

A Hundred Years of Irregular Warfare

Maj M W Shervington PARA

"Wars might be won without fighting battles"

– T.E. Lawrence, 1917¹

'TOOLKITS'

History is littered with irregular wars² in which the actions of guerrillas, insurgents and terrorists have defied the authority of stronger, more conventional forces. Since 1990, there has been an average of 25 internal conflicts every year.³ The preponderance of such warfare, and the measures that have developed to counter it, necessitates a careful examination of the definitions and causes of this specific style of warfare set against an historical backdrop.

Irregular Warfare comprises 'military operations in which one or more sides include irregular forces or employ irregular methods'.⁴ The 'rules and ethics' governing regular warfare do not apply. Irregular warfare 'tends to marry especially low conduct with characteristically high-minded motives.'⁵ In prescribing an irregular strategy, the protagonist is able to employ a range of tactical effects or 'modes of conflict'⁶ that include insurgency, guerrilla action and terrorism.

Current British military doctrine⁷ defines insurgency as "an organised movement aimed at the overthrow of constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict. It is an armed political struggle, the goals of which may be diverse. Generally, an insurgent group attempts to force political change by a mixture of subversion,

In choosing violence, the insurgent can pick from his 'toolkit' of irregular warfare the tactical instruments that he believes will deliver that objective.

propaganda, political and military pressure, aiming to persuade or intimidate the broad mass of the people to support or accept such change."⁸ Current events in Iraq have forced the British Army to re-examine this definition: 'Insurgency is competition involving at least one non-state movement using means that

¹ Please see Major Shervington's full dissertation online at www.smallwarsjournal.com for his extensive notes and references.

include violence against an established authority to achieve political change'.⁹ The verbosity of the definition tells the practitioner that insurgent movements will use all methods and tactics at its disposal to achieve a political aim. Bard O'Neill offers a less-prescriptive synopsis: "Insurgency may be defined as a struggle between a non-ruling group and the ruling authorities in which the non-ruling group consciously uses political resources (organisational expertise, propaganda and demonstration) and violence to destroy, reformulate, or sustain the basis of legitimacy of one or more aspects of politics."¹⁰ In choosing violence, the insurgent can pick from his 'toolkit' of irregular warfare¹¹ the tactical instruments that he believes will deliver that objective.¹² In short, the insurgent demonstrates that he is capable of prosecuting a broad tactical battle as part of a politically strategic campaign. Examining the evolution of this capability over the 20th Century is best focused by looking at four issues: the conditions from which revolt appeared; the insurgent leader's strategy and operational philosophy; the tactics that were employed; the outcome of the campaign and the way that it affected subsequent insurgencies.

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Dave Dilegge
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FOUNDATIONS AND FACES OF INSURGENCY IN THE 20TH CENTURY

The history and evolution of insurgency in the 20th Century is dominated by a triage of ideological clashes, wars about nationalism or liberation or both, and uprisings based on the effects of industrialisation and globalisation.¹³ While the pendulum bounced haphazardly between all three, seven campaigns in particular had a disproportionate influence. These were the Arab Revolt and T.E. Lawrence (1916–1919); the People's War in rural China and Mao Tse-tung (1930s); Latin America and Ernesto Che Guevara (1960s), the growth of

IN THIS ISSUE

ARTICLES

- A Hundred Years of Irregular Warfare** 1
by Maj M. W. Shervington PARA
- The Political Warfighter** 16
by Mr. Erik Evans
- Are More Troops Needed in Iraq?** 25
by Carlos L. Yordan, Ph.D.
- 4th Generation Warfare** 27
by Capt John W. Bellflower, Jr., USAF
- ‘We’ve Done This Before’** 33
by LTC Brent C. Bankus (Cavalry, AUS, Ret.)
- The Necessity for Psychological Operations Support to Special Operations Forces during Unconventional Warfare** 38
by MAJ Gregory J. Reck, USA

WISDOM FROM THE PAST

- An Afternoon with Bernard Fall** 21
By LtCol W. G. Leftwich
Marine Corps Gazette, February, 1969

FEATURES

- “About” Small Wars Journal** 36

urban insurgency in Palestine (1947), Cyprus (1956) and Brazil (1967) under Menachem Begin, George Grivas and Carlos Marighela respectively; and the current menace from radical Islamist militancy (since 1960) that is currently personified by Usama Bin Laden but is articulated by thousands and potentially millions of others.¹⁴

REVOLT IN ARABIA

The Arabs had been long suffering victims at the hands of Ottoman imperialists in a way that ‘cannot be imagined in sufficiently horrible terms’.¹⁵ Believing that Ottoman policies discriminated against them ‘on the grounds of race and nationality’ the Arabs wanted to be rid of the Turks and claim Arabia

for themselves but did not know how to set about it. When the Ottoman Empire aligned itself with Germany during World War One the Allied Powers, and Britain in particular, encouraged Hussein, the sharif of Mecca and his son Faisal, to lead the Arab peoples in revolt by promising [them] a future state of their own.¹⁶ Although Britain offered material support in terms of arms, it had no intention of committing British troops to the Turkish Front en masse. It did offer a small band of intelligence officers and Arab specialists, one of whom was T.E. Lawrence, 'arguably one of the most influential theorists of the twentieth century in terms of revolutionary war'.¹⁷ Knowing that the Arabs 'were unused to formal operations', Lawrence calculated that they would only taste victory if he formulated a style of revolutionary warfare by painstakingly discarding the conventional military doctrine prevalent in the British Army at the time. In his belief, 'armies were like plants, immobile as a whole, firm rooted through long stems to the head. We [the Arab tribes] might be like a vapour, blowing where we listed. Our kingdoms lay in each man's mind, and as we wanted nothing material to live on, so perhaps we offered nothing to killing.'¹⁸

Lawrence's strategy relied on three tactical elements – 'one algebraic, one biological, a third psychological'.¹⁹ The algebraic examined the pure science of achieving victory, and to this Lawrence analysed the numerical strengths of the Turkish Army against which the Arabs were pitted. He reached the conclusion that 'to hold Arabia the Turks would 'have need of a fortified post every four square miles, and a post could not be less than 20 men, so the requirement would be 600,000 men for the area they were trying to control, whereas they only had 100,000

available.'²⁰ The biological factors would re-balance the superior numbers of men and materials that philosophers had traditionally calculated to achieve victory. The Arabs could not afford casualties for though 'they may make only a brief hole, rings of sorrow widen out from them'; in material terms, the Turkish Army were in constant short supply so that 'our cue should be to destroy not the Army but the materials'.²¹

The third element was psychological and would concern not only shaping Turkish minds to the war in which they were now engaged, but the Arabs who had to either fight it or be a part of it. In helping to achieve this, Lawrence regarded the printing press as 'the greatest weapon in the armoury of the modern commander'²² in persuading Turkish soldiers and the Arabs that victory was inevitable. An acquiescent Arabian population was fundamental to achieving this objective; victory would be theirs when 'we had taught the civilians in it to die for our ideal of freedom: the presence or absence of the enemy was a secondary matter'.²³ Lawrence summed up his operational philosophy: 'In fifty words: Granted mobility, security (in the form of denying targets to the enemy), time, and doctrine (the idea to convert every subject to friendliness), victory will rest with the insurgents, for the algebraical factors are in the end decisive, and against the perfections of means and spirit struggle quite in vain.'²⁴

The tribes of Arabia waged a very specific guerrilla campaign against an occupying Turkish Army. It avoided direct confrontation when and where possible, preferring the 'hit and run tactics' on Turkish outposts and supply lines. In short, the Arab Revolt witnessed the victory between 1916 and 1919 of 3,000 Arab

tribesmen over a Turkish force of up to 50,000 soldiers.²⁵ Lawrence had been the first practitioner to articulate the nature of insurgent warfare. Mao Tse-tung would be the next.

MAO TSE-TUNG AND THE PEOPLE'S WAR

Following the dissolution of the Manchu Qing Dynasty in 1911, China had been shaped by the internecine politics of warlordism, a growing nationalist movement among the urban centres and a burgeoning communist sector in the ruling party. Mao, one of the founding fathers of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, had fled persecution from the purges of the ruling nationalist party, and soon began to formulate revolutionary aspirations to seize power for the Communists. Mao had recognised that 'a potentially revolutionary situation exists in any country where the government consistently fails in its obligations to ensure at least a minimally decent standard of life for the great majority of its citizens.'²⁶ This was the case in China. Millions of rural peasants lived in squalid conditions where the benefits of education, health and employment were denied in preference to the urban centres. The schism between urban and rural China would dictate the revolutionary movement that Mao intended to lead. China's struggle would, according to Mao, be both ideological and nationalistic. Victory over the ruling urban classes for the predominantly rural masses depend on a strategy that involved an intangible 'quartet' of time, space, will, and substitution'.²⁷

Mao needed time to build the organisational strength of the party and the will and determination to win among both communists and the population at large 'upon

whose support they were entirely dependent for ultimate victory'.²⁸ Space would be traded for time by avoiding battles with conventional forces and surrendering territory. Substitution forced the movement to find the 'means of drawing upon what strengths were possessed in order to offset weaknesses' such as propaganda for weapons, subversion for air power, and political mobilisation for industrial strength.²⁹

