Shah Shuja to reign according to cultural norms as indicated in a letter penned by Sir McNaughton regarding the current state of affairs in Kabul, and the prospects for leaving stability behind. "Had we left Shah Shooja alone, after seating him on the throne, the case would have been different. He would have adopted the Afghan method of securing his sovereignty. But we insisted upon his acting according to Europeans notion of policy, and we left all his enemies intact—(the Shah remains) powerless, only because we are here."²

The British made numerous mistakes in Afghanistan to include intimate relations with local women, backing an unpopular ruler in Shah Shuja, allowed abuses committed by those Afghans who did have support from the British and the reduction in payments made to the tribes for security,³ but these are simply issues arising from a faltered strategy of governance and security establishment. By placing their patron on the throne and squaring off with the tribes in a number of major battles, many in the British leadership assessed that the enemy would be subdued and through force would support the new king and the presence of foreign troops.⁴ This assessment would prove to be horribly wrong. As Kabul rose up and the tribes gained the tactical upper hand, British forces garrisoned in Kabul were forced to retreat back through the mountains to the post in Jalalabad. This bloody ending of the First Anglo-Afghan War is depicted in the famous 'Remnants of War' painting by Elizabeth Butler, in which one lone battered horseman, Dr. William Brydon, is illustrated surviving the ordeal. In all 16,000 British soldiers, families and servants began the retreat march in January of 1942; a number of servants did eventually make it back to India, and some family members were returned after being kidnapped; but only one member of the British army lived.

This case study highlights the inability of the British to gain grassroots support for the government that they installed. By using bribes to win hearts and minds the British merely bought temporary security for themselves and the illegitimate

administration they propped up. This was not in any way a durable solution to solve a problem of governance. Bribes were not the way to transform a traditional society, or establish security. The mere presence of foreigners in a tribal environment shifts the balance of power that ultimately is rearranged to have new winners and losers. In the case of the First Anglo-Afghan War the losers in this new dynamic were not accounted for properly, and therefore there was a natural resistance to the new authority. Consequently the British Kabul garrison was slaughtered. It is difficult to make the counterfactual argument that had the British used methods in accordance with customary norms, the mission would have been more successful, but it is considerably more difficult to imagine that the outcome of the First Anglo-Afghan War could have been worse for the British.

The situation in 19th century Kabul compares to the one observed in the Iraq case study detailed above. Traditional leaders at the local level are replaced by an outside force that upsets the local dynamic leaving former unofficial power brokers with a significant loss of influence. This outside force does not adopt local norms to leave a lasting peace, otherwise attempts to instill foreign concepts that are insulting to local customs. AQI, in their unique manner of establishing governance, did it to the tribal leaders in the Anbar Province. The British and their Gurkha armies did it in Victorian Era Afghanistan, the repercussion in both cases being mass scale resistance. What many have incorrectly identified as radicals motivated through religious means, is merely former influential unofficial individuals losing significant local prestige, and turning them into an active enemy. With reference to these individuals and the existing structure, security and governance should be established. These institutions must go hand in hand, and requires both be created at local levels and supported by local norms and local positions of authority.

In order to establish security and governance in a country an invading army could also opt for the heavy handed approach and despite international outcry, violating the International Law of War and human rights, one could argue that this is a successful model to establish security and governance in a top down manner that requires rule through force. Although, this policy may have limited short term success, establishing enduring security and government systems through the sword has proven in numerous historical cases to be unsustainable. The example of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan provides the next case study and displays that nothing unifies a people and breaks

¹ Tanner, Stephen. *Afghanistan*. De Capo Press 2002. Pg 152

² *ibid* p.156

³ Dupree p.384-385

⁴ Tanner p. 153-154

down ethnic, tribal, geographical, economic, and social lines, quicker than a brutal foreign power introducing alien concepts while conducting war crimes on one's own soil.

Soviets in Afghanistan

More than 130 years following the slaughter of the British garrison during the retreat to Jalalabad, a new Afghan flag was revealed. The flag was now the color red (signifying Marxism) and no longer green. (Color of Islam).¹ Additionally the Soviet backed government instilled new drastic economic and cultural policies that drove rural Afghanistan ablaze in resistance, and on 24 December 1979 forces of the Soviet Union entered Afghanistan en masse in order to protect the revolution, install a new, more competent pro-communist regime under Babrak Karmal, and put down the resistance. Like the British so many years earlier, the Soviets garrisoned and controlled major cities, but had limited influence in the countryside. Although development and advancements had occurred in the past century in Afghanistan, cultural norms remained. The tribes and the mulahs still held great influence over society, while foreign backed central administrations were powerless to effect actions at the tribal level.

By January 1, 1980 Soviet forces controlled strategic locations throughout Kabul, as well as government centers, ammo depots, airfields and communication centers countrywide. Initially the Mujahideen countered these actions with military opposition, however, the insurgent resistance quickly realized they were no match for the overwhelming firepower of the Soviet Army in large scale battles. The insurgency morphed and centered itself on the rural villages and was decentralized based on tribal and ethnic lines with the various Mujahideen cells commanded by influential locals with little military experience.² The Soviets countered these decentralized resistance actions by attempting to build up a loyal Afghan army that was firm in its support to the Communist government in which they represented. Despite the Soviet efforts and the support they enjoyed amongst certain elite classes in Kabul the communist forces they developed became an army that was susceptible to periodic large scale desertions, ultimately proving the Soviet efforts at getting local forces to do their dirty work as feeble.

¹ Jones, Seth G. *In the Graveyard of Empires: Americas War in Afghanistan*. W.W. Norton & Company 2009. P.14

² Jalali, Ali Ahmed and Lester Grau. *The Other Side of the Mountain. Mujahideen Tactics in the Soviet-Afghan War*. USMC Studies and Analysis Division. Quantico VA. P. xviii.

Viewed as an occupier, and growing desperate in their inability to quell the resistance, the Soviets adopted a strategy to separate the Mujahideen fighters from their support. This equated into focusing on the rural communities, which made up 85% of the population. The Soviet Army took incredibly brutal steps in order to intimidate the population and used force to prevent locals from providing support to the Mujahideen resistance fighters.³ The aggressive actions of the Soviet Army drove millions into neighboring Pakistan. Refugee camps were established providing the breeding grounds for the resistance and a place of sanctuary outside the strong arm of Soviet might. This provided the sanctuary necessary for the resistance to grow, receive outside support and continue to resist. The Soviet defeat in Afghanistan however was not caused by brutal decisions at the tactical level; these mistakes were made in Moscow when determining the best way to expand communist ideology to the south.

A fundamental misunderstanding of how to establish good governance in traditional societies such as rural Afghanistan led to Soviet defeat. It was the attempt to establish a top down system of administration that imposed on social norms created over generations. "Moscow's original sin was in trying to create a stable, socialized Afghanistan with a strong central government. Central control is inimical to the Afghan political culture and way of life. No amount of military power or political bargaining could bring that about. The harder the Soviets tried, the more people resisted."⁴ From the moment the Soviets entered Afghanistan, they were faced with resistance from a decentralized enemy, from various tribal and ethnic backgrounds, which viewed the Russians as anti-Islamic and supporting an illegitimate government,⁵ and by 1984 it was a complete disaster for the Russians as a CIA report assessed, "The Soviets have had little success in reducing the insurgency or winning acceptance by the Afghan people, and the Afghan resistance continues to grow stronger and to command widespread popular support. Fighting has gradually spread to all parts of Afgha-

³ Alexiev, Alex. "The War in Afghanistan: Soviet Strategy and the State of the Resistance. RAND Corporation. November 1984. accessed on 20 October 2009.

<http://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/2008/P7038.pdf>

⁴ Washington Times. "Lesson from Soviets in Afghanistan."

Washington Times, 18 Feb 2009. accessed 28 Oct 2009.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/feb/18/lessons-from-soviets-in-afghanistan/>

⁵ Lopez, Andrea. "Countering the Afghan Insurgencies: The Soviets and the Americans, the First Years." ISA 48th Annual Convention. 28 Feb-March 3 2007. pp. 4-5

nistan.”¹ The Soviet intervention on behalf of the central government was doomed to failure from the beginning.

Similar to the British case, the Soviets in Afghanistan were a concentrated force, which attempted to impose their will in a top down, centralized format. Both military operations resulted in defeat for the occupying force. The British and the Russian case studies provide evidence that despite having influence over the seats of the power in Kabul, it was in no means linked to expanding any form of governance, or security throughout the country. The British and the Russians failed to understand that development at the local level is more important than centralized systems for establishing lasting security and governance. The latter case studies are admittedly counterfactual arguments, meaning claims that steps not taken by the occupying armies led to its demise. However for the discussion of this paper and its obvious relevance to current U.S. operations, the lessons learned should not be ignored. It becomes clear that both the British and the Soviets failed to coincide with traditional norms of behavior in Afghanistan. As a result, despite considerable loss of wealth and life, efforts to establish functioning governance and security failed. The experiences of both the British and the Russians should not be lost on current military operations as the US attempts to establish security and governance simultaneously in the counterinsurgency battles it is waging.

Recommendations

1) Counterinsurgency elements, be they military or administrative, must find local answers to local security and administrative problems. By propping up government forces that lack legitimacy, we are essentially weakening the institutions we are indeed attempting to create. We are preaching responsible governance, civic participation and security. Simultaneously US forces have to explain rigged elections, corrupt officials and bribe demanding police. This places both military and State Department officials in an incredibly precarious position. We are simply seen as the strong arm of a broken, corrupt system. It is essential we find traditional local methods to establish a system that is unfriendly to insurgents and supportive of local stability. Additionally it is necessary these institutions of governance and security have local legiti-

macy so as those participating will display loyalty to its institutions.

2) Coalition forces need to address one issue at a time. This means that establishing a strong central government with functioning institutions that are mutually supporting and all significant posts are filled with democratically elected personnel while simultaneously, fighting an insurgency is a bridge too far for the limited resources that the US government possesses. By addressing this shortfall in a realistic manner we can understand that the mission can be accomplished, but not in a shortened timeframe, or under conditions where there is a doubt as to the commitment of long term presence in the counter insurgency battle.

3) Do not enter an area unless there is intent to stay there. The clear, hold, build model is the perfect modern day example of proper counterinsurgency strategy. It focuses sufficient resources in a concentrated area, eliminates resistance fighters, maintains a presence, and proceeds to develop both governing and security institutions. By leaving an area before establishing security and governance institutions, legitimacy is weakened considerably.