A campaign for national liberation based on three phases would follow. The first phase would be one of organisation, consolidation and preservation in which military operations would be sporadic and limited. This pre-revolutionary phase, the 'strategic defensive', would concentrate on building will and training and organising the peasants into subversive

Mao insisted that the political and military organisation run separately but in parallel with each other..

elements to enable the guerrillas to live among the population 'as little fishes in the ocean'.³⁰ The second phase would involve sporadic military attacks on enemy outposts and patrols coupled to a philosophy of eroding the faith of the people in the government while enhancing the cause celebre of the insurgents to defeat the government. This 'strategic stalemate' would concentrate on establishing bases, increasing the tempo of operations and training units for the decisive third phase. This would be the 'strategic offensive' in which the revolutionary movement would be organised into regular military units and inflict a defeat on the constitutional military in conventional

battle. Every phase should occur simultaneously, so that the revolution is self-fulfilling and ever-lasting.³¹ It poured another foundation onto Lawrence's uncompromising belief in Clausewitz's most famous dictum that war is a continuation of politics by other means. Mao insisted that the political and military organisation run separately but in parallel with each other.³²

Mao's philosophy on guerrilla warfare, extensively published after the Communist victory in 1949, gained wide currency. However, the philosophy's success must be interpreted within a broader understanding of China in the late-1930s, particularly concerning the Japanese invasion in 1937. This had largely eradicated the China-based threats to Mao's movement, effectively clearing the way for his accession to power. However, the success of a communist-inspired revolution in a period of great instability in the world after the Second World War precipitated a number of revolutionaries to copy his philosophy in their reach for power in their own countries. Between 1950 and 1970 there were at least ten insurrections across the globe in which Mao's model, or the Marxist ideology from which it was inspired, was the chosen vehicle.³³ Not all of these were successful; revolutionary models tend to work only in the country in which it was born and, on more occasions than not, are entirely terrain dependent. The relevance is in the fact that his philosophies were studied and adapted and did inspire other revolutionary movements, regardless of their eventual outcome. Latin America in the 1960s was a particularly fertile continent for revolutionary aspirations.

GUEVARA, 'FOCO' AND LATIN AMERICA

Ernesto 'Che' Guevara was born in Argentina in 1928 and had trained as a doctor before travelling through South America. He was in Guatemala in 1954 when the CIA manufactured the overthrow of a left-wing government; the uprising convinced Guevara in the strength of revolution. He fought alongside Fidel Castro in Cuba between 1956 and 1959.³⁴ He then travelled throughout Latin America during the 1960s and attempted to export his revolutionary ideas.

Whereas most theories of revolution seem to agree that certain preconditions must be met if a revolutionary situation is to arise, Guevara's theory was built on the basis that only a 'minimum level of discontent with a government' would be sufficient to create objective conditions favourable to revolution and to 'kindle the first spark'.³⁵ The revolutionaries themselves would create the conditions from which the people would want to revolt.³⁶ Once this level had been reached, military forces would provide the foco for revolution by exposing the corruption in government and the sufferings that it inflicted on the people. The foco would be the 'small motor of revolutionary dissolution'.³⁷ It would strike from its base in the countryside because 'the guerrilla fighter is above all an agrarian revolutionary.'³⁸

Guevara's attempts to export his model throughout Latin America in the 1960s failed because foco was built on the false premise of revolutionary success in Cuba in which the conditions for revolution certainly did exist.³⁹ Castro's victory in Cuba where the conditions either the 'minimum levels of discontent' did

not exist or the intrusion by revolutionary, 'multi-national' armies bent on a form of 'regime change' was not welcomed.⁴⁰ Also, Guevara's deliberate engineering of a rural insurgency movement ultimately ignored the rural to urban migration that had seen urban centres at an alarming rate. Guevara's greatest failure was in Bolivia, where his efforts at implanting foco was intended to subsequently start a chain reaction of foquismo through Argentina, Brazil and Peru. Bolivia's land reform programme and its nationalisation of the tin mines had enriched great swathes of the rural and urban populations, depriving Guevara of anything like the seeds of disenfranchisement that were vital for his movement to mature. The tin mining community 'regarded his [Guevara's] small band of assorted followers – Cubans, Peruvians, a few Bolivians and one East German woman – as aliens...the Bolivian army was more of a 'people's army' than the foco.⁴¹ Guevara was killed in Bolivia in October 1967, his foco theories largely discredited and abandoned.

A PASSAGE OF RITE: URBAN INSURGENCY AND TERRORISM

The over-emphasis on insurgencies seizing power from a rural base had generated a swathe of counter-arguments from theorists and practitioners who extolled the virtues of revolution with an urban insurgency core. This frequently spilled over into urban terrorism, a trend demonstrated by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) resistance to British rule.⁴² Indeed just as urban insurgency developed as a vehicle for revolution in conjunction with growing urbanisation, so too did the frequency of attacks on innocent civilians, deliberate or otherwise. The bond between urban insurgency and terrorism is now indivisible. A number of protagonists emerged to demonstrate the

growing attraction of this relationship. Principal among these were Menachem Begin in Palestine (1944–48), George Grivas in Cyprus (1956) and Carlos Marighela in Brazil (1967).

BEGIN'S PALESTINIAN WAR

By 1943, British administrative control of Palestine had generated a sense of extreme resentment among the local population. Frustrated by the British refusal to lift its immigration laws to allow more Jews into the country, and contemptuous that the British had seemingly reneged on its commitment to give independence to Palestine, a number of Jewish resistance movements appeared. One of those was Irgun, a right wing organisation that was led by Menachem Begin. For Irgun and Begin, the time had come to fight and to 'break through the gates from within'.⁴³ Begin announced that 'all the hopes that beat in our hearts have evaporated without a trace. We have not been accorded international status, no Jewish army has been set up, the gates of the country have not been opened. Our people are at war with this regime – war to the end...'⁴⁴

Begin's fight was to be a political struggle pursued by military means, in which Britain would be targeted directly through a precise bombing campaign that would 'deliberately, tirelessly, [and] unceasingly' destroy its prestige in the eyes of the international community.⁴⁵ Palestine would be turned into a 'glass house' into which the world's attention would be focused. He would achieve this by welding terrorist tactics to an extremely sophisticated propaganda machine that encouraged each of the insurgent organisations to 'run its own illegal radio station and an underground paper'⁴⁶ so that the 'propaganda

of the deed [of violence]⁴⁷ would achieve the aim.

Between September 1946 and July 1947, there were over 600 British military casualties, the majority resulting from road mines, a particularly lethal form of attack which injured the vehicle driver and the occupants. British counter-tactics typically failed and the insurgents who planted the mines 'usually escaped undetected'.⁴⁸ There were a select number of attacks on the intelligence and security apparatus, and more than 90 attacks on economic targets involving over 20 train derailments and attacks on the oil pipeline.⁴⁹

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The selection of economic targets had the dual purpose of increasing both the financial burden of the Palestinian government by raising the direct and indirect security costs (and thus taxes), and the number of troops that were assigned to protect those targets, thus reducing the number of troops that could be involved in counter-insurgency operations. Begin's campaign was also exported to Italy, Germany and Austria where the British Embassies were all bombed.⁵⁰ The terrorist campaign cost 338 British lives and led to the handover of the territory to the United Nations in 1948. Israel was granted independence a year later. Attention would now turn to the

further evolution of urban insurgency in Cyprus.

GRIVAS, EOKA AND CYPRUS

Urban insurgency was given another shot in the arm by George Grivas's EOKA (National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters)-led campaign in Cyprus between 1953 and 1956. His campaign against British colonial rule began in 1953 with the political objective of achieving enosis (union) between Cyprus and Greece. This would be fought by directing a guerrilla war as 'the sole instrument of the political aim pursued'.⁵¹ Conditions for revolution were ripe, with British taxes incurring the wrath of virtually all Greek Cypriots.⁵²

Grivas's strategy was built around the belief that national liberation movements must have the 'complete and unreserved support of the majority of the country's inhabitants'.⁵³ The purpose was to 'win a moral victory through a process of attrition, by harassing, confusing and finally exasperating the enemy forces, with the object of achieving our main aim.' He also believed in spending a great deal of time in the preparatory phase, building the will of the people and organising the insurgency movement. He attached great significance to the secrecy behind the insurgency's movement, but discarded Mao's 3rd phase believing that the insurgency could deliver the objective by itself.

EOKA's terrorist campaign bombed British government offices in Cyprus, murdered British subjects and displayed a wanton disregard for Cypriot life by inflicting terrorist atrocities in broad daylight, killing women, children and members of the clergy.⁵⁴ Other than bombing, his chosen methods of attack included arson, sabotage, raids on police armouries, street

murder and mining.⁵⁵ The campaign swung between rural and urban theatres. During November 1956, there were 416 terrorist incidents in which more than 35 people died; in April 1957 EOKA exploded 50 bombs and assassinated two British soldiers.⁵⁶ As the struggle increasingly took on the spectacle of a civil war a political solution became progressively more attractive. Eventually, EOKA halted its demands for enosis and a Republic of Cyprus was declared in 1959.