Conclusion

So why are these case studies relevant? How do they relate to the fundamental question of how to establish security and governance in an effective manner? It is important that we as a military, accepting our resources are limited that we focus on both security and government development at the local level. If we treat each region as a mini-state that historically is decentralized from the central government our chance of establishing lasting security and governance is greatly improved. By trying to install a top down governance style we are simply introducing alien concepts into a society where actors will behave in protection of their own local interest, and will not be persuaded by altruistic concepts of strong central government. In Iraq during 2006, as this the first case study indicates, as well as Afghanistan during the British and Soviet occupations there was a marked absence of institutions being centrally established that were respected locally or were working in the interests of the local unofficial power brokers. This was the key mistake of the foreign actors, and a mistake American policy and decision makers cannot ignore. Both security and governance institutions at the local level will enable progress that will ultimately result in lasting peace and responsible governance. At the time when effective systems at the local level

¹ Central Intelligence Agency, Directorate of Intelligence, “The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: Five Years After,” May 1985. Released by the National Security Archive. Taken from Jones (2009) p.35.

are established we can turn to fitting the proper pieces into a functioning central government. Only at that time will security self-identify as what it truly should be; an intermediate objective that is merely a means to effective governance, the desired end state.

The constructivist level of analysis is the way International Relations experts describe a phenomenon as to how social norms developed over time drive macro level decisions. Simply stated, how individuals within a society behave will ultimately determine how they are governed.¹ Nowhere does a constructivist understanding of traditional systems become more important than in counterinsurgency warfare. It is widely understood and reported that in order to defeat an insurgent, you must win over the same people the insurgent is trying to control. By installing top down governmental or security systems, we are taking self-defeating measures. Although it is easy to organize a centralized system in which all parts of the country are loyal to the center, historically the systems of occupied countries US forces are currently conducting operations in do not function in such ways. Developing security and good governance must go hand in hand. Progress in one element assists in development of the other.

Returning to the fundamental question: How does the US military make meaningful security gains through the pragmatic application of affordable capabilities? Consider one final example of security and governance progress taken from Afghanistan: After eight years of intervention and more than 37 billions of dollars in aid² the recent UN Human Development Index which measure access to education, life expectancy and living standards: Afghanistan ranks 181 of 182 countries worldwide.³ There is vast concerns regarding the legitimacy of the current government⁴ and October

of 2009 marked the deadliest month of the conflict for U.S. troops.⁵ It is time to reassess the top down strategy. Establishing a government that is structured on unnatural local norms is not meeting the goals of our increasingly impatient nation. Governance and security establishment at the grassroots level should become the focal point of future efforts as this is the most pragmatic way to make meaningful security gains with limited resources.

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¹ International Relations Theory is way out of the scope of this paper, however for a deeper understanding of Constructivism, see Alexander Wendt; he is considered one of the founders of modern social constructivist theory. He has authored numerous articles and his book is *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 1999 will provide sufficient information on the topic.

² Katzman, Kenneth. "Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security, and US Policy." Congressional Research Service. 14 Aug 2009.

³ IRIN.com Humanitarian News and Analysis. "Afghanistan slipping down Human Development Index. 20 October 2009. <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=86435>. accessed 20 Oct. 2009

⁴ Stewart, Phil. "U.S. decision can't wait for Afghan legitimacy: Gates." Reuters. 19 Oct. 2009. Accessed 8 November 2009. www.us.mobile.reuters.com/article/newsmaps/idUSTRE59Jo8M20091020

⁵ Michaels, Jim. "US deaths reach record levels in Afghanistan." USA Today. 27 October 2009. Accessed 2 November 2009. http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2009-10-27-afghanistan-deaths-troops_N.htm

Towards a Comprehensive Understanding of Violence in Small Wars

By William Harris

Honorable Mention, Question #1

The Athenian General Thucydides recorded in his account of the Peloponnesian War, which waged for decades between the alliance networks of Athens and Sparta, striking accounts of every form of warfare known to the 5th century BC Greeks. In writing about the events at Corcyra, a city that was torn by civil strife generated by the surrogate insurgent forces working to advance the competing aims of the two Greek powers, Thucydides writes:

[T]he Corcyrans were engaged in butchering those of their fellow-citizens whom they regarded as their enemies: and although the crime imputed was that of attempting to put down the democracy, some were slain also for private hatred, others by their debtors because of the moneys owed to them. Death thus raged in every shape; and, as usually happens at such times, there was no length to which violence did not go; sons were killed by their fathers, and suppliants dragged from the altar or slain upon it; while were even walled up in the temple of Dionysus and died there.¹

Violence is endemic to warfare; it is the very substance of warfare. But the kind of violence found in civil wars, insurgencies, revolutions, civil strife, and various other forms of small wars are often described as senseless. When compared to the analysis of warring nation-states, these types of conflicts often seem to have no coherent narrative that can make sense of the carnage to the student or practitioner. Yet, as Clausewitz reminds us, war is composed of several dominant tendencies, one of which is “primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, which are to be regarded as a blind natural force.”² If securing the population is one of the fundamentals of population-centric counter-insurgency campaigns, then the practitioner must have a mental framework to understand how violence works in small wars and how it affects all aspects of the conflict. Each leader needs to have these mental para-

digms and a working knowledge of these effects if he is to be expected to adapt to the realities on the ground in a small war.

An overarching theory which explains all phenomena that leaders will encounter in a small war and proscribe clear courses of action is a nice-sounding Platonian goal, but is completely unrealistic for the real world. Instead, small unit leaders and officers all the way up the chain of command find a confusing mix of competing factions, goals, plots, and interests that indigenous actors all advance with lethal and non-lethal means. As the political saying goes, “all politics is local,” and it is in small wars where the political objectives must inform the small unit leader more than in any other form of warfare. The sergeants, lieutenants, and captains will be much better able to create viable operational plans to advance the political interests of their country if they are able to understand how violence affects their specific area of operation, which has its own unique circumstances, history, and individuals. A framework for understanding the effects of violence can begin with how it affects the objectives of an operation, and then proceed to how violence affects the insurgents, and finally the population as a whole. From this framework, the local commanders can begin to think about how they need to approach the goal of securing the population, how to integrate development with security, and what security means for the population.

The first part of the framework is to understand the objectives of the operation. The mission in a small war may involve any number of potential objectives in a country whose government is “unstable, inadequate, or unsatisfactory for the preservation of life or protection of such interests as are determined by the foreign policy of our nation.”³ Without a solid understanding of the objectives in small war, the leaders implementing the policy cannot develop strategic, operational, and tactical plans to achieve those objectives. When understanding these objectives, one can envision a scale where at one end the intervening nation seeks only

¹ Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1973) 241.

² Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 1976) 89.

³ United States Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1940), 1.

the most modest in the nation in which it is deploying its military forces. At the other end, the intervening nation seeks a complete revolutionary change of its government, society, economy, and culture. The further the intervening power goes towards complete change, the more resistance it should expect. A less obvious effect would be that the closer the goal is to complete social change, the higher the level of endemic violence there will be in the target society. In changing the structure of a society, the intervening power and indigenous regime will by necessity change who holds power, the methods people use to satisfy their ambition, the sources of power, how people ensure their livelihoods and secure their families. The best examples of these radical changes come from the various revolutionary movements, such as the communist efforts in Russia, China, Nicaragua, and many other countries. Changing a tribal society to an urban one or a client-based economic system to a more open capitalist system will result in social upheavals. There will be winners and losers. The potential losers will have powerful incentives to fight against the intervening power. In Nicaragua, the powerful patrons in the rural areas used their influence to oppose the Soviet backed Sandanista communist government which sought to impose land reform.¹ Besides land reform, there are countless sources of power over whose control people will willingly fight during a small war. In Iraq, control of oil is never far from the surface of many disputes, especially those between the Arabs and the Kurds over Kirkuk and other disputed regions along the border of the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government.

It is important to note that the changes in a society may not be intended by the intervening power. By opening a closed society that has lived under a totalitarian regime to the modern global marketplace, an intervening power will let loose powerful economic and social forces that will directly impact that country. While the intervening power may believe that it has only limited aims in changing the nature of a given country, by exposing it to the vagaries of the global markets and culture, it will have much greater effects than intended. The leaders at the local level trying to stabilize a country that has been suddenly exposed to these global forces must understand that they are working much further towards the total change end of the spectrum than they had intended. The more

tribal, traditional, and pre-industrial a society is, the more violent this shock will be.

Proper planning will acknowledge this potential opposition and look for ways to mitigate it. This is the first area where there must be careful coordination between those officials working for development and those primarily focused on security. Since there is greater risk of violent opposition when there are increased economic changes, leaders at all levels must coordinate economic and security efforts to reduce the probability and effects of armed opposition. This can be done by identifying potential threats at the local level and then working to mollify the opposition. This mollification could mean local compromises with tribal leaders or major landowners to ensure that they do not feel personally threatened by the changes. The small unit leaders in the villages, towns, and urban neighborhoods are essentially running political campaigns intended to gain support for political aims of the intervening power. In most recent cases, this means that the small unit leaders are campaigning to increase the support for the indigenous government. To do this, they need to be responsive to the social and economic needs of their "constituents," which can only happen through the integration of security and development at the company level. Slowing the rate of change will reduce the perceived threat to those who held political, social and economic power before the intervention. Slowing the rate of change at the local level means keeping the tribal Shayikhs in Iraq involved in the political and development process, even though their long-term position is threatened by the global economic system. Incorporating the pre-intervention power-holders into the new system means that the local leaders are making fewer changes in the society and reducing the level of overall change in the society. This may reduce one motive for armed opposition to the government and intervening forces.

There are essentially two types of violence that the government must protect the civilian population against. The first type of violence is that meted out by the insurgents to force the population to actively or passively resist the government. If the government is to expect support from the population, or at least passive resistance to the insurgents, then it must provide some sort of protection against insurgent coercion. Loyalty to the reigning regime will not long survive against continual threats to a man's family. While this is a straightforward concept, it is extremely difficult to defend the people against this form of violence meted out by insurgents.

¹ *Peasants in Arms* gives a very detailed analysis of the motives for the combatants on both sides of the Nicaraguan conflict from 1979 to 1994. Lynn Horton, *Peasants in Arms* (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1998).

The second type of violence is that which is based in criminal, tribal, or other non-political motives. The second category of violence will always be present, but it is exacerbated by the state of civil strife. Violence from this second category does not necessarily detract from the legitimacy of the government in the short-term as long as it is under a certain threshold. There is an unquantifiable threshold of this “civilian” violence which if exceeded will effectively mean that there is no government presence in a given area. In this state of anarchy, the government will have no legitimacy. So, the second type of violence, the “civilian” violence, can destroy the legitimacy of the government if it is allowed to spiral out of control. In Somalia, many civilians give their support to the Islamic Courts Union and other Salafist Islamist groups who have an ideology that conflicts with the more liberal local beliefs because these groups are able to establish peace unlike other contenders such as the internationally supported regime-in-exile.¹ However, becoming involved in preventing this type of violence is often beyond the purview of most intervening units unless they are seeking to affect a revolutionary change on the target society. There are several difficult questions that the intervening force leaders must answer when dealing with this type of violence. The local commander will have to discern between different types of violence. Was this act an honor killing, vengeance for another killing, an assassination of a government employee, an act of greed, part of a drug-gang conflict, or something else. Any given act of violence could be one or more of these different varieties and each carries a different meaning when examined by its affect on the mission, the insurgents, and the civilians. Second, the commander will have to develop a course of action. This may well mean doing nothing. Intervening in a tribal struggle may only result in unifying more tribes with the insurgents instead of increasing support for the government. What makes this difficult is that the answers to these questions can only be found through intimate knowledge of the local circumstances. Without this local knowledge, leaders are very likely to err, and thereby doing damage to their mission. For example, I have dealt with situations in rural areas of Iraq where tribal violence is overlaid on top of the insurgent-government conflict since one tribe allies itself with the government for help against their antagonists in a different tribe. The local insurgent cells were recruited along kinship lines since the insurgents trusted their relatives to fight alongside of them. So if there was tribal violence over a

woman for example, while the immediate cause was tribal in nature, it automatically became an insurgent-government conflict because of the interconnected tribal and insurgent-organization dynamics. In these circumstances it is vital for those small unit leaders to take a systematic approach to understanding the violence in their area of operations.

There are many motives for individuals to fight against both the indigenous government and the intervening forces. The second part of the framework is to look at the insurgents. There are many ways to categorize different types of insurgent organizations and objectives. There is one dichotomy, however, that directly influences both the organization and goals of the insurgents, and therefore how the insurgents affect the security forces’ ability to secure the population. On the one hand there are hierarchical insurgent groups, while on the other hand there are decentralized groups. Examples of the first category include the old communist insurgencies around the world, Hizbollah, and the Tamil Tigers. Note that this category does not preclude cellular organization, which is essential for the security of most insurgencies. These hierarchical groups are able to impose discipline throughout their organization. Even if they employ a cellular design, they can force those individual cells to work towards a common goal. The second category includes groups such as Al Qaeda, some insurgent groups in Iraq, as well as some fighters in failed states like Angola. These groups are organized more along a franchise model and have little ability to enforce discipline on individual cells. Al Qaeda has had this problem with several franchises which have turned to banditry, rapine, and pillage.² Banditry is present in all types of civil war,³ so the question is more about the degree of control the leaders have over their group. In some failed states, such as Angola, the fighting has degenerated to a point where there are empty cities and wasteland, and the “armies of lost soldiers keep clashing, whose real objective is less to win than to survive and kill.”⁴ Leaders should expect to see increasing levels of violence as the insurgents contest the government’s control in a given area. But that level of violence against civilians may fall once the insurgent shadow government has de facto control over a given area. For example in the Sal-

¹ International Crisis Group, “Somalia’s Islamists,” 12 December 2005, www.crisisgroup.org

² See Osama Bin Laden’s denunciations of Al Qaeda in Iraq/Islamic State of Iraq and of the Al Qaeda affiliates in Algeria.

³ Stathis Kalyvas “New’ and Old’ Civil Wars,” *World Politics* 54 (October 2001), 99-118.

⁴ Bernard Henri Levy, *War, Evil, and the End of History* (Hoboken: Melville House Publishing, 2004), 20.

vadorian FLMN insurgent movement, the insurgent leaders “had problems with *bandolerismo*. There were people taking advantage of the fact that they carried a gun to commit crimes against the people. There were some rapes, thefts against the civilian population, and this had to be stopped.”¹ Once the FLMN established its own justice system, it gained more legitimacy from the people. One possible course of action for the government and intervening forces in a small war is to exploit the excessive violence to excite opposition to the insurgents. Much of the success in Iraq is the result of the Sunni Arabs of Anbar Province rejecting the extreme insurgents because of their extreme violence.

As violence expands in a small war, it may begin to affect the inner workings of the insurgent groups. Marc Sageman’s work demonstrates how the internal group dynamics of terrorist groups are often more determinate than other factors such as ideology.² As these movements change over time, they frequently become more violent, with each succeeding generation more violent than its predecessor.³ In some conflicts, such as Iraq, new groups may arise and splinter groups may break away from their less ideologically pure parent groups. In Iraq and some other theaters, these groups often become more violent.⁴ As Thucydides put it, “in places where the revolutions occurred late the knowledge of what had happened previously in other places caused still new extravagances of revolutionary zeal, expressed by an elaboration in the methods of seizing power and by unheard-of atrocities in revenge.”⁵ This is not always the case, however. One of the tenets of the Jaysh Rijal Al-Tariq Al-Naqshabandia (JRTN) insurgent group in Iraq, is that JRTN does not attack civilians and does not use the extreme violence of Salafist groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq. This difference means that insurgent groups like JRTN have a greater ability to gain legitimacy and pose a greater threat to the survival of the government than insurgent groups that become increasing violent. As these groups become more violent, they increase their in-fighting, alienate their potential supporters, and isolate themselves. Because of the tendency for insurgent groups to become more vio-

lent over time, an organization that intends to control territory and overt control must adhere to an organizational structure that enables it to enforce discipline on its members. The “violent fanaticism which came [*sic*] into play once the struggle had broken out,”⁶ makes controlling violence as difficult for the insurgent leaders as it is for the security forces. The leaders should use every opportunity to exploit this difficulty to isolate the insurgents from the civilian population.

The security forces in a small war are working to secure the civilian population from the insurgents and the violence of the conflict. However, since the violence will affect the civilian population in several different ways, the security forces must understand those effects if they are to mitigate them and preserve to struggling regime. The violence itself has sociological and psychological effects that can change the very nature of the society. As time goes by, generations are raised in increasing violent cultures. This creates changes in the basic sociology of a culture where fighting becomes a way of life. As generations come of age learning the way of the gun, the way of violence becomes justified and a good as opposed to the necessary evil it is seen by the general stream of western culture as. As generations come of age by proving their manhood in guerrilla combat, that guerrilla combat itself is legitimized as a justified method for obtaining their goals. In Nicaragua, during the contra insurgency against the Sandinistas in the 1980’s, the young peasant man proved himself as a man “by taking up arms, participating in combat, and enduring the harsh conditions of guerrilla life.”⁷ After the insurgency was over, guerrilla combat remained a frequent recourse for those who lost political contests. After the peace in Nicaragua, when the contra leadership was elected into office, many of the ex-contras again took up arms because they felt betrayed and they now saw “violence not as a strategy of last resort, but as a primary instrument to press their demands in an intensely competitive postwar environment.”⁸ Once the fighters learned to fight, they were quite willing to take up arms again. Once a society has descended to past a certain indiscernible level of civil violence, the latent violence will remain even if it is temporarily pacified. The *compas* of El Salvador enforced their own law in their region before they signed a peace treaty. However, even after the peace treaty, the violence of the war remains. El Salvador is currently “one of Central America’s poorest and most violent nations, plagued by a pro-

¹ Jon Lee Anderson, *Guerrillas* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 177.

² Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

³ Stephen Pelletiere, *A Theory of Fundamentalism: An Inquiry into the Origin and Development of the Movement* (Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, 1995).

⁴ Mazin Ghazi and Samir Haddad, “Who Kills Hostages in Iraq,” *Al Zawra* (September 19, 2004).

⁵ Thucydides, 242.

⁶ Thucydides, 243.

⁷ Horton, 188.

⁸ *Ibid*, 240.

liferating criminal gang culture that specializes in murder, kidnapping, car theft, and drug trafficking.” Some of this crime can be attributed to the poverty felt by the peasant class; but “many of the gang members are the sons of daughters of returned refugees, unemployed former soldiers, and demobilized guerrillas.”¹ This brutalization of society is nothing new. In her history of the 14th Century, Barbara Tuchman writes that warriors chose to continue to live a life of violence:

whether employed or living by adventure, they made pillage pay the cost. Life by the sword became subordinate to its means; the means became the end; the climate of the 14th century succumbed to the brute triumph of the lawless...Unable to live adequately off ruined lands, they joined the mercenaries rather than follow a life without the sword.²

Individuals in tribal cultures often turn to violence to resolve their disputes. We have looked at how the small unit leaders of the security forces must work to discern this type of violence from anti-government violence. In tribal cultures, there is often a higher tolerance for levels of violence than one would find in suburban America, for example. This higher tolerance takes the form of an increased willingness to employ violence to resolve a dispute. But in societies where this is the norm, there are established rules for its employment. Whether this is *pashtunwali* in Afghanistan and Pakistan or another set of codes, these cultures have adapted to higher levels of violence. In these traditional societies, the security forces must understand how deal with this violence, as Akbar Ahmed relates he did as a Political Agent in Waziristan.³ The security forces need to understand that not all societies can adapt to this violence since they no longer have the tribal framework of rules to govern violence. In these cases, security forces may encounter societies that are more like completely failed states or “feral cities,” where there is no law and order.⁴ These situations are a kind of extreme that is the worst case scenario for the collapse of a society. They do occur. The security forces must understand that different levels of violence will have different effects on the legitimacy of the government and on the population in different societies.

¹ Anderson, 270.

² Barbara Tuchman, *A Distant Mirror* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1978), 222-3.

³ Akbar S. Ahmed, *Resistance and Control in Pakistan* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

⁴ Richard Norton, “Feral Cities,” *Naval War College Review* (Autumn, 2003).

There are other definite psychological effects of violence in addition to the effects discussed above. In addition to the justification of violence, individuals come to accept higher and higher levels of violence as normal⁵ and their identification of enemies and inherently evil increases. As violence increases people find that “political parties, unions, interest groups, and other forms of civil association have not yet provided effective means to protect members from the new order, so people retreat into or invent security groups as much to protect themselves as to promote their interests.”⁶ Once the society has retreated to identifying itself almost entirely by tribe, civil society will be destroyed. The individual is unable to trust the state for justice or protection. So he turns to his family or his tribe. At this level, “each group must regard every other as a possible enemy on account of the antagonism of interests, and so it views every other group with suspicion and distrust.”⁷ This retreat into insular security groups and away from civil society is not irreversible, but the local commanders will be forced to approach this problem and resolve the conflict. The security forces must plan for the isolation and inter-group competition in increase in the civilian population as the level of violence increases.

Finally, the commanders at each level should understand that the endemic violence will cause psychological effects by forcing the people to deal with capricious and ever-present violence. The psychological defenses that people use to deal with their “human weakness before the uncontrollable forces of nature on one side and before despotic rule on the other,” will cause them to identify with some form of authority and project blame onto other groups to overcome their internal feelings of “insufficiency, humiliation, and resentment.”⁸ These mechanisms can have the effect of reinforcing violence as “violence comes to have magical self-inflating properties that deflect it from the goal of liberation and give it a life of its own.”⁹ If a commander does not understand how these psychological processes work, how the prospect of capricious violence affects the thinking of the people in the streets, then he will not be able to understand how to secure the people. Without understanding the people and sympathizing with

⁵ See for example Dave Grossman, *On Killing* (Boston: Back Bay Books, 1996).

⁶ Gary S. Gregg, *The Middle East: A Cultural Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 75.

⁷ William Graham Sumner, “War,” in *War: Studies from Psychology, Sociology, and Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1968), 210.

⁸ Gregg, 346-7.