The significance of Grivas's campaign is found in his own admission that he 'applied certain principles and methods which were applicable to the special case of Cyprus. In my opinion that was one of the principal reasons for our military success.'⁵⁷ He not only fused his military campaign to a political objective but studied the historical offerings at hand, in particular Mao and Guevara. He adapted both models to create an urban and rural insurgency movement which successfully employed terrorism and guerrilla warfare. As Grivas's campaign was interpreted by others as achieving political success, so the evolution of urban insurgency continued. The struggle would now move back to Latin America.

MARIGHELA'S BRAZILIAN DREAM

The evolution of urban insurgency received fresh impetus with the publication in the late 1960s of the revolutionary theories of Brazil's Carlos Marighela. Considered by many as 'possibly the most widely read, known and imitated theoretician and practitioner of urban guerrilla warfare'⁵⁸, Marighela had been a communist activist for over 40 years until he formed the Action for National Liberation (ALN), a revolutionary movement that intended to 'destroy the present Brazilian economic,

political and social system...'⁵⁹ Achieving success would be dependent on adapting the revolutionary models of Che Guevara and Fidel Castro to suit conditions in Brazil at the time. Rapid urbanisation had exposed several deep-running sores within Brazilian society, not least the burgeoning shanty towns with their high unemployment and feeble prospects. Marighela rightly identified that the city would be 'the primary battleground' for his revolutionary concepts to take hold.⁶⁰

Marighela's revolutionary philosophy revolved around inflicting specific acts of terrorism in order to generate a government response. That response would be either conciliatory or brutally repressive; either way it would serve to further alienate the population. The city offered both soft targets and the perfect landscape on which the population could effectively judge that response. Alistair Horne, who analysed the impact of Marighela's work on the Algerian Independence movement in the 1950s, summed up his strategy: "Marighela's essential philosophy was that a resort to blind terrorism would inevitably provoke the forces of law and order into an equally blind repression, which in turn would lead to a backlash by the hitherto uncommitted, polarise the situation into two extreme camps and make impossible any dialogue of compromise by eradicating the "soft centre."⁶¹ The ALN would also follow a strict propaganda code tied to the careful use of mass communications and the media. His Minimanual confirms this approach: "The coordination of urban guerrilla⁶² action, including each armed section, is the principal way of making armed propaganda. These actions, carried out with specific and determined objectives, inevitably become propaganda material for the mass communications system. Bank assaults,

ambushes, desertions and diverting of arms, the rescue of prisoners, executions, kidnappings, sabotage, terrorism, and the war of nerves, are all cases in point. The war of nerves or psychological war is an aggressive technique, based on the direct or indirect use of mass means of communication and news transmitted orally in order to demoralise the government.”⁶³

Tactically, Marighela initiated a series of actions that ‘would be designed to be spectacular, targeting Brazilian authorities as well as multi-national companies’ in order to weaken the economy by driving foreign capital out.⁶⁴ His principal techniques were letter bombs, assassinations and politically motivated kidnappings. These included kidnapping the US Ambassador to Brazil and demanding the release of 15 prisoners; both the Ambassador and the prisoners were released.⁶⁵

Ultimately Marighela’s theories failed because the government’s response, though brutally repressive, did not have the desired effect of alienating the population. It seemed ‘impervious’ to the claims of the insurgents and increasingly rejected their violent tactics.⁶⁶ A survey carried out in Rio de Janeiro in 1969 showed that 79% of the city’s inhabitants rejected terrorism.⁶⁷ Ultimately, the insurgents ‘failed to develop a rural component to complement their urban strategy’ and their attacks did not themselves threaten the government.⁶⁸ Marighela’s fate dovetailed with that of his theories and he was eventually killed in a police ambush in 1969, an operation which government forces labelled as ‘the biggest success of the 1969 counter-guerrilla operations.’⁶⁹ Up until this moment, insurgencies were regional and based loosely around the communist ideology. That would

face competition in the 1970s as a highly politicised strain of Islam emerged from the Middle East. It dominates insurgency and terrorism to this day.

RUMBLINGS OF POLITICAL ISLAM

By the 1970s insurgency had evolved into a revolutionary ‘competition’ between ruling governments and those forces that used a variety of means to challenge their legitimacy. It had progressed from a solely rural affair into one that swayed between the city and the countryside depending on what the conditions gave the insurgents the best chance of success. It had discarded the concept of violent struggle for pure violence’s sake and replaced it with a formula whereby violent struggle could only be successful if there was a political goal in sight. That political goal had alternated between the twin ideological pillars of Marxism and Capitalism which, for much of the 20th Century, elevated insurgency to Cold War objectives. And as the Cold War thawed after 1991, so the new ideological pillar, representative of radical Islam, was erected. Sayyid Qutb, one of the small handful of theorists behind Islam’s resurgence, is clear: ‘The communists failed. The nationalist leaders failed. The secularists totally failed. Now the field is empty of all ideologies – except Islam...Now at this most critical time when turmoil and confusion reign, it is the turn of Islam, of the umma to play its role. Islam’s time has come.’⁷⁰ As the century drew to its violent close, global insurgency would be added to the repertoire of irregular war strategy. Radical Islam’s cause was given a powerful boost courtesy of the last of the superpower proxy wars which took place in Afghanistan in 1979, in the last of the superpower proxy wars.

In 1979, several massive events shook the Muslim world. A peace deal was signed between Israel and Egypt,⁷¹ Ayatollah Khomeini seized power in Iran under the banner of the Iranian Revolution, 49 American citizens were hostages in the US Embassy in Tehran,⁷² a radical Islamist group seized control of the Grand Mosque at Mecca, and the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan.⁷³ Each of these events would now be played out in the Afghan theatre where a new strain of jihadist insurgency would emerge.

JIHAD!

Afghan communists had seized power during a coup in 1978. The Soviet Union, ever mindful of the threat to its interests from Pakistan and Iran, both of whom were American allies, had signed a treaty of friendship with the Afghan leaders that bound the two countries firmly together. The ruling parties⁷⁴ subsequently initiated a series of policies of 'radical agrarian reform, compulsory literacy, and the imposition of socialism, through thousands of arrests and summary execution'⁷⁵ that alienated large swathes of a traditional and tribal-based population. Following this, the Khalq faction disposed of the Parcham in a vicious purge. In April 1979 there was a general uprising after which the government lost control of the countryside. The Soviet Union intervened on 26 December 1979 to halt the government's slide and the cracking of the Soviet socialist edifice.⁷⁶

The invasion sparked great consternation throughout the West, particularly in America and Britain. Occurring during the closing week of a tumultuous year, the US Congress almost immediately granted millions in foreign aid to a resistance movement and promised to support

a resistance movement. The 'resistance' that emerged was initiated by Islamic religious networks across the Muslim world; it would take the form of jihad, or Holy War. Those that would inflict would fight under the banner of Islam as Mujahidin, or Warriors of God.

The call for jihad, positively encouraged by America, galvanised seven Sunni Muslim resistance movements from across the Muslim world to repel the 'impious invader' and liberate a land of Islam (dar el-Islam) under the banner of an 'Islamic Unity of Afghan Mujahidin (IUAM).'⁷⁷ Saudi Arabia, custodian of the Two Holy Places of Islam (Medina and Mecca) and therefore defacto leader of Islam, viewed its involvement in Afghanistan as part of its struggle for that leadership. That struggle had been given fresh impetus after Khomeini's Revolution had swept him to power earlier in the year. A resurgent Shi'i Iran could threaten Sunni hegemony. Saudi leadership of Islam, already threatened by revolt earlier in the year at the Grand Mosque, could not suffer another reversal. Therefore, the Saudi government decided that it would not only financially support the Sunni-based Mujahidin but that it would export, on 'an industrial scale'⁷⁸, its Wahhabist and Salafist⁷⁹ interpretation of Islam to Pakistan.⁸⁰ The exporting of 'petro-Islam' to the scores of medrassahs (religious schools) in Peshawar after 1979 reinforced Saudi Arabia's intent for the war in Afghanistan to be fought under the banner of Islam and jihad.

Thousands of Wahhabist Sunnis from across the Muslim world travelled to the North West Frontier, and from there into Afghanistan, to join forces with the Afghan resistance movement. This force was perceived by the West as freedom fighters and by Saudi Arabia as the vanguard of the Umma and the jihad.⁸¹

The seven resistance groups, the Peshawar Seven, had diverse political, ideological, and religious views which were patchily united by the CIA under the common objective of establishing an Islamic government in Afghanistan under the Shari`a code of law.⁸²

On arrival in the region, the volunteers met with Afghani soldiers, Pakistani military and CIA operatives in training camps and centres along the border regions of Pakistan and Iran.⁸³ There they learned the necessities of guerrilla warfare – ambushes, sabotage, small-arms weapon training, use of terrain, concealment and demolitions. Particular attention was paid to teaching mine warfare.⁸⁴ From those centres, small detachments of

It was Azzam's epic, mythic, fantastical language that was to become the standard mode of expression for 'jihadi' radicals over the next decade'.

mujahidin, totalling between 90,000 to 250,000 guerrilla fighters,⁸⁵ were funnelled into Afghanistan. Armed with a wide selection of light weapons, mortars, DShK machine guns and, increasingly after 1986, hand-held Stinger anti-aircraft missiles, the detachments carried out widespread sabotage of bridges, pipelines and electricity pylons, extensive road mining, attacks on small Soviet garrisons, and occasionally participating in combat as part of a larger, more powerful regimental formation.⁸⁶

At their peak, the Soviets had over 120,000 men in Afghanistan supported by over 30,000 men operating in Soviet territory. 'In all,

some 642,000 men were rotated through Afghanistan over the whole campaign. In addition to the 13,000 dead or missing, Soviet forces lost over 300 helicopters and over 1,300 armoured personnel carriers.⁸⁷ In 1989, President Gorbachev ordered the Red Army to withdraw from Afghanistan, providing confirmation that the war had "destroyed the myth of a (superpower) in the minds of Muslim mujahidin young men".⁸⁸ Among them were three individuals who would come to articulate the struggle in a much broader, and for the West more menacing, sense. Those individuals were Abdallah Azzam, Ayman Muhammed al-Zawahiri, and Usama bin-Laden.

ABDALLAH AZZAM AND THE SIX PILLARS OF ISLAM

Abdallah Azzam, a professor of Islamic Law from Palestine and Jordan and founder of the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas, had travelled to Pakistan during the 1980s to support the Afghan resistance movement. In Peshawar, where he was 'the best known Arab Islamist'⁸⁹ he founded the Council of Islamic Coordination, an Arab-based charity under the aegis of the Red Crescent of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. From there, he founded the Bureau of Services to the Mujahidin to 'receive, supervise, and organise all these people.'⁹⁰ Azzam's priorities lay in demonstrating that jihad in Afghanistan was the moral and financial obligation of every Muslim. He proclaimed, and published articles in a series of jihadist newspapers to support his assertions that "if the enemy has entered Muslim lands, the jihad becomes an individual obligation according to all doctors of the law, all commentators of the Sacred Texts, and all scholars of tradition (those who assembled the words of the Prophet)."⁹¹ Afghanistan was merely the first

land usurped by infidels and it was the individual duty of every Muslim to reclaim that land. The struggle would not lapse there, but “will remain an individual obligation until all other lands which formerly were Muslim come back to us and Islam reigns within them once again. Before us lie Palestine, Bukhara, Lebanon, Chad, Eritrea, Somalia...”⁹² In doing so, Azzam told his followers that jihad had to become the 6th pillar of Islam, to which every Muslim must subscribe.⁹³

Although other clerics called for jihad, Azzam’s proclamations were given extra kudos ‘because what he called for [in Afghanistan] actually came about.’⁹⁴ He became the ideologue of the ‘Arab Afghans’ delivering hugely charismatic and knowledgeable sermons about Islamic law, jihad and the persuasive allure of martyrdom. ‘It was Azzam’s epic, mythic, fantastical language that was to become the standard mode of expression for ‘jihadi’ radicals over the next decade’.⁹⁵ In 1984, Azzam founded a movement to provide logistics and religious instruction to the mujahidin; it was known as Al-Qai`da al-Sulbah (or ‘the solid base’).⁹⁶ This base would enable jihad to be exported throughout the world as part of a ‘cosmic struggle’⁹⁷ in pursuit of an Islamic caliphate. A few months later, Azzam and his two sons were murdered by a car bomb. The yawning gap that his death created was quickly filled by Ayman Muhammed al-Zawahiri, a medical student of his from Egypt.

KNIGHTS UNDER THE BANNER OF THE PROPHET⁹⁸

Al-Zawahiri, born in Egypt in 1951, had become radicalised at an early age through the teachings of Azzam and the writings of spiritual

leaders of radical Islamist groups. One of these was Sayyid Qutb, who urged his Islamist followers to ‘launch something wider’.⁹⁹ For Qutb division in the world was stark, “In the world there is only one party, the party of Allah; all of the others are parties of Satan and rebellion. Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of rebellion.”¹⁰⁰ Al-Zawahiri became further radicalised when he was imprisoned, along with thousands of others, for the assassination of Egyptian President Sadat in 1981.

On his release three years later, he was asked to go to Afghanistan to take part in a relief project. He found the request ‘a golden opportunity to get to know closely the field of Jihad, which could be a base for Jihad in Egypt and the Arab world, the heart of the Islamic world where real battle for Islam exists.’¹⁰¹ Previous attempts at inciting jihad in Egypt had failed because ‘the Nile Valley falls between two deserts without vegetation or water which renders the area unsuitable for guerrilla warfare...’¹⁰²

Following a second prison term ended in 1984, he returned to the ‘incubator’ of Afghanistan where jihad could ‘acquire practical experience in combat, politics and organisational matters’.¹⁰³ This had not been the case elsewhere because wars were ‘fought under nationalist banners mingled with Islam and sometimes even with...communist banners’.¹⁰⁴ It was during this second period in 1987 that al-Zawahiri met the third individual in the pack, Usama bin Laden. Their partnership, founded in Afghanistan, would flourish into a multinational organisation. Its spiritual leader was al-Zawahiri.

USAMA AND THE CULT OF PERSONALITY

Usama bin Laden's history and current involvement in transnational terrorism is now infamous. Born in 1957 as one of 57 children to a Saudi construction magnate, it is estimated that bin Laden inherited roughly \$300 million when his father died in 1967.¹⁰⁵ As the only child to not volunteer for an overseas university education, bin Laden enrolled into the Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah, which was then a centre for Islamic dissidents from all over the world. It was here that the bin Laden was exposed, and seemingly hypnotised, by the fiery sermons of Abdallah Azzam and Mohammed Qutb.¹⁰⁶ The massive events that had shaken the Muslim world in 1979 occurred in the same year that bin Laden left university, and they left a deep impression on him.¹⁰⁷

Bin Laden first travelled to Peshawar in 1980, and by 1984 was firmly ensconced there. He set up various charitable organisations for the mujahidin and worked at Azzam's al-Jihad newspaper, the standout paper in the region at the time.¹⁰⁸ Azzam was a huge influence on bin Laden through his ability to fuse Islamist scholarship with contemporary issues affecting the Muslim world. By adhering to the Azzam line of the sixth pillar, bin Laden became known in Afghanistan chiefly as a person who generously helped fund the jihad.¹⁰⁹ Working alongside Azzam in the Bureau of Services, bin Laden realised that jihad in Afghanistan would increasingly depend on a complex network of charities, sympathisers and financiers. Though he did fight, his principal contribution was in the financial support he donated and the contacts he made with the mujahidin commanders. These contacts formed the foundation for al-Qai`da, which literally

translated means 'the [Data] base'.¹¹⁰ Although Al-Qai`da's and Usama bin Laden's greatest impact was still to come, by 1988 he began to extol the virtues of a worldwide jihad and his attention increasingly turned to Palestine.

The Red Army withdrew in early 1989 leaving a puppet regime whose time in power would be immediately challenged. Pakistan, wishing to see an Islamic government in Afghanistan, continued to support the mujahidin in their unfulfilled quest for power. In one of the last major tactical battles of the war, the mujahidin attacked Jalalabad with the intention of seizing it as the new administrative capital of the country. The attack failed and only served to expose the serious infighting among the myriad of mujahidin factions. For Bin Laden and other fanatical Islamists, the infighting represented fitna (strife or division within Islam), a state of affairs which was expressly forbidden in the Qur`an.¹¹¹

The jihadist war in Afghanistan had both short and long-term effects. In the short term, Soviet forces were defeated by a guerrilla army who had adapted the tactics and strategies of Mao, Guevara, Begin, Grivas and Marighela to achieve their political objectives of installing an Islamic government, though it would take another few years for the Taliban to seize power. The longer-term effects were more far-reaching. The Arab leaders viewed this Afghan war as a "training course of the utmost importance to prepare Muslim mujahidin to wage their awaited battle against the superpower that now has sole dominance over the globe, namely, the United States."¹¹² Fuelled by Azzam's 'exhortations to violence'¹¹³, in which anything but armed struggle is rejected, the Afghan war had re-asserted the Arab belief in their 'cosmic struggle' for a pure and just

Islamic state, something that had not occurred since the Prophet's death 1,300 years ago. That was the new political objective to which this 'global insurgency' would fight to achieve.

INSURGENCY IN A NEW CENTURY

Two events in this new century have forced the world into what Dr Stephen Metz has labelled another 'age of insurgency analogous to the period from the 1950s to the 1980s'.¹¹⁴ The first event was 9/11 and the potential threat from a resurgent militant Islam; the second event is the ongoing counter-insurgency campaign in Iraq. After nearly four accumulated years of highly charged debate a new category that Dr John Mackinlay has labelled a 'global insurgency' has emerged.¹¹⁵

Both these events have forced Western Governments and the United States in particular, to push the study of insurgency and irregular warfare to the forefront of military and political debate. There are now a growing number of politicians, military academics, strategists, historians and investigative journalists who are examining the subjects and professing another theory (and often a

prescriptive solution) to subjects that remain 'fraught with perils'.¹¹⁶

The study of insurgency has revealed a number of core themes or principles. Support of the people is critical enabling the insurgent to blend in. Insurgencies will inflict hit and run tactics and avoid pitched battle until the insurgent forces are ready. Throughout the 20th Century, insurgents used propaganda and the media as a weapon. All insurgencies have been fused by a political ideology, a drive for an alternative political structure to replace the current power base. Above all, insurgents have competed for power with the government and have used every means at their disposal in order to win. By contrast, counter-insurgency forces have not been given the same freedom of manoeuvre than conventional forces, as the next chapter will illustrate.