⁹ *Ibid.*

their requirements for surviving in a war-torn country, those small unit leaders may never be able to move beyond naïve frustration at the people's unwillingness to support the security forces.

This loose framework is a series of questions intended to guide thought about how to understand the situation a leader will encounter when engaging in a small war. The highly political nature of small wars means that the political objectives must inform every decision, how far to intervene, how much of the society to change, whether to subvert or reinforce the existing social order. Each of these decisions will either increase the possibility of violence or decrease it. The decision about how to do development work will also either increase or decrease the possibility of violence. So the development and security plans must be integrated at the lowest level possible. These questions about how far to change the societies is debated on a daily basis in both Iraq and Afghanistan. How limited or total are the objectives? Will the intervention upset the traditional way of life? Will the intervention force global economic forces on local systems? Do the security forces have to defend the civilians from both the insurgents and types of civilian violence?

The violence in a small war will also affect the insurgents, either leading them to become increasingly more violent and possibly alienating themselves or forcing them to become more disciplined and able to establish law and order in areas effectively ceded by the security forces. How hierarchical are the insurgents? Are they able to control their violence and fighters? Are the insurgents able to enforce law and order in areas under de facto insurgent control?

Finally, the violence will affect the very nature of the society, breaking down the civil society, alienating groups from each other, creating cultures of violence, and making people more fanatical. Does the society have cultural mechanisms to control violence? Is the threat of violence breaking down any existing civil society? How long until warring groups become irrevocably hostile? How much is the endemic violence creating a culture of violence that could eventually lead to a failed state?

This framework is more a series of questions than direct advice. It is drawn from works on military theory, anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics, and history. Implicit in this approach is that overly deterministic or proscriptive approaches will be of only limited help to the small unit leader. A combination of familiarity with a broad range of disciplines with a very intimate un-

derstanding of the local situation will better serve small unit leaders than a checklist of objectives for winning small wars. Like all wars, a small war is "more than a true chameleon that slightly adapts its characteristics to a given case."¹ The violence endemic to small wars, those wars of the people, must be understood on a holistic level if the small unit leaders can successfully secure the population and support the political objectives of their country. Simplistic answers to the questions above will lead astray those small unit leaders who make life and death decisions on a daily basis.

* * *

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¹ Clausewitz, 89.

How We Lost the High-Tech War of 2020:

A Warning from the Future

By Charles J. Dunlap, Jr.

Editors Note: Security is much more than not losing, but it is predicated on not losing. Our focus with the writing competition can reasonably be seen as addressing a subset of a broader concept of security. This entry didn't answer directly address that subset question, but it surely framed the challenge and presumptions in which the question exists. We were happy to receive it and to publish it here. Our thanks to the author, Major General Charlie Dunlap, and to other like-minded thinkers and contributors to Small Wars Journal such as Colonel Gian Gentile, for challenging group think and forcing intellectual rigor.

The following is a transcript of a secret address delivered by the Great Leader to the Supreme War Council late in the year 2020.

IN THE NAME OF THE PEOPLE AND THE PARTY, I welcome my comrades to this celebration of our great victory over our most arrogant enemy, America. A little over ten years ago they crowed about how their entire armed forces were “adapting” to wage what was then known as “irregular warfare”. They were guilty, as so many before them were, of preparing to fight the last war instead of the next. We observed their error and exploited it into the victory we honor today.

The core of their miscalculation was the belief that conventional war against powerful nation states - what they called “peer competitors” - was passé.

With great fanfare, the Americans issued a new manual for counterinsurgency, and many of their national security elites embraced it as if it were a panacea for all possible conflicts. To our delight, they restructured their entire military to conduct such low-tech operations. We had no intent to fight that kind of war, and did not do so when the time came.

Popular American thinking at that time expressed a grand vision that irregular wars, like the insurgencies they fought in Iraq and Afghanistan, would be the primary challenge for U.S. forces for the future.

Of course, no one disputed that such conflicts would persist in the 21st century. Still, why American policymakers thought that there was an appetite among their electorate to put massive numbers of U.S. troops on the ground in another “Iraq” or “Afghanistan-like” situation is a mystery to us, but that is what they instructed their planners to concentrate upon.

They ignored such evidence as the fact that significant majorities of their people still concluded it was a mistake to have waged war in Iraq and Afghanistan, despite such military success as they enjoyed. The American people – and their politicians - were rightly wary of another such operation. Their own experts calculated the material cost well into the trillions of dollars and the human cost played out on their television screens nightly.

When some of their generals tried to warn that their military needed to be prepared to confront adversaries like ourselves, their own Secretary of Defense mocked them as suffering from “Next-War-it is.”

We cheered when it was mandated that in order to “remain viable” any major arms program “will have to show some utility and relevance” to irregular operations. The implementation of this meant that the weapons we feared the most were never built in the numbers that might have deterred us. It seems that their strategists never fully distinguished between the serious concerns irregular conflicts raised and the truly existential threats presented by ‘regular’ war.

We also celebrated when their Department of Defense announced that “nation building” and “stability” operations were being put on equal footing with warfighting. Such a diffusion of focus eroded the fighting ability of their once mighty military machine. No longer was it exclusively centered upon what their Supreme Court once said was their purpose, that is, to “fight wars or prepare to fight them should the occasion arise.”

This obsession with using the military for nation building and stability operations was strange to us. Americans apparently never really understood it was a mistake to make their military, the most authoritarian, undemocratic, and socialist-

tic element of their society, the “face” of their country to peoples struggling in failed or failing states.

Yes, the U.S. military did succeed in stabilizing some of these countries, but they imprinted the people with the belief that only the armed forces could get things done in a society.

In truth, the power of American society was a product of its civilian institutions, not its military. It was the free enterprise system, not a military structure, which produced the freedom and economic vitality that the U.S. enjoyed, and that gave its military its supremacy. Yet with the bulk of the U.S. military devoting itself to nation-building, the nations they “built” around the world established themselves with uniformed people, not civilians, as the movers and shakers in their society – exactly like their American military mentors.

It is no surprise that capable and secure civilian-led governments never permanently emerged from these efforts. Of course, we were glad to deal with military strongmen in these newly “built” governments. They pragmatically accepted – no, welcomed - our political ideology that recognized that Party leaders knew what was better for the People than did the people themselves as true democracies preached.

In devising their defense architecture in the post-Iraq/Afghanistan era, the Americans also never really understood that although insurgencies could inflict great harm to their interests, they could never present a genuine threat to the existence of the United States as superpower. Only a nation such as ourselves, capable of fielding not just one or a few nuclear weapons as an insurgency or terrorist organization might, but hundreds and even thousands of them, could truly threaten America’s very survival.

Some Americans believed that conflict with us was implausible because of the economic links between our countries. To them, war was “illogical” and, therefore, wholly improbable. Apparently, they were unfamiliar with the British economist Norman Angell who, a few years before the outbreak of the First World War, wrote a popular book that promoted just such a theory. Of course, he was profoundly wrong, as were the Americans of 2010 who thought similarly.

Actually, the logic of economics is more a cause of war than a promoter of peace. Our case is illustrative. In the early part of the 21st century, we enjoyed tremendous economic progress because we were able to exploit the wage advantage we obtained by turning the proletariat into ex-

tremely low-cost factory workers. Because we offered cheap labor, manufacturing of every type flowed into our country. This produced a meteoric rise in exports, and our nation was awash in profits. Our international prestige sky-rocketed.

The march of technology, however, did not favor us. The marriage of nanotechnology and robotics produced automated manufacturing systems of increasing sophistication. As more and more such machines were developed, their cost – like so many other computer-based products – continued to drop. In an amazingly short period, machines could economically replace the low-wage workers that had favored us so much for several decades.

We watched with alarm as the productivity of these advanced robots rose. In time, they became even cheaper than the cheapest of our laborers. Increasingly, it was cost-effective for the developed countries to have their own factories close to the point of sale. Such local factories also did not suffer the transportation expenses our products incurred. In short, the new fully-automated local factories of the developed nations soon held an almost insuperable advantage.

That left controlling the cost of energy and raw materials as the only other factors in the manufacturing process that we could hope to control to maintain our dominance. This, as you know, led to conflict with the Americans.

You recall how: with respect to energy, we increasingly were forced to rely upon cheaper but environmentally unsound sources such as coal and other fossil fuels. The world took notice, mainly because advanced analytical techniques permitted scientists to trace pollutants back to our country.

As various international organizations criticized us and even imposed various sanctions, our message to our people was unwavering and resonated with our history. We told them that outsiders were once again trying to subjugate us, and this began the drumbeat of nationalism that we would use so effectively later.

Likewise, we sought to control key sources of raw materials around the globe. When tough commercial negotiations failed we bribed – and, when necessary, threatened - the leaders of many of the nations into granting us concessions at a huge discount. By the time their own people realized what was happening, we had our own forces in place to “protect” our citizens and our “property.” When the international community tried to stop us, we fought them.

The Americans, especially those who naively believed that we shared their values, were slow to realize how we intended to deal with the crisis. They thought that we were a peaceful people more interested in commerce than conflict.

Clearly, the Americans proved their naiveté. Why? They tend to “mirror image” peoples who, in reality, do not reflect their culture or ideals. Americans too often are inclined to believe that all peoples think as they do. In our case, they did not appreciate how pervasive and deep-seated the resentment of past foreign domination was among our peoples.

That resentment easily translated into war-supporting nationalism. Our Party used our country’s always latent nationalism as a powerful tool for energizing the People. It was not difficult for our Information Ministry to paint a picture that once again foreigners were seeking to reduce our nation to subservience. Support for the use of force was wide and deep not just among Party members, but the proletariat generally.

We would not have dreamed of using force if the Americans still had their capabilities they once possessed to dominate high-technology war. Interestingly, too many Americans miscalculated how quickly once-backward societies like ours could integrate new technology into war-making systems that could defeat the U.S. even without resorting to nuclear weapons.

Our steady increase in defense spending on high-technology paid off – especially as the Americans underfunded or even terminated the programs we most feared. Without a doubt, the U.S. underestimated the investment and effort that would be required to maintain the military superiority they enjoyed at the beginning of the 21st century.

For example, a capability that really concerned us was American airpower. In particular, it was the U.S.’s ability to project that airpower anywhere in the world at almost any time. However, the ability to do so depended upon aerial tankers that re-fuel its warplanes during long flights. America’s air force was repeatedly frustrated by political and legal difficulties from renewing and expanding its tanker fleet. In our system, of course, we have no such problems where national security is concerned.

In the end, the U.S. had too few warplanes to contain us. We mastered getting inside their “acquisition loop” and deployed newer systems before they finished buying already obsolescent ones.

Because we could manufacture the most advanced electronic components in our country, the American military no longer possessed a monopoly on the most sophisticated weaponry available.

WORSE YET FOR THE AMERICANS, besides believing that “irregular warfare” reduced the need for high-technology air, space, and naval combat capabilities, they dramatically reduced such forces in favor of increasing the numbers of trendy “counterinsurgency” units.