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Editor's Note: Major Shervington's full dissertation, including his extensive footnotes and references from this chapter, omitted here for space, are available online at SWJ.



The Political Warfighter

Mr. Erik Evans

"War is the continuation of politics." In this sense war is politics and war itself is a political action; since ancient times there has never been a war that did not have a political character."

– Mao Tse-Tung

*"In the United States, we go to considerable trouble to keep soldiers out of politics, and even more to keep politics out of soldiers. Guerrillas do exactly the opposite. They go to great lengths to make sure that their men are politically educated and thoroughly aware of the issues at stake."*²

– Marine General Samuel B. Griffith

*"Our fighters have gone through a dogged political education..."*³

– General Vo Nguyen Giap

In classic Maoist warfare the political indoctrination of the population's consciousness is the principle task of the guerrilla fighter. The guerrilla is in essence a political warfighter that wages war against his enemy in the political and military realms. He is readily capable of conducting political campaigns to convince or coerce the population to back the insurgency while mounting combat operations against enemy forces. Conversely, foot soldiers in a counter-insurgency campaign often have no political component to their mission. Their directive is to seek out and destroy guerrillas in the military battlespace,

not to politically energize the passions of the people against the insurgent movement. Whereas, the political guerrilla stirs, captures and channels the hatred and animosity of the people against the insurgent infrastructure's enemies (i.e. a constituted government or an occupying army). The guerrilla acts as a political force that supercharges the insurgent organization's political campaign. Meanwhile, the apolitical counter-insurgent actor gives no political advantage to the cause that he serves.

¹ Mao Tse-Tung, "On Protracted War," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung: The Period of the War of Resistance Against Japan* Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2001. p. 152

² Samuel B. Griffith, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1961. p. 8

³ Vo Nguyen Giap, "People's War, People's Army," Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2001. p. 60

Mao Tse-Tung believed that understanding the relationship between politics and war was essential to prosecuting successful military campaigns. His ideas closely echoed the sentiments of 19th century Prussian general Carl von Clausewitz. Clausewitz contended that war develops in and springs forth from the “womb” of politics.¹ Mao concurred, “In a word, war cannot for a single moment be separated from politics.”² Clausewitz argued that war is employed to further political objectives in the same way that other political means (i.e. diplomatic cables, sanctions etc.) are utilized. It differs only from other political conflicts in that it is resolved through bloodshed.³ Mao similarly stated, “...that politics is war without bloodshed while war is politics with bloodshed.”⁴

Mao emphasized the importance of politics in guerrilla warfare. He stated that, “Without a political goal, guerrilla warfare must fail.”⁵ He believed that the guerrilla must have a precise conception of the political goal for which he is fighting and the political organization to be used in attaining that goal.⁶ Mao saw political training as the key component in the development of a politically charged foot soldier. Military arts were not the sole or principal concern of the guerrilla. Mao stated that, “The fighting capacity of a guerrilla unit is not determined exclusively by military arts, but depends above all on political consciousness, political influence, setting in motion the broad popular masses, disintegrating the enemy army, and inducing

the broad popular masses to accept our leadership.”⁷ Political training gave the guerrilla an effective knowledge base that he could use to fulfill his primary objective; political mobilization of the population.

The goal of political mobilization is to transform a disorganized and inert population into a politically organized and energized body. The first step in political mobilization is the establishment a political aim and political program to support that aim. Political mobilization does not involve the mere presentation of the political aim and program

Giap stated that in Vietnam’s war against foreign powers, “political activities were more important than military activities, and fighting less important than propaganda.” Counter-insurgency doctrine often reverses this strategy with resulting failure.

to the population. Rather it is a metaphysical bonding with the population that connects the political aim and program intimately with the people’s lives. Mao stated, “Our job is not recite our political program to the people, for nobody will listen to recitations; we must link the political mobilization for the war with the developments in the war and with the life of the soldiers and the people, and make it a

¹ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited by Peter Paret and M. Howard, New York: Knopf, 1993. p. 173

² Mao, p. 153

³ Clausewitz, p. 173

⁴ Mao, p. 153

⁵ Mao, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1961. p. 43

⁶ Mao, p. 88

⁷ Mao Tse-Tung, *Basic Tactics: “Political Work”*, 1937 http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-6/mswv6_28.htm#ch15

continuous movement.”¹ Mobilization binds the population, army and government together into a coherent war machine. Why did Mao view political mobilization of the population as the key to success in war? The answer lies within an analysis of the Clausewitzian trinity and how Mao applied it to the Sino-Japanese war.

Clausewitz argued that war differed from other political expression in that it is produced and governed by three dominant tendencies known as the “paradoxical trinity”: (1) The elements of primordial violence and animosity which mainly concern the people; (2) Probability and chance which the army and its commander must contend with on the battlefield and; (3) War’s subordination to the political realm, which is the sole concern of the government and its ability to reason the politics of conflict.² Clausewitz contended that during 18th century European warfare, the people’s role in war was ‘extinguished.’³ During that time period European governments did not turn the elements of primordial violence and hatred that are latent in the people against their enemies. War was the business of governments and armies alone.

The French Revolution reintroduced and reemphasized the elements of primordial violence and pure hatred in warfare. Clausewitz stated that, “in 1793 a force appeared that beggared all imagination. Suddenly war again became the business of the people – a people of thirty millions, all of whom considered themselves to be citizens.”⁴ Warfare in Europe

was no longer just the business of governments and their armies. The French had the advantage because their political structure was designed to arouse and capture the violence of the whole population. The political framework of European governments was structured to support small professional armies and could not channel the might of the people against France.

Clausewitz criticized European governments for believing that they could stop the power of the French with the government and army alone. He stated, “It was expected that a moderate auxiliary corps would be enough to end a civil war [French Revolution]; but the colossal weight of the whole French people, unhinged by political fanaticism, came crashing down on us.”⁵ Radical alterations in the political character of European government had to be undertaken to defeat France. Napoleon’s armies were destroyed once Europe’s statesmen recognized the nature of politics that brought the masses and all their energy into war.⁶ During the early Sino-Japanese war Mao came to the conclusion that the Chinese resistance against the Japanese was similarly making the same mistake that the European governments did during the Napoleonic wars.

Mao argued that the Chinese resistance was not accessing the hatred and animosity of the people. He argued that Chinese resistance amounted to a “...partial war because it is being waged only by the government and the army, and not by the people. It is precisely here that the chief reason for the great loss of territory and for the many military setbacks during the

¹ Mao Tse-Tung, “On Protracted War,” *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung: The Period of the War of Resistance Against Japan* Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2001. p. 152

² Clausewitz, p. 101

³ Clausewitz, p. 712

⁴ Clausewitz, p. 715

⁵ Clausewitz, p. 627

⁶ Clausewitz, p. 737

last few months is to be found.”¹ From Mao’s perspective, the Chinese needed to stir the passions of the people against the Japanese. He condemned Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang for suppressing the role of the people in war. He wrote, “The [Kuomintang] think the Japanese aggressors can be defeated by the government’s efforts alone, but they are wrong. A few battles may be won in a war of resistance fought by the government alone, but it will be impossible to defeat the Japanese oppressors thoroughly. This can be done only by a war of total resistance by the whole nation.”² The politicization of the soldier and political mobilization of the population were the solutions to China’s problems. Note that Mao’s references to the army, government and people are akin to Clausewitz’s trinity.

Clausewitz and Mao lambasted military theorists who denied that there was an intimate relationship with politics. They both blamed the loss of wars in their respective time periods on leaders who eschewed the role of the people/primordial violence in war. Warfare was not just the business of governments and the military. The North Vietnamese communists also believed that tapping into the primordial violence of the people through political mobilization would bring victory in battle. Vietnamese General Vo Nguyen Giap said, “Many a time the political force of the masses crushed enemy mopping up operations and successfully protected our compatriots’ lives and property.”³ The force of the people would energize the military and government into an awesome war machine. Giap wrote, “In a

revolutionary war, the people’s political superiority will be translated into a material force capable of turning the table on the enemy, overcoming all difficulties and hardships to defeat in the end an enemy who at first was several times stronger.”⁴ The Chinese and Vietnamese armies garnered stunning wartime success in the application of political mobilization in their war planning.

Insurgent groups that have tapped into the violent passions of people through political indoctrination pose a dangerous threat to counter-insurgent forces. For example, Hezbollah developed a psychological-political campaign that successfully channeled the violence and hatred of the Shiite population against Israel.⁵ Hezbollah emulated Mao’s dictum that, “The political goal must be clearly and precisely indicated to inhabitants of guerrilla zones and their national consciousness awakened.”⁶ Ibrahim Moussawi, a spokesman for Hezbollah, stressed the significance of instructing the populace in the insurgent infrastructure’s political agenda:

We [Hezbollah] give as much support as possible to the people living in the occupied zone, making them aware that the eventual outcome of the war is also about their freedom. Obviously, this has certain serious psychological implications for those trying to counter our efforts. We have been more

¹ Mao, p. 49

² Mao, p.25

³ Vo Nguyen Giap, “The South Vietnam People Will Win,” Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2001. p. 21

⁴ Giap, p. 36

⁵ For discussion on Hezbollah’s successful tactics against Israel see Clive Jones, “Israeli Counter-Insurgency Strategy and the War in South Lebanon,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Winter 1997), p. 82-108, Al J. Venter “Middle East Mind Games: Interview With Hezbollah” *Soldier Of Fortune*, January 1998: p. 63, and Brendan O’Shea, “Israel’s Vietnam?” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 21, No.3 (Jul-Sep 98). p. 207-220

⁶ Mao Tse-Tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1961. p. 89

successful in achieving this objective than the enemy [Israelis] in recent times.¹

A central component of Islamic militant-political groups, such as Hezbollah, has been to politicize the masses through educational, social and religious programs. The Muslim Brotherhood and its splinter groups, such as HAMAS and the Egyptian Gama'a Islamiyya, have made a political and spiritual connection to the masses through their grassroots social-political programs. A Gama'a Islamiyya tract stated, "The social activities of the Gama'a have had great effect on the people, this is the secret of the spiritual union for the Gama'a with people from amongst the poor in particular."² The insurgent movement's religious-spiritual-political connection with the people allows it to control and channel their violent passions.