These were filled not with warriors specially trained for high-intensity combat but rather with a curious kind of “soldier” described in their counterinsurgency manual as one who “must be prepared to become...a social worker, a civil engineer, a school teacher, a nurse, a boy scout.” As you know, we slaughtered these “boy scouts” by the thousands!

Americans prided themselves in the fact that they transformed their military into a multitude of “culturally-sensitive” social workers who knew much about our history and customs. What they knew too little about was how to fight an aggressive, high-technology power who knew much about the ways of war. Our troops were amused when captured American troops begged for their lives in our own language. Of course, it did them no good.

In any event, we found we could contend with the light, low-tech counterinsurgency units that comprised most of America’s battle forces. Early in the 21st century the U.S. added over 92,000 ground troops. We cheered! We wanted the Americans to be spending \$40 billion a year on troops instead of technology. We never feared America’s ground forces because we were a nation that could easily put millions into the field to oppose them. And we did so when the time came.

What we did fear was America’s high-technology forces because they had the potential to block our ability to project power. That is why we were thrilled when it became chic in the U.S. to denigrate the role of technology in war. If anyone spoke approvingly of a high-tech weapon, they were immediately condemned as an out-of-fashion “Cold War” thinker.

Strangely, even though it was widely known that we were building a high-tech, globally-capable force, the Americans seemed to ignore that in their planning. While we were building fifth-generation fighters, they were turning their fearsome military into a ‘soft power’ collection of do-gooders skilled mainly at winning hearts and minds. Our missiles and bombs had no hearts and minds to win, and

the Americans paid with their lives accordingly. Our strategy was based on force, theirs on hope.

WE CONSTANTLY LOOKED for imaginative ways to undermine the U.S.'s defense establishment as it had evolved in the 21st century. For example, America had become increasingly dependant upon its reserves and National Guard not as a strategic reserve as originally intended by their Founding Fathers, but as a force they depended upon to meet current operational requirements. This policy hurt them in a number of ways.

It became the fashion in U.S. defense circles to say that part-time troops were the equivalent of regulars every way. They made any departure from those assertions appear to be questioning the patriotism and dedication of the part-timers. No one wanted to accept that modern war is so psychologically daunting and technically complex that it is best waged by full-time professionals. These truths were simply candid and frank analysis of military requirements, not assessments of people's character, but they were politically unspeakable in America.

So America continued to pour costly incentives into maintaining their part-timers, and even created "missions" so as to justify their numbers. It became so attractive to serve as a part-timer that many full-time professionals opted into that status. Why make all the sacrifices to be a regular when virtually the same benefits were available to part-timers who could choose where they wanted to live and, often, how frequently they wanted to serve? The denigration of the full-time professional in favor of the part-timer proved disastrous.

What is more is that this policy underestimated the importance of homeland security in the minds of America's state governors. The threat of terrorism, as well as the increasing expectations of the electorate when natural disasters struck, caused governors to insist that these troops not be deployed overseas at times of crisis. Consequently, as I will discuss in a moment, we did our best to create as many terrorist incidents as possible. When the Guard became politically 'undeployable', it hobbled the U.S. military in the ability to confront us.

The Americans had also come to depend upon a whole range of contractors to run their war machine. Many American policymakers seemed to think that anything done by private companies was inherently cheaper and more efficient than government. It is true that the competition of free enterprise will, in most cases, produce such results. However, warfighting is the exception that proves

the rule. Specifically, the mercenary values of the marketplace do not sustain people in the crucible of war.

People in business make decisions based on cost-benefit analysis. We recognized that no amount of money makes it 'worth it' to any company or, more importantly, any individual to die. Of course, we aimed our most sophisticated and vicious attacks on these contractors, and we enjoyed much success. What is more, is that when we captured contractors, we designated them as unlawful combatants and tried them for their crimes against our People and The Party. It did not take many executions before the contractors were walking away from their contracts, crippling the American military at the worst possible time.

We used the indirect approach again by attacking other vulnerable targets both inside and outside the United States. For example, our agents acquire interests in companies around the world. When the time came, they refused to trade with the U.S. More importantly, we controlled many financial institutions though our huge investment holdings. We were amazed at how naïve the Americans were to overlook our activities for the decade preceding the war.

YOU KNOW THE REST, comrades. Our high-tech forces often defeated the Americans on the battlefield, and we were able to inflict such punishment on their homeland that they were soon pleading for peace at any price. With their military shattered, their economy reeling, and their people demoralized, their defeat was complete. Their will was broken!

As strong as our determination was, we would not have triumphed if America had not deceived herself about the nature of future war. She bled herself dry waging an endless series of 'irregular wars' while her ability to fight 'regular wars' atrophied. She deluded herself about her conventional superiority, and failed to realize the overarching importance of readiness to meet existential threats.

Had America paid attention to the growing capabilities of militaries such as ours, she no doubt could have maintained such dominance that nations like ours might not have dared to oppose her – we keenly understand brute force and its consequences.

Now the Americans beg for scraps. So desperate are they that they send their children here to be our servants. We control their future! That is

the cost of defeat! Let us praise the Party and the People!

* * *

Charles J. Dunlap, Jr. is an active duty Air Force major general, and is the author of the essay, [How We Lost the High Tech War of 2007](#), published in

the January 29, 1996 issue of the [WEEKLY STANDARD](#) from which this essay gets its inspiration.

Additional biographical data, and official photo are all publicly available at <http://www.af.mil/information/bios/bio.asp?bioID=5293>.

Book Excerpt: Senator's Son: An Iraq War Novel

by Luke S. Larson

Chapter 24

Senator's Son: An Iraq War Novel will be available from your favorite booksellers, including [Amazon](#), on February 25, 2010. Published by K.E. Inc., Scottsdale, AZ. © 2008, Luke S. Larson. Reprinted here by permission. See also: [Luke's site](#), [Zenpundt review](#), and [Chapter 1 via Google books](#).

A white van with "Wounded Warrior" printed on the side pulled up in front of the apartment building. A reserve gunnery sergeant drove the van; he wore his uniform. John climbed in the van with his walker. He looked at the six other Marines, all of whom were junior enlisted. The oldest Marine barely looked twenty-one. The sight of them warmed his heart. *God damn, I love Marines!*

"Hey, how's it going, sir," said a Marine who recognized the lieutenant from Bethesda.

"Good, good; just call me John today."

He wore jeans and a polo shirt. All of the other wounded Marines were dressed in jeans and sweaters, no uniforms.

"How are you doing?" asked John to the wounded veteran sitting next to him.

"I'm doing good," said the lance corporal who lost his leg in an IED blast in Fallujah. "They told me I was the fastest Marine they've seen move from walking therapy to running therapy. Also I got three of these bad boys."

The nineteen-year-old pulled up his left pant leg and tapped on his prosthetic. A Marine Corps sticker covered the manufacturer's name.

"One for running, one for hiking, and one for everything else."

The van pulled up and the motley crew limped their way inside the stadium. The youngest-looking Marine of the bunch was named Paul. He

was excited. He was going to get to throw the opening pitch of the game. Private Paul looked normal in jeans but walked slightly hunched over with a slight limp. In the van, on the way to the game, the Marines showed their scars and swapped stories. Paul's story involved being ripped open by a mortar round in Al Qaim. His stomach was a horrific site. John smiled at the private. *This ought to be good. These men deserve to get a little celebration after all they've been through.*

As they walked to their seats, Paul was escorted down to the side of the field. John looked out onto the green field as a military color guard presented the flag during the national anthem. He left his walker in the aisle and struggled to stand on his own.

As they started to the national anthem, John couldn't help notice the man in front of him did not remove his hat. The man looked thirty-something. He wore a Ralph Lauren windbreaker and khakis. He stood slouched seemingly disinterested as the national anthem played. His hat absorbed John's attention.

"Excuse me," said the Marine in a sharp tone.

"Yes," said the man turning his head back to look at the lieutenant.

"Can you take your hat off please?" asked John. "I find it disrespectful."

"Well I don't really give a damn what you think is disrespectful, this is a free country."

* * *

The security guards ran and pulled the gunnery sergeant off of the man. John spoke with the security guards. The man left on his own accord and as he walked away, John noticed blood all over his khaki's. *At least his khakis are ruined.*

The security guards left without saying anything to any of the other Marines. With all of the excitement they almost missed Paul's opening pitch. John did not want to miss the crowd's reaction to the Marine's moment in the spotlight. *This will be awesome.* The loud speaker projected,

"Tonight the opening pitch will be thrown by United States Marine Corps, Private First Class Keith Paul of Sandusky, Ohio. Keith was wounded in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom."

The wounded Marines in the eleventh row on the first base line hooped and hollered cheering for their buddy. John held his left hand to his lips, and gave a high pitched whistle.

Suddenly, John stopped and looked at the crowd. Several people clapped and cheered. Although no one stood, no one whistled.

He looked at the people sitting to his left who seemed annoyed by the Marines. He looked back at the other five Marines who were all still cheering. The jumbo screen displayed Paul. *Oh well, at least the Marines are excited.*

Private Paul limped off the field. The loudspeaker's announced the baseball team's starting lineup. The crowd cheered. Their noise filled the stadium. The announcer highlighted the starting pitcher recently won the Cy Young award. The crowd went nuts and several people gave a standing ovation. John shook his head. *This is sick.*

The lieutenant hobbled out to the aisle and grabbed his walker.

"Where are you going, sir?" asked the gunnery sergeant.

"I need some air."

"I need a smoke, I'll go with you."

The two Marines walked through the stadium to the outer balcony. John moved defeated, pushing his walker. The gunnery sergeant walked tall in his stiff and crisp Charlie's uniform, despite the scuffle. His green pants and shirt were freshly pressed and starched. His colored ribbons made a sharp contrast against the tan shirt.

The two Marines stood on the balcony smoking as a man walked by.

"Thank you," said the man, nodding his head toward the gunnery sergeant.

The lieutenant looked at the man as he walked away. Thank you? How much do you thank me? Enough to walk by and say thank you. Geeze thanks; you're doing your part buddy. Not enough to take your hat off during the playing of the greatest country in the world's national anthem. Yeah right, thank you.

These people don't have any idea. They don't care. To them this is just another day in paradise. They don't realize right now there are service members in harm's way sacrificing everything for them. They cheer for a ballplayer, an athlete who shows physical prowess, and call him courageous. That's something I guess, but it's surely not courage. Isaac running into fire, pulling out three wounded Marines, knowing he may get hit or burst into flames, that's courage.

Thank you. How much do you thank me? I'll put a yellow sticker on my car and I'm doing my part. It's almost insulting the majority of those sheep only have the sticker on their car so they feel good about themselves. Yeah, put the fucking sticker on your car but don't even stand up for a true hero. Cheer for some empty meaning like a ballplayer's accomplishment in a mere game.

These people are indifferent. In World War I and World War II, the Greatest Generation, the people cared. They supported the troops wholeheartedly; the majority of the country was unified behind the foreign policy of the country. Gold Star mothers had strangers buy them groceries in the stores. The people cared.