Giap stated that in Vietnam's war against foreign powers, "political activities were more important than military activities, and fighting less important than propaganda."³ Counter-insurgency doctrine often reverses this strategy with resulting failure. Military activities become more important than political activities and fighting becomes more important than propaganda. The apolitical counter-insurgency campaign is doomed against politically charged insurgent movements. As the lone insurgent fighter moves through the countryside and the city, he brings with him something more destructive to his enemy than bombs, bullets or

bayonets; a political message. He uses this political message to spin a political web between himself and the people that nets the counter-insurgent forces trying to destroy him.

The answer to the politically charged guerrilla fighter is the development of a politically charged counter-insurgency fighter, a political warfighter. A political warfighter that understands the political aim and political program of the counter-insurgency campaign. A political warfighter who can galvanize the primordial violence and hateful instincts of the people against the insurgent enemy. A political warfighter that can unlock the political fanaticism of the people just as the French revolutionaries, Napoleon, Mao Tse-Tung and Vo Nguyen Giap did in past wars. The political warfighter is the spark. The political message is the fuel. The people's hatred and animosity are the fire. The fire that forges a successful war machine.

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¹ Ibrahim Moussawi in interview with Al J. Venter "Middle East Mind Games: Interview With Hezbollah," *Soldier Of Fortune*, January 1998. p. 63

² Sheikh Rifa'ey Ahmad Taha, "The Islamic State in Egypt is Approaching,"

www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/egypt.htm

³ Vo Nguyen Giap, "People's War, People's Army," Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2001. p. 79



AN AFTERNOON WITH BERNARD FALL

LtCol W G Leftwich, USMC

A tribute to the memory of a gifted writer who knew his subject implicitly,
including the Marines with whom he lived and died.

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Editor's Note: Bernard Fall is well known to students of Small Wars. Imagine our surprise when we found this article recounting his afternoon spent with another well known warrior (yes, Marine, *that* Leftwich). The Marine Corps Gazette has been extremely generous with granting us this reprint from their archives. The Gazette now has its archives online.

TWO years have passed since Dr. Bernard B. Fall, author, lecturer and Indo-China expert, was killed near Hue in Vietnam. This anniversary recalls a memorable afternoon spent with him only two days before he departed on his final trip in December, 1966. I was researching on Vietnam, and Dr. Fall, the acknowledged authority, was a valued source if his always busy schedule permitted. When I called for an appointment, he agreed with characteristic courtesy but warned that he was in the midst of preparing to leave. This was obvious when I arrived at his Washington home. His roomy study already overgrown with books and manuscripts was further cluttered with obvious preparations for the trip. He was to continue his study of Vietnam on a Guggenheim Fellowship and expected to spend a year abroad. He said that Gen. Wallace M. Greene, then Commandant, requested that he spend some time with the Marines, and he had agreed to do so. Indeed, his last days were with the 3rd MarDiv.

I had met Dr. Fall only casually on a previous occasion, but was impressed as always with his cordiality and contagious enthusiasm.

He needed little less than an unsolicited visitor at that time, but he devoted the better part of an afternoon to random discussion, interrupted periodically by phone calls from people seeking his time. An enthusiastic and uninhibited conversationalist, he talked freely on all aspects of the 20 years of the war he had studied so avidly. On several occasions he referred to his vast library of books and periodicals. I was startled and complimented that he had read an article I had written previously on some small unit actions in Vietnam. He charitably didn't make any comment on its quality or accuracy, but in the course of the afternoon he did cite the inaccuracy of several other current articles in military periodicals. He obviously read virtually everything written on his favorite subject and made copious marginal notes. I shuddered at the thought that my unscholarly offerings might be the subject of such intense scrutiny.

I gave Dr. Fall some photos taken in the Central Highlands of monuments to the ill-fated Mobile Group 100, which succumbed to a series of Viet Minh ambushes along famed Route 19. This was a subject dear to his heart,

and he mentioned appreciatively that the 1st Air Cavalry had cleaned up two such sites which were nearly overgrown by the kunai grass that now covered the graves of the men they honored. This launched a discussion of MG 100 and ambush tactics. He alluded to a classic example of antiambush reaction made by the MG survivors, already battered by three ambushes. Rising out of the elephant grass, they charged precipitously across Route 19 and scattered the ambushers bent on finishing them off. He felt that American units were not as ambush prone because they could reconnoiter their flanks by fire with their immense firepower and the profusion of aircraft that the French did not have. "We never learn," he continued, as he described another operation on which he had accompanied American advisors along Route 14 eleven years later. Dr. Fall had carried a tape recorder, and he recalled his voice saying: "Watch out lieutenant. This is a probable ambush area," followed by the advisor's assurance: "There aren't any VC here," and then the rattle of gunfire that confirmed his suspicions. The ARVN convoy, consisting of tanks and infantry, immediately telescoped; the regimental commander was killed when he went forward to spur the advance.

I steered the conversation toward the topic of my visit, research on the advisory effort. "The advisory concept is generally good," he explained, "but it has been misdirected since 1955 when Gen 'Iron' Mike O'Daniel took over from the French." The Americans did away with the Mobile Group concept. They introduced a divisional structure and planned for conventional war after the Korean pattern. Somewhat bitterly he described what he considered to be the systematic removal of French symbolism, down to the floppy-brimmed bush hats. An unfortunate side effect,

he continued, was the elimination of all traditional trappings in the Vietnamese services. Elite units who had fought bravely against the Viet Minh were reorganized and their achievements obscured. Only the Vietnamese airborne units retained their symbolic red berets. Dr. Fall added that a further oversight was the failure to assign advisors to the paramilitary forces (now the popular and regional forces) until 1964. "However, even the best advisors can't accomplish much in a year," he admonished. The longer-term French military missions in Cambodia and Laos in the 1960's did much better. In fact, he recounted, a French colonel named Seta even belied the myth that a Westerner cannot command native troops in this age. Seta, chief of the French advisory mission to Cambodia, complained to Prince Sihanouk that he could not accomplish a particular task because he wasn't in command. The mercurial Sihanouk promptly dubbed him a brigadier in the Cambodian Army. A bemused Paris consented, and Seta eventually rose to lieutenant general. Present day advisors can well appreciate this extraordinary achievement. The possibilities of an American being invited to command a comparable ARVN force would appear remote indeed.

Dr. Fall mentioned some successful advisory efforts from the past. Lafayette was a grand scale advisor on Washington's staff, and the Germans accomplished much with the Turks prior to and during World War I. Integrated units are an extension of advisory efforts, and the half-French, half-Vietnamese units fought very well during the French War. A frequent critic of American tactics, he called the Marine Corps' Combined Action Companies the "best idea yet." Taking his massive doctoral dissertation from a shelf, he mentioned a

*"Casualties don't mean
anything to them . . ."*

French technique that might serve us well today: the GAMO's (Groupes Administrates Mobiles Operationales), 150-man mixed units that contained government officials as well as protective troops. Their mission was to move into newly cleared areas and govern until civilian authority could return. French commanders disliked them because their commands had ultimately to provide security for them. This tidbit never got into any of his books, but offers food for thought as a potential combination of CAC's and Revolutionary Development Cadres.

Dr. Fall with obvious relish produced his then unpublished book *Hell in a Very Small Place*. "This is the most authoritative book on Dien Bien Phu," he stated, "because only I had access to the French secret files." He pointed out the many diagrams used and cited especially those showing the tonnages of bombs dropped on Viet Minh supply lines. Interdiction of primitive lines of communication accomplished "zilch," then he said, accomplished little before in Korea, and is not much more effective now. Too bad the American command didn't advise the French of their failures in Korea in time to revise tactics in Indo-China, he concluded.

A discussion of Dien Bien Phu naturally followed, and he cited the outgunning of the French artillery as the key factor. The French expected to destroy the Viet Minh artillery, of

which intelligence knew, through counterbattery fire. They couldn't conceive of their own loss of air adjustment, the placing of Communist guns on the forward slope of surrounding hills, or the inability of French aviation to penetrate the flak and destroy the guns. I raised the question as to whether anyone had ever talked to the French engineer officer about what was essentially an engineering siege problem. "I have," he announced, and then he described an interview with one Maj Sudrat now stationed in Paris, who was mildly amused that no one had ever bothered to question him about Dien Bien Phu. The analysis of the engineering problem is covered in detail in *Hell in a Very Small Place*. In essence, Sudrat advised Gen DeCastries that 36,000 tons of fortification material would be needed to make the strongpoints invulnerable to 105mm fire. Only 4,000 was forthcoming;



Bernard Fall during final visit to VN.

hence the fate of the garrison was sealed when siege conditions evolved. Dr. Fall felt the choice of Gen DeCastries was an incongruous one in view of his personal background and the impending defensive nature of the battle. An aggressive, offensive minded excavalryman, DeCastries did not properly appreciate the defensive implications of terrain. Another command complication, added the writer, was the complexity, as yet unresolved, of multiple battle groups operating together. His book treats this situation in intriguing detail as well.