In Vietnam the people cared. They cared enough to riot. They demanded the troops come home. They protested. They saw what was going on and objected against it, right or wrong they at least bothered to care.

Now you've got my generation's situation. A small disproportionate amount of people carry the burden and the majority is apathetic. We're out there risking our necks protecting their right to continue their lives in apathy. Thank you. I'll just go on protecting your right to not give a fuck.

Thank you. Not enough to cheer for a nineteen-year-old hero, a kid for any other relative situation in the states. A kid who carried a burden no young man should ever carry and has sacrificed more than any one person should ever have to. You know what, unless you want to sit down and buy me a beer and pay attention to what is going on in

the world, next time don't thank me. He was disgusted with life, bitter by the atrophy of America.

He pushed the walker and hobbled back down and sat next to Paul whose face was full of excitement.

"Sir, did you see all of those people cheering for me, when I threw the first pitch? It was awesome; it was the coolest thing that has ever happened to me," said Paul.

He handed the lieutenant a baseball with a signature on it.

"The Cy Young winner even gave me a signed ball. He told me he wished he was as brave as I was, said I was his hero. Can you believe that! I'm that dude's hero! Isn't that awesome, how much people appreciate what we're doing?"

"Yeah, that's awesome," said John trying to smile.

He was ashamed by his own arrogance, humbled by the innocence of the private.

* * *

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The Scope of Security In a Small War

by Mr. Joel Iams

Editor's Note: the judges noted this article provided a general introduction to COIN and peace-making literature, while laying out through some interesting, varied, and high-quality examples the principles the phasing of small wars and the challenges faced in figuring out how to conclude them.

"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."

-Small Wars Manual, United States Marine Corps, GPO, Washington DC, 1940

Security is the fundamental public good that functioning governments provide to the state and its citizens. In a small war, security considerations encompass two basic types of security. Traditional security focuses on the threats posed by states and their agents: militaries, spies, and saboteurs. Non-traditional security focuses on threats that emanate from beyond the Westphalian paradigm: disease, economic uncertainty environmental catastrophe, and non-state-affiliated terrorists. The broadness of security as a concept means that it is best considered as a multi-faceted service, which must be provided for in different manners throughout the campaign. The facets of security can be usefully divided into three phases: one in which traditional security dominates, a transition phase, and a phase

in which non-traditional security dominates. This paper will examine what security means at different points in a small war, discuss what types of security are important in each phase, and explain the costs associated with that type of security.

In a small war, a shortfall in governance produces an unstable or otherwise unsatisfactory situation, which in turn provokes an expeditionary power to undertake an operation that combines military force and diplomatic pressure to further that power's interests. From a security perspective, a state has failed to provide adequate security in a manner that threatens the interests of another state, and the expeditionary power is rectifying that shortfall with a combination of military and diplomatic tools. The most fundamental shortfalls re-

late to the traditional security issues, since those impact the viability of the state. Once the basic security of the state is assured, the state can address non-traditional security issues that affect its citizens. A state that cannot shield its citizens from non-traditional threats will always be subject to instability; amelioration of those threats is essential to the long-term stability of a state.

As a result, traditional security is more important early in a small war, while non-traditional security is more important later. Military forces have historically considered traditional security threats their primary focus, but have also addressed non-traditional threats when existing government capabilities fall short, by responding to crises ranging from post-conflict reconstruction to natural disasters and epidemic disease. As civilian expertise is developed and capability grows, the military's rudimentary approach to non-traditional security issues becomes less useful, and civilian institutions can resume the management of security issues. Executing this transition over the course of a small war campaign is complicated, and requires military officers, diplomats, and civilian experts to cooperate closely.

Political leaders need to clearly define the endstate that will constitute "victory" both militarily and diplomatically to foster this coordination. Clear guidance should define the type of local leaders to empower, the type of legal framework to establish, the local governance structures to construct, and the overall situation that will satisfy the military and diplomatic goals. Military operations should logically seek the attainment of political goals. The political leadership thus owes its military and diplomatic agents a clear picture of the conditions they must establish to consider victory achieved. Achieving that victory will require three basic phases of operation: the establishment of legitimate control to satisfy basic security needs, the transition from military to civilian leadership to lay the groundwork for satisfying broader security needs, and the establishment of governance structures to satisfy the ongoing non-traditional security needs.

Phase One: The Core Need of Legitimate Control

At its core, a small war is about a shortfall in governance in a host-nation (HN) state. At its most severe, a collapse in governance can spawn a violent struggle in which an insurgency seeks to supplant the existing government. This type of insurrection undermines the monopoly of the legi-

itimate use of force that traditionally defines a viable state, and the rebels' ability to threaten the viability of the state represents a traditional security threat.¹ To reinforce the basic legitimacy of the HN government, the first priority of the expeditionary power is the need to establish control through military operations, creating zones where the HN government's control is unchallenged.

Empirically, control is a key factor in garnering popular support, and when nationalist/patriotic sentiments are not at issue, populations tend to support the side that controls their region.² The process of establishing control requires careful attention to the political endstate desired: the use of indiscriminate or unacceptable force can alienate a citizenry and de-legitimize a government, forcing the expeditionary power to establish a military dictatorship to maintain stability. The questions of how much force is too much and what techniques are unacceptable can only be answered in the context of a particular instance, since they reflect the cultural and historical norms of a given country and its people.

The people are the fundamental consideration in governance, and controlling the population is the core of modern counter-insurgency doctrine.³ To meet the traditional security needs of the state, the population must be protected from the depredations of armed forces, regardless of whether they are rebels or agents of a foreign power. In protecting the population and establishing state control a variety of measures have proven successful, including relocation, checkpoints and control measures, and gradual expansion of the zone of control.

Establishing security in the population centers reinforces the perception of state control, not only in the cities but in rural communities as well. A state whose population is largely rural will require garrisons not only in major cities, but in outlying villages, with the residents of outlying farms relocated to the safety of secure villages. Once the population is securely within the embrace of the HN government or expeditionary power's forces, the military can strike concentrations of rebels with greater freedom. To maintain this segregation of the civilian populace and prevent infiltration by rebels, a combination of identity cards, check-

¹ Weber, Max. *Weber: Political Writings*, Peter Lassman, ed. Cambridge University Press, 1994.

² Kalyvas, Stathis. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, Cambridge University Press, 2006.

³ For details, see Galula, David. *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, Praeger Security 2006, as well as *FM 3-24: Counterinsurgency Operations*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2006.

points, and security perimeters establish contextual data for each individual and enable the military to identify and focus on suspicious movement.

This process, sometimes called an “oil-spot” technique, proved successful in the French campaign in Morocco that gave it the current name. But its effectiveness has been seen in other campaigns: the English subjugation of Scotland in the mid-1700s, the Philippine insurrection in the early 1900s, and the Malayan Emergency in the 1950s. These measures are often unpopular, and a high degree of resistance to relocation and checkpoints can be expected as a result of the stifling impact on economic life and the perception of foreign domination. This is a tough problem for the expeditionary power that can be addressed in several ways: by clearly identifying the security benefits, by employing HN forces as the face of the operation, and by integrating its forces with the local population.

Forcible relocation pays security dividends, by allowing local farmers to avoid the intimidation of rebel forces and the requisitioning of goods and resources that follows. If the perception of threat posed by the rebel forces is low, rural populations may resist the costs imposed by relocation, so application of relocation as a policy will have to reflect the nature of the campaign. Additionally, establishing secure villages across a widely dispersed population may not be practical in a resource-constrained environment, and certain areas may have to be relegated to rebel control for a time until forces can be allocated to more distant areas.

The forces involved should ideally belong to the HN government, to mitigate the appearance of imperialism on the part of the expeditionary power. The HN military may not be able to provide capable forces at this early stage, so the expeditionary power may have to take steps on its own. The Combined Action Program, in which Marine units dispersed to Vietnamese villages to work in the fields by day and protect the village by night, proved highly disruptive to the activities of Vietnamese communist rebels, and offers a model for consideration my military commanders. The increased risk to such isolated forces must be calculated in light of the potential to deny the rebels the access to the population they need to maintain their threat to the HN government.

It should also be understood that security is a matter of degree, and not an absolute. In even the most orderly societies, one cannot reduce violence to zero, and in an institutionally weak society ongoing violence may be accepted at a certain level. The prevalence of highwaymen in 18th-

century Scotland, of gunslingers in post-Civil War America, and of rebels in today’s Philippines shows that at a sufficiently low level violence becomes a nuisance that civil authorities can address, rather than a threat to the legitimacy of the state that the military alone can counter.

This opening phase of a small war is principally a military operation. The instability likely reflects weakness in local institutions including the HN military. As a result, the expeditionary power will have to alter its own military to meet the manpower demands of small wars. The ground forces must rebalance from heavy units designed to fight opposing armor or mechanized forces to become a mostly-infantry force, capable of garrisoning a countryside and attacking lightly armed rebels. The expeditionary military force will need to establish garrisons across the theater and begin training their HN counterparts to assume eventual control as the campaign matures. The expeditionary military may have to incorporate assistance from allied militaries, and even civilian organizations providing relief services outside the scope of government control. To this final end, militaries have historically allocated regular forces to the civil affairs mission, retraining infantry units to assume responsibility for a wide range of policing, reconstruction, and liaison duties in an environment where civilians cannot or will not go.¹

Military commanders need to keep in mind that military operations are not an end in themselves, that they set the stage for the attainment of political objectives. The ultimate test of the success or failure of a military campaign is the degree to which it facilitates the attainment of political aims. A battlefield victory can be negated entirely if its methods or aftermath produces a politically unacceptable situation, as the American experience in Vietnam showed all too clearly. Consequently, military commanders need to ensure that their operations are laying the groundwork for the eventual assumption of control by civilian planners.

During this first phase, while traditional security concerns are paramount, civilian planners need to work with the military to establish a clear understanding of how the transition to civilian control will take place. Their role becomes more critical as violence diminishes and the focus of security shifts. As soon as fighting has diminished,

¹ McCreedy, Kenneth O. *Planning the Peace: Operation Eclipse and the Occupation of Germany*. *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 65, No. 3 (Jul., 2001), pp. 713-739. McCreedy details the effective establishment of US Army civil affairs units to plan the reconstruction efforts in the immediate aftermath of hostilities.

non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will likely follow to provide immediate relief services, which in a perfect situation will be smoothly supplanted by the HN government. This coordination of governmental and non-governmental military and civilian activities is a complex task, which detailed planning can improve to some extent.

The costs in this opening phase are obvious, in the provision and sustenance of military forces overseas by the expeditionary power. In all likelihood, the HN government will be unable to repay any of the cost of the effort, and the military expedition must be considered a “sunk cost” that lays the groundwork for future economic benefits. The expeditionary power should understand that parsimony in this opening phase is a risky gamble, since a shortfall in forces risks prolonging the period in which rebels can resist the establishment of legitimate control. The political leaders of the expeditionary power should be prepared to allocate significant military resources to the conflict.

Phase Two: Secondary Needs Under Military/Civil Partnership

The military must establish local institutions of governance immediately after taking control of a sector. Local governance has a degree of legitimacy that the expeditionary power can never attain, and that the HN government may have forfeited prior to the start of the small war. Civil affairs units responding to the military commander can start the process by establishing or re-establishing local leaders in a town council, and gradually recruiting a police force and judiciary to serve basic needs. Diplomatic personnel should coordinate the provision of civilian expertise to guide the new local institutions, clear in the understanding that the local leaders are assuming a degree of control and authority.

Rebellions and insurgencies (often at the heart of small wars) often use the language of grievance to justify their actions, but popular grievances can be addressed through a local institutional framework such as a town council, so long as it remains responsive to popular needs and transparent in its deliberation and execution. Disputes about land or resources can be arbitrated at a local level where the appearance of local control can be reinforced. These are relatively low-cost initiatives, when compared to the expense of foreign expertise from the expeditionary power. T. E. Lawrence observed that while local solutions, though flawed at the outset, will generally survive the test of time better than more “perfect” solu-

tions imposed from outside; recent American doctrine has embraced this point.¹

With an acceptance of this principle in mind, the military commander and his diplomatic counterpart should quickly move to reinforce the legitimacy of local institutions by funneling resources, ensuring accountability, and providing monitoring by civilians. The traditional security needs will begin to recede to the background as people begin to require the fundamental services of government: utilities such as electricity and clean water, infrastructure such as roads and market spaces, and social institutions like schools and clinics and courts. These represent the first tier of non-traditional security needs, focused on human beings rather than the state as the object of security. They address threats such as disease, economic instability, and illegal activity.

This shift in focus reflects the first step away from the traditional security focus on the state and the people as a whole, and begins to address the needs of individuals. Since progress will not be uniform across a theater, the expeditionary commander needs to be able to maintain a sector-by-sector focus. Heavy fighting may dominate in one sector, while in another, individual access to electricity may be paramount. This affords the overall military commander the opportunity to delegate authority in stable sectors to his diplomatic counterpart, with an eye to the eventual assumption of civilian control over the situation.

This type of post-conflict stabilization is a role the U.S. military performed well until after Vietnam. Notable examples include the Reconstruction of the former Confederate states from 1865 to 77, operations in the Philippines from 1898 to 1910, political reform initiatives in the Dominican Republic between 1916 and 1924, and culminating in the formal establishment of Civil Affairs as a branch of service in the wake of World War II. The Philippines offers an excellent example of a small war maturing from a military operation to a civilian operation, as LTG Arthur MacArthur relinquished authority to Governor William Howard Taft.

¹ Lawrence, Thomas E. *The Twenty-Seven Articles*, *Arab Bulletin*, 20 August 1917. The quote is: “Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is.”

Compare to [Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction](#), U.S. Institute of Peace, 2009, p. 3-12 in its comments on Host-Nation Ownership and Capacity.

As in the Philippines, this second phase sees the military beginning to hand off responsibilities to civilian experts, from the expeditionary power and the HN government (if available). The expeditionary power needs to tread lightly, since establishing a colonial presence is not politically viable in the 21st century. Keeping in mind Lawrence's guidance on the relative value of local efforts should enable both military and diplomatic officers to remember that locally-generated solutions will endure longer than those imposed from without. Ensuring the future viability of local institutions is critical to the long-term success of the campaign, and can best be performed by civilian diplomats coordinating closely with the military commanders as the military recedes into the background.

Costs in this phase transition from focusing on the military campaign to providing the basis for future economic and political growth. A shrewd theater commander will have deployed his assets and planned his campaign to facilitate the transition between a military post and a civil police or government building, to ensure that the military infrastructure can be transitioned for civilian use and avoid the cost of building the same structures twice. As the civilian administrators and advisors arrive, local institutions can be housed in these facilities, the populace can use roads or bridges the military has improved, and the civil administration can create public spaces in the areas the military has secured.

At this point, the military costs decrease relative to the civil costs of sustaining a nascent society. The expeditionary power will, in all likelihood, still be funding the HN military- and police-building efforts, providing economic reconstruction assistance, and funding the development of political institutions. To defray these substantial costs, the assistance of foreign allies and NGOs provides a useful reservoir of funds and expertise. Such cooperation requires a significant amount of prior coordination and consensus-building. The expeditionary power's desire for unilateral control over the small war must be balanced by its understanding of its own resource limitations, its requirements for outside expertise, and the cost (in relinquished control) accepting that expertise is likely to entail.

Phase Three: The Dominance of Civil Needs

As the military threat to the HN government wanes, the focus of the small war shifts not only to civilian control, but to a gradual assumption of

control by HN civilian authorities. Police forces can now begin to take the lead from the Army, which can begin to resume its peacetime size, structure, and function. The expeditionary power will have to decide how to manage this process, as militaries that expand the scope of their mission set sometimes are reluctant to return to the barracks and submit to civilian control. Should the object of the small war be the establishment of an independent, stable state subject to the rule of law, a relatively high degree of civilian control will have to be established regardless of whether or not a military leader is in charge.

To satisfy the security concerns of the civilian population in this phase, supply chains for schools, clinics, markets, and industry become a priority. Issues of personal security, of security from disease, from economic instability, and from environmental catastrophe become the highest priorities for the HN government. This is a dramatically different security focus from the traditional view, but it offers several useful insights. First, it shows how a military subservient to civilian control can still provide for the security of the nation in non-traditional roles. It shows how a military can assist in the transition from domestic instability to a more quiescent state. Lastly, it shows how a wide array of government services can be viewed as derivative of the contemporary conception of the state's purpose: the protection of its population from harm.¹

If the traditional role of the military is to fight and win the nation's wars, the non-traditional roles include the wide array of functions a military provides in peacetime. Whether fighting fires, providing temporary shelter in the aftermath of earthquakes, or addressing the impact of storms such as hurricanes and tornadoes, military resources have a role in providing the citizenry with immediate relief from natural disasters and environmental catastrophe. Military assets offer a logistical base and pool of basic expertise that can also assist public health officials in combating epidemic disease, and assist police with securing the borders and points of entry. These non-traditional roles are an accepted function in many nations, and in contemporary Europe are gradually becoming the accepted norm; actual combat is increasingly viewed as a deviation.

¹ Evans, Gareth and Mohamed Sahnoun, *The Responsibility to Protect, Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2002. The authors contend that international intervention should be conducted under the aegis of the state's responsibility to protect, that is more fundamental than the state's right to sovereign status.

The military as an institution subject to civilian control can also assist in the effort to absorb former rebels or insurgents into national institutions under the rubric of disarmament, demobilization, and re-integration (DD&R). DD&R efforts are a subject worthy of study in themselves, in which several NGOs have begun to specialize, but for the scope of this article it is enough to note that the integration of former rebel leaders into national institutions has been historically promising. Jan Smuts' evolution from Boer commander to British hero of the First World War and national leader of South Africa is one example. Joseph Wheeler served as a Confederate cavalry general before leading US Army forces in the Spanish-American War, evidence that bitter adversaries in civil war need not remain such indefinitely.

The re-integration process also occurs in a civilian dimension. Legitimate political grievances that persist beyond the end of the small war may be addressed through former rebels' participation in politics, as the Faribundo Marti National Liberation Front (Spanish: FMLN) in El Salvador has transitioned from military opponent to political party. Even in situations where re-integration fails, the HN government and domestic institutions may emerge strong enough to resist a low-level insurgency for decades to come, as the Philippines has resisted the New People's Army and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

In the end, assuming the military returns to its subordinate role, the domestic political aims of the government will focus on addressing human security needs, leaving traditional security needs to the realm of foreign and military affairs. Particularly if the expeditionary power establishes a military alliance or treaty of mutual defense, the HN government's priorities should shift to issues like public health, economic reconstruction, and education, and public order. The establishment of supply chains for trained personnel and modern equipment across these fields is all part of government's fundamental purpose to provide for the protection of its citizens against foreseeable threats, and requires a competent set of regulatory authorities.

By this time, the cost of this phase of the campaign is largely a reconstruction cost, and can be viewed in several ways: as an investment in the future trading relationship between the expeditionary power and the HN government, as the price for more or less permanently mitigating a severe threat, or as the cost of preventing the establishment of a hostile regime or a toehold for an opposing great power. If the cost of the small war is to be

recouped, it will have to be in some economic relationship, otherwise the expeditionary power will face the prospect that it has allocated resources to provide for its own security with a war in a foreign land. This cost assessment is one the political leadership should undertake at the very beginning of the enterprise: is the small war truly in the national interest?

Conclusion

The concept of security itself is a broad one, and in the context of a small war the focus of security efforts must shift as the campaign matures and local capacity is built. To achieve long-term results, a narrowly military effort will be insufficient, and a whole-government approach that incorporates diplomats and civilian experts offers a better chance of success, albeit at increased cost. The initial focus on traditional security problems allows the expeditionary power to secure basic stability in the target state, but to eliminate the core problems that have led to instability in the first place, a much more comprehensive view of security and a correspondingly greater allocation of resources is required.

There is a spectrum for resource investment in small wars, where punitive expeditions sit at one end and comprehensive enterprises lie at the other. Punitive expeditions, like General Roberts' expedition against Kabul in 1879 serve as an example at one end, where a military force defeats an adversary and a reasonably compliant regime is immediately installed. These solutions are generally recognized as temporary, since they do not address the deeper causes of the original instability.

Comprehensive enterprises, like the American campaign in the Philippines from the invasion in 1898 to its emergence as a commonwealth in 1935, require a massive investment of military and civilian resources. Where a punitive expedition may leave a target state prostrate, in the latter case the expeditionary power assumes a vast degree of responsibility for the gradual amelioration of all manner of security needs. This latter example corresponds to the American military experience of the past two decades, where legislative declarations of war have been replaced by resolutions delegating executive authority to employ force, and where the defeat of an adversary force has been generally regarded as insufficient to merit the description "victory". This more comprehensive enterprise requires a correspondingly broader view of security.

In contemporary small wars, the broad nature of security is initially a state concern, but fundamentally it is a human concern, to which end securing the state is a means rather than an end in itself. At first, the small war starts with a military campaign to protect the population from the insurgents, but it immediately transitions to reinforce military success with civil operations aimed at establishing legitimate governance among the citizenry. The transition from military-led operations to civilian-led operations proceeds as the insurgency dwindles, and a functioning HN government is established. Eventually, as former insurgents reintegrate into society, the military recedes to its traditional focus on state security needs, while the remainder of the HN government focuses on the human security needs of the population.