Inevitably the talk turned to the present struggle, and the author predictably waxed most eloquently and forcefully: "Americans have to grow up in foreign policy. We can't bear to see anyone fall on their faces without propping them up. Our children get hurt, and we immediately pat them on the back and say 'I'll take care of it, kid, don't worry.' This is part of our advisory problem," he elaborated. "Our American take-charge attitude is our own greatest enemy. We get so emotionally involved with the so-called emerging nations that everything that happens is interpreted in terms of an American defeat or victory.

I asked him of course what he thought was the state of progress. "We'll win when we ultimately get the 10 or 11 to 1 superiority that's needed. By that time American firepower will have destroyed everything in the country anyway; then what'll you have?" I asked about the magnitude of enemy losses, and he replied with feeling: "Casualties don't mean anything to them; they do to us because we're round eyes; we've got to quit thinking in terms of our own concepts of loss." On helicopters, he stated that he doubted the validity of the air cavalry concept because helicopters were simply too

vulnerable to carry the total transportation load.

On chivalry in war: "The Viet Minh soldiery used to show compassion toward wounded and frequently left them to be picked up by ambulances at predesignated spots. The political commissars changed all this at Dien Bien Phu, but the failure of the French Command to agree to truces had earlier soured the atmosphere. Today all traces of chivalry are gone."

The afternoon slipped away in my enthrallment with the author's animated flow of commentary. I departed with a sheaf of notes and apologies for disrupting his packing. I had an occasion to call him two days later on the eve of his last departure for Vietnam. I concluded the call with a humorous rejoinder to "stay away from Route 14," the scene of his 1965 ambush. He laughed and said he would confine his activities to Route 1, which he knew better. This was sadly prophetic. On 21 February 1967, he was killed by a mine near his self-titled "Street Without Joy."

The nation thus lost a gifted writer with unique insight into a tortured area about which we still know too little. Often controversial, occasionally seeming outrageously biased, he was ever the probing scholar. More importantly to me, he retained an unflagging consideration for the trooper, be he French, American or Vietnamese. This appealing quality was amply demonstrated that December afternoon.

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(bio as published in 1969)

Are More Troops Needed in Iraq?

By: Carlos L. Yordan, Ph.D.

Editor's Note – this article is derived from Dr. Yordan's op-ed published in the Bangor Daily News on 29 Nov, 2005.

Congress and the American people have questioned the Bush administration's Iraq strategy. As demands for the withdrawal of U.S. troops intensify, the president's response is to stay the course. A new strategy is needed, but to make this happen there has to be a shift in how people think in the Pentagon and the White House.

Looking back, the Bush administration's biggest weakness is its unwillingness to integrate lessons learned in post-conflict operations during the 1990s. While the majority of Americans trusted the U.S. military's ability to defeat Saddam Hussein's forces, there were many questions regarding post-war operations. The then US Army Chief of Staff, General Eric Shinseki, told members Congress in February 2003 that based on his experience commanding peacekeeping forces in Bosnia that it will take "several hundred thousands" troops to stabilize post-war Iraq. Fearing that these remarks could weaken support for the war, the then Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz, dismissed these comments, re-emphasizing that post-war Iraq could not be compared with Bosnia because Iraq did not have a history of ethnic conflict.

Shinseki's views also countered to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's approach to transform the military. People forget that the war against the Taliban, though an impressive display of U.S. power, was not really planned by the Pentagon. The plan was

developed by the Central Intelligence Agency in the late 1990s. The war in Iraq was a chance for Rumsfeld to prove that a high tech and more mobile military could accomplish its objectives in more efficient fashion. There is no doubt that the quickness of the war supports Rumsfeld's vision that less can accomplish more, but as some critics have pointed out in the last years, post-war operations run against this logic.

To achieve Quinlivan's ratio, the American-led coalition should have deployed around 500,000 troops in Iraq.

Do we need more troops in Iraq? Bush repeatedly states that his decisions have been informed by military commanders' assessments of their needs in Iraq. It is difficult to say whether the president is in direct contact with his commanders on the field or if commanders' views are being filtered by senior civilian Pentagon officials. Indeed, countless news stories capture the growing disconnect between Washington insiders and field commanders. Commanders tell reporters they need more troops to achieve the mission's objectives, while Pentagon military and civilian leaders explain that more troops are not needed.

In the end, the president has been ill informed. More troops were needed in the months after the war and more are still needed today. Building on the experience of peacekeeping operations in the 1990s, Justin Quinlivan's research shows that the chances of achieving post-conflict stabilization dramatically increase when interveners were willing to deploy 20 troops per 1,000 inhabitants in post-war societies. In the case of Bosnia, NATO deployed 23 troops per 1,000 inhabitants, while the ratio in Kosovo was 24 to 1,000. As a point of comparison, Saddam Hussein's security and military services were so large that it amounted to 43 security personnel per 1,000 Iraqis. So, it is no surprise that U.S. forces did not have the manpower to secure post-war Iraq. In May 2003, there were only 6 coalition troops per 1,000 inhabitants. To achieve Quinlivan's ratio, the American-led coalition should have deployed around 500,000 troops in Iraq.

Do we need more troops in Iraq? The White House contends that we have enough. Some senior officials contend that the growing number of Iraqi troops will help the U.S.-led Multinational Force (MF) stabilize Iraq. This is highly doubtful for at least two reasons. First, even with Iraqi troops, the MF is short of the 20 per 1,000 formula noted above. If the Pentagon's numbers are correct the MF, which is made up of around 165,000 troops, is closely working with 221,000 trained Iraqi troops and police personnel. If Quinlivan's research findings are right, the MF still needs around 110,000 troops. Second, and more importantly, this research is based on post-conflict societies that did not experience the type of instability

Iraq is experiencing today. Thus, the Pentagon may have to actually deploy more troops, if the Bush administration is to successfully stabilize Iraq in the short to medium term. Ideally, a portion of the forces should be designated for war-fighting, while the other should be responsible for military training and peacekeeping.

Based on this research, it is clear that more troops are required in Iraq, but an increase of current force levels will probably not take place. The Bush administration, as noted in the president's recent speeches on Iraq, is still embracing Rumsfeld's assessments that more troops are not needed. Only time will tell whether this is the right decision. However, America's presence in Iraq for the last 33 months demonstrates that the Bush administration's repeated efforts to stabilize Iraq have been unsuccessful. One important reason for these failures is the lack of troops available to pacify and secure Iraq. Seeing that the current plan repeats this same mistake, victory is not assured. A new strategy is needed and it must be built around Quinlivan's findings; more troops will stabilize Iraq, easing the country's democratic transition.

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4th Generation Warfare

Captain John W. Bellflower, USAF

Welcome to the fourth generation of warfare.¹ Although some commentators would argue that this term is misleading since “fourth generation war” is nothing new, its resurgence as a primary method of engaging in conflict with world powers is new. Building upon the teachings of Mao Tse-tung, Ho Chi Minh and Che Guevera, today’s insurgents have redefined their understanding of centers of gravity and have broadened the field of war. Recognizing a complete inability to defeat the military might of the United States, and seeking to avoid massing their forces for inevitable defeat, non-state actors such as Al Qaeda have turned to a modern, asymmetric approach to war. Through maneuver, an enlargement of the battlefield to include the whole of society, and decreased reliance on centralized logistics, today’s insurgent forces, although technologically inferior to U.S. military forces, provide a formidable opponent. Fourth Generation War (4GW) insurgents seek to combine guerrilla tactics with a willingness to fight “across the political, economic, social, and military spectrums” to convey a message that will achieve the strategic goal of “changing the minds of the enemy’s policymakers.”²

Proponents of 4GW suggest that we are embarking upon a new era in warfare that results in the breakdown of the nation-state’s

monopoly of war and calls for the development of new methods to combat warfare that run the spectrum of society. At least one commentator has argued that

[n]o matter how many search and destroy missions are initiated against ‘terrorist’ sites, no matter how many terrorist operatives are targeted for assassination, terrorist planners . . . ceaselessly emerge from the anonymity of the crowd, supported both overtly and surreptitiously by rogue regimes . . . , to reap their vengeance and havoc upon innocent civilians . . . and all symbols of established society.³

It has been said that technology and firepower alone cannot win this type of war wherein enemy combatants are composed of decentralized cells capable of blending into the population at will. How, then, can it be done? Despite arguments to the contrary, the United States has previously engaged in this type of warfare and the lessons learned from those conflicts stand ready to be incorporated into today’s strategy and tactics. Given the on-going conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the likelihood of similar engagements in the future, an understanding of those past lessons is crucial. The hard won lessons of past small wars teach us that 4GW cannot be won solely by second and third generation tactics.

It is generally agreed that a small war is one in which a traditional nation-state armed

¹ While Fourth Generation War involves conflict between a nation-state’s military and an irregular, non-state actor, “the first three generations of modern war focused, in turn, on massed manpower, then massed firepower, and finally on maneuver.” Thomas X. Hammes, “The Evolution of War: The Fourth Generation,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 78 (1994), 35.

² *Id.*

³ Harold A. Gould, and Franklin C. Spinney, *Fourth Generation Warfare Is Here!* (University of Virginia, Center for South Asian Studies, Fall 2001), available at <http://www.virginia.edu/soasia/newsletter/Fall01/warfare.html>.

force is engaged in combat with an irregular armed force.¹ From that starting point, the differing attributes of a particular small war are as varied as the locations in which small wars are fought. Regardless of the specific nature of any particular small war, they bear a striking resemblance to 4GW. Indeed, history provides numerous examples of small war scenarios that are directly analogous to military engagements we face in the 4GW era. Is an article that discusses American troops hunting a warlord, speaking of “the [small war] pursuit of Pancho Villa in 1916 – or [the 4GW pursuit of] Muhammed Farah Aidid in 1993 or Osama bin Laden in 2001?”² Is America’s invasion of a sovereign country to overthrow a dictatorial regime in favor of self-government by the people, a small war in Mexico in 1914 – or 4GW in Iraq and Afghanistan in the present day?

The commonalities between small wars and 4GW, apart from similar objectives, owe much to the nature of the opponent and the location of the engagement. Perhaps not coincidentally, it is these common attributes that serve as the enemy’s strength. The combatant likely to be faced in a small war or 4GW relies upon mobility and superior intelligence regarding terrain and the troop movement of his opponent and is not encumbered with supply to the same degree as regular forces.³ This provides the insurgent with an ability to attack at his own choosing and then to disperse once he has drawn blood

thereby avoiding singular defeat by a regular force. The location of these engagements can be anywhere the nation-state has a perceived interest, be it military, economic, or purely social. Throughout history, and even today, we see that these engagements often occur in the

While in regular warfare, a hatred of the enemy is often developed among the regular troops to instill courage and a willingness to fight; this is counter-productive in small wars.

inhospitable terrain of unexpected places. Thus, despite America’s technological advantage, we often face an opponent of unknown strength and quality in a place we know little about. This initially puts U.S. forces at a disadvantage because the insurgent will often be able to develop an operational or tactical method to counter America’s technological advantages. The insurgent does this by controlling the pace of war, refusing battle, and drawing the invader deep into hostile country where he becomes overextended and vulnerable. To counter these insurgent advantages, U.S. forces must employ a strategy that combats the insurgent militarily, socially, and politically.

Writing in 1896, C.E. Callwell laid out the blueprint for a strategic approach to combating insurgents. Recognizing that the insurgent, owing to his mobility, is at a strategic advantage over the regular force, Callwell argued that the object in a small war is to force

¹ See, e.g., C.E. Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice*, 3d ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 21; United States Marine Corps (USMC), *Small Wars Manual* (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 1940), 1-2.

² Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

³ Callwell, at 52-3, 87.

the insurgent to fight so the regular force's tactical advantages of firepower and discipline could prevail.¹ Once the battle is forced, "mere victory is not enough. The enemy must not only be beaten. He must be beaten thoroughly."² This is the essence of what Callwell teaches, for the "mere expulsion of the opponent from the ground [he occupies] is of small account; what is wanted is a big casualty list in the hostile ranks."³

Although Callwell's reliance upon attrition to win the day is grounded in second generation warfare (2GW),⁴ he steals a page from the insurgent and combines this approach with third generation warfare (3GW) maneuver and mobility. First, the theater of operations is divided into sections that are fortified with defensive posts and supply depots to support mobile columns of troops that will patrol the area.⁵ Once this is done, the commander in each area can focus upon defeat of the insurgents within his area. This is accomplished by maintaining mobile columns of lightly-equipped troops ever-ready to close with and destroy an insurgent force before it has time to disperse into the populous.⁶

In addition to tactics calculated to inflict a high casualty rate among the insurgents, Callwell also addresses the need to strike them where they live. This becomes necessary when there is no identifiable objective such as a capital city, stronghold, or organized army for the regular force to focus on capturing or destroying. It is then that the regular force

must "hunt [the enemy] from their homes and . . . destroy or carry off their belongings."⁷ Thus, a method for driving the insurgency to failure is through the destruction of its means of existence. This can be done through the burning of crops and stores of grain and other foodstuff, through the capture of livestock, and the burning of villages.⁸ To be effective, however, this strategy must be conducted methodically; a ring of fortified posts must be established around the area sought to be pacified and vigorous patrols conducted so that an insurgent force is unable to escape.⁹ The objective in this method is, as it is throughout Callwell's approach, to force the insurgent to fight whereby the regular force can annihilate him.

Throughout its campaigns between the world wars in every clime and place, the United States Marine Corps borrowed heavily upon the teachings of Callwell and recorded its practical experiences in a manual designed to pass on lessons learned from one generation to another. Agreeing with Callwell to a point, the Marines understood that the enemy must be sought out, attacked vigorously, and pursued doggedly to ensure complete victory.¹⁰ However, recognizing that the small wars of its generation lacked the imperial quality of that in Callwell's generation and were "usually a phase of, or an operation taking place concurrently with, diplomatic effort,"¹¹ the Marines eschewed

¹ *Ibid.* at 90-1.

² *Ibid.*, at 151.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ William S. Lind. "Understanding Fourth Generation War," *Military Review* 84 (2004), 12.

⁵ Callwell, at 131-4.

⁶ *Ibid.* at 136.

⁷ *Ibid.* at 146.

⁸ *Ibid.* at 40, 133.

⁹ *Ibid.* at 147.

¹⁰ USMC, at §5-8(d). The Marines also subscribed to Callwell's strategy of dividing the theater of operations into military districts and utilizing mobile columns from fixed bases to engage the enemy and deny them respite. *Ibid.* at §§ 5-8, 5-13 through 5-25.

¹¹ *Ibid.* at § 1-7(c).

the heavy-handed, attrition-based strategy favored by Callwell for a more tactful approach.

Since diplomatic efforts were not yet exhausted, the Marines' approach to small wars reflected the limits that the diplomatic corps often places on military actions of this nature. Indeed, those limits often dictate that Marines are limited to a show of force or other tactics short of actual combat.¹ Thus, the restoration of peace and orderly government may involve more than purely military measures and, to the extent military measures are applied, they may be of secondary importance,² for "the goal is to gain decisive results with the least application of force and the consequent minimum loss of life."³ It is for this reason that the Marines place great emphasis on the psychology of small wars and establish a key difference between their approach to small wars and Callwell's approach.

Understanding the psychology involved in small wars has an appreciable impact on the methods employed to accomplish the mission involved.⁴ The major difference in psychology in regular warfare vice small wars concerns the impact upon the individual members of the regular force. While in regular warfare, a hatred of the enemy is often developed among the regular troops to instill courage and a willingness to fight;⁵ this is counter-productive in small wars. Since the goal in the Marine approach to small wars is to accomplish an

objective without resorting to force when possible, the local population must be convinced of the altruistic nature of the regular force.⁶ This is achieved by a thorough study of the people of the theater of operations culminating with an indoctrination of all ranks with a proper respect and attitude toward that population.⁷ By exercising proper deportment and courtesy, the individual troops within the regular force may act as suitable ambassadors for the United States to convey a message of benevolence. This common sense approach will inevitably result in immeasurable benefits with the local population as they realize that the regular force is not an invader but a humanitarian force intent on restoring peace and order.

Although the use of this approach may bring about a prompt end to the small war, the Marines caution against allowing the populous to fall into a cycle of self-submission. In countries that have a history of brutality and repression, the population may instinctively submit to the external influence of the regular force. While this is initially welcomed because it results in a quicker return to order, the difficulty arises when the regular force seeks to return power to local authorities.⁸ Given their inclination toward submission, local authorities may be unwilling to shoulder their responsibilities. Therefore, the regular force must assume only as much responsibility as is necessary to accomplish its objective while encouraging the local government to carry its full capacity of responsibility.⁹ To do otherwise "weakens the sovereign state, complicating the

¹ *Ibid.* at § 1-8, 1-9(d).

² *Ibid.* at § 1-9(f).

³ *Ibid.* at § 1-16(c).

⁴ The small wars engaged in by the Marines were mainly campaigns to suppress lawlessness or insurrection or enforce treaty obligations rather than campaigns of conquest and annexation as in Callwell's time. USMC, at § 1-2(a).

⁵ *Ibid.* at § 1-16(d).

⁶ *Ibid.* at §§ 1-10(d), 1-14(a).

⁷ *Ibid.* at 1-16(a).

⁸ USMC, at § 1-14(d).

⁹ *Ibid.*

relationship with the [regular] forces and prolong[s] the occupation.”¹

In addition to the continuing use of diplomacy and psychology in its approach to small wars, the Marine Corps also makes use of another tool that was unavailable to Callwell: aviation. Recognizing that insurgent forces are not likely to present targets of strategic military value for combat aviation, the Marines concluded that the best use of aviation in small wars is close support of infantry units.² This support takes many forms. Foremost in importance is reconnaissance aircraft.³ From a strategic perspective, reconnaissance aircraft permit