In the present day, small wars are extraordinarily costly enterprises. States with an expeditionary power projection capability should undertake such campaigns only where the national interest is clearly at stake, either in the form of economic or political security. Such campaigns should not be assumed for “light or transient causes”, as the cost of maintaining an expeditionary force and the ensuing diplomatic effort is very high.¹ In a democracy, the political leadership should obtain the strongest possible mandate for a small war. Broad support for the campaign, based on a consensus that the security of the nation is at stake, is necessary to see the campaign through to a successful conclusion.

The contemporary American small wars, from Somalia and Bosnia to Iraq and Afghanistan, offer lessons for political, military, and diplomatic leaders to follow. Clarity of purpose from political leaders regarding the nature of the security threat is an essential prerequisite of any campaign, to ensure both a coordinated military/diplomatic response and to secure popular support for pursuing the stated objectives. A carefully planned campaign, coordinated closely with allied powers and non-governmental agencies to address the wide spectrum of security concerns may take more time to assemble but appears to yield more lasting results at lower cost. And finally, the transition to local civilian control and addressing of human security needs is a complex and difficult challenge, a principally diplomatic effort that has yet to be resolved in a manner that is both timely and satisfactory. The problem of security in a small war is a daunting proposition, to which no expeditionary power has found a complete solution.

¹ Jefferson, Thomas, *Declaration of Independence*. United States Congress, 1776.

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Don't Try to Arrest the Sea

An Alternative Approach for Afghanistan

By Major Mehar Omar Khan, Pakistan Army

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Over the last three months that I've spent in the United States, I've heard with concern and trepidation the growing calls for a possible pull out from Afghanistan. No sane citizen of our world, let alone a Pakistani infantry officer who may soon end up being another name on an ever-growing list of the fallen soldiers in war against terror, enjoys thinking about the painful possibility of our world's greatest military power and history's most inspiring nation retreating in the face of an onslaught by Kalashnikov-wielding bearded barbarians riding on the back of motor-cycles, hungry horses and perspiring mules. What is **being realized** with increasing intensity is the pain of a seemingly endless and bloody war for almost a decade now; the pressure of a US public opinion that's almost irreversibly weary of wars (at least for now); the misery of a mismatch between resources and mandate; the rising groans of despairing allies unwilling to persevere and, the scary scarcity of success stories. However what **needs to be realized** is the fact that abandoning Afghanistan will be an unmitigated tragedy.

For United States, I believe, Afghanistan is not a case of 'success or failure'. USA is too big and too powerful to fail against a collection of miserable fanatics holed up in the treacherous mountains of Southern Afghanistan. It's instead a case of *doing too much with too little care and attention*. It's a challenge (still quite surmountable) aggravated by *ditching smart choices and contracting wrong compulsions*.

The current US approach to fixing Afghanistan is impressive in *detail* but seriously flawed in *design*. Despite recent adjustments reflected most profoundly in Gen Mc Chrystal's COIN Directive, the ship is still headed for the rough seas. The overall design continues to be based on 'mending and reforming' Afghanistan the country – **as a whole**. The brass-tacks continue to be muddled by unclear strategic intent. The 'reform route' continues to be drawn 'top-down'. Too many coalition people and too many international dollars still reside in Kabul or at best in the provincial headquarters. The majority of Afghans continues to stare angrily from the sidelines while a few thugs rule

the streets and corridors of Kabul. Too many criminals continue to be respectable and powerful despite being in the neighborhood of so many well-meaning people. While too many handsome US soldiers continue to die, radical *surgery* is still being pended in favor of *cosmetics*.

What is being tried is too much. What needs to be done is *economizing the force and maximizing the effect*. What needs to be done is to increasingly get smarter or leaner in *physics* and more effective and skillful in *chemistry*. What is being done is more and more of physics. What is needed is more skill. What is being poured in is more troops. US public opinion is rightly angry about all of this. Why should young men continue to fall for a 'losing cause'?

But is it a case of a 'losing cause' or one of a '*badly managed success*'. I believe it's the latter. And it is with this belief that I want to suggest an alternative approach to what is being done. This approach is embedded in the belief that troops required to manage or govern Afghanistan will never be 'enough' and the right route is 'bottom to up' and 'hub to spokes' and not the reverse of it. I also believe that promise and prosperity is the only magnet that can wean desperate people away from violence and that Afghanistan is too big to be made prosperous all-together. Hence the process of rebuilding and development will have to be 'selective' to start with.

The approach, suggested hereunder, is based on some 'can't do' and some 'can do' kind of things. The identification of what can be done has to be based on a dispassionate recognition of what can't be done.

First, therefore, the 'can't do' part:

Can't 'govern' this country: It is historically incorrect to call Afghanistan a country or even a *place*. It has always been and it is a *people*. Afghanistan represents a people who have always been divided and loosely managed; never properly 'governed' at any level even in the loosest sense of that word. Any effort to reverse that historical trend or reality will be a terribly misdirected investment of

blood and money. Afghans, vastly ignorant as well as illiterate, have never been clever enough to submit to a central authority. 'Liberal democracy', 'united vision', a 'social contract', 'tolerant co-existence', 'civil society', 'civil debate', 'national discourse' – are all misnomers largely tossed around in a small section of expatriate community residing in the West. Hence, even the smartest bunch of people can't govern this place as a *whole*.

Can't 'protect' all Afghans: The emphasis in COIN directive on 'protecting the civilians, instead of killing the Taliban' is unachievable in its entirety. Coalition troops can never reach numbers needed to extend adequate protection to populace across Afghanistan. It will only give an additional propaganda tool to Taliban, in addition to increasing the range of their target zone. Every suicide bombing will now be seen and portrayed as a sign of coalition's failure to deliver on its 'promise' of 'protecting' the populace. And promises mean a lot in that medieval society. My proposed 'approach' addresses this dilemma.

Can't have 'total' peace: In Afghanistan, peace has always been relative – both in time as well as space. In that unfortunate part of the world, 'peace' has mostly meant 'less fighting' or 'fighting contained to a few tribes in a few pockets' or 'bloodletting restricted to family feuds'. Afghans are fatally skillful in digging up reasons to fire and fight. No amount of money, time or effort can reverse this tragic historical reality in a space of few years. It will instead take sincere national leadership and international commitment spanning generations – something very very hard to come by.

Can't have 'rivers of milk and honey' flowing in a few years: After centuries of war, Afghanistan is now way 'beyond a quick or economical repair'. Too much is to be set right and built anew. Roads, hospitals, schools and colleges – nothing is there. Attitudes, dreams, aspirations, ideals, sense of unity, a 'unifying' sense of patriotism – nothing is there. It's all broken; shattered by wounds and trauma inflicted by unkind times and endless misery. Brigades of straight-thinking US soldiers with scant support or commitment from Afghan 'national' leadership or international community (if there ever were two things by those names) can't do it in decades, let alone years.

Can't do it without Pashtuns: Like it or not, Afghanistan has always been a Pashtun country. Many as they are though, Uzbeks, Tajiks and Hazaras have always been the 'outsiders'. Regardless of who holds the banner (Taliban or anyone else) Pashtuns will never cease fighting unless giv-

en their leadership role in Kabul. They have always shed blood for the defense of their 'right' on the throne of Kabul. One can't mess with that 'right' without incurring serious consequences. What we are facing in Afghanistan is '*Pashtun Intifada*'. It is only '*led*' by bearded mullahs calling themselves 'Taliban'. Take out Taliban and the insurgency will *continue*.

Now what 'can be' done:

The list is very short. Don't try to arrest the sea. Create islands. Having gone well past the phase of breaking the back of Al-Qaeda and dispersing the Taliban, concentrate on '*creating and building*' examples. Set the beacon and you'll see that all the lost ships and boats will come ashore. Here's how to do it.

First and foremost, *believe* that it's not God that drives these people crazy; it's poverty. Believe that Pashtuns don't submit to the Taliban out of sheer love for the one-eyed Mullah Omar; it's deprivation and fear that drives this herd to the first man holding the flag of power and promise. Raise your flag higher than the Mullah's and half-blind lunatic will be devoured by Pashtuns. What is being done is unfortunately not the right way of raising the banner. It defies the logic of 'can't do's' given above. Pashtun face of the country is not sufficiently visible.

Kabul or PRTs will NOT work. Provinces are too big a governance laboratory for Afghanistan. Instead, pick a few districts (nothing more than that) in the heart of areas worst-afflicted by Taliban-led insurgency. Invest heavily in these districts.

Do it in two phases; one, craft the message, two, let the message spread itself.

Here's is how to create the message. In selected (preferably non-contiguous) districts, give them an honest and polished leadership from 'amongst themselves', a transparent and efficient court, a model Pashtun police heavily armed with both weapons and motivation, schools (separate for girls and boys), a few hospitals, electricity, money for farming and setting up small businesses through a few efficiently functioning banks, paved roads, a model transport system and, not the least, build a beautiful grand mosque and an FM station that recites Quran with Pashtu translation 24/7. If possible, build a few plants and job-creating projects around mineral mines and informal fire-arms industry. Let these people serve as an example for rest of the Pashtun country. Having created these models, international community can then

work 'upwards' and 'outwards' to include more and more areas and tribes.

Simultaneously the governance, right from district up to Kabul must be painted with an unmistakable Pashtun color. As of now, Pashtuns are being seen and treated like Sunnis of Iraq. In reality they are a majority and deserve to be empowered like Shias in Iraq.

A few examples of model districts would unmistakably mean this: that USA means good and only good; that Islam is not the sole monopoly of Mullah Omar; that Islam and Quran can co-exist with banks and schools and hospitals and businesses; that life without bloodshed is a good life and that what Americans do is better than what Taliban do or plan to do. The approach will give Pashtuns an irresistibly attractive reason to ditch the message and manipulation of Taliban in addition to stripping Mullah Omar and his Al Qaeda cohorts off their narrative and their manifesto.

Militarily, coalition must hold fast to these model districts as bases and let the Taliban fester and sulk in the outlying, ungoverned margins. Their lack of ability to give in their areas of influence what coalition gives in its area of control, will delegitimize them in due course of time. This may sound like giving away vast swathes of land to Taliban. In reality, it means a considerable improvement on what obtains now. Taliban structure of governance stands on a foundation of both fear and promise. The existing effort to pursue them everywhere leaves them surviving everywhere. They thrive on coalition *chasing* their shadows. This new approach of excluding them from selected pockets

will progressively deprive them of targets for violence and audience for propaganda. Their brutalities in areas without coalition presence will discredit them while doing no harm to coalition's image. Relative peace in coalition-governed districts will fuel discontent in Taliban-controlled districts. It will also give coalition and Afghan Forces the strategic advantage of operating from the '*interior lines*' instead of having to hopelessly *roll up* Taliban from margins to center.

Such 'model district projects' should not be the responsibility of USA alone. Other members of international community must also partake by taking up a district each.

These islands of peace and prosperity, though small, will be seen by all the lost mariners in the sea (of chaos and cruelty). It is my sincere belief that these model districts will serve as the 'clarion call'. Pashtun, hungry for food and promise, will come running and rally to the cause that gives him hope of a better future, of peace and of return to the 'throne of Kabul'.

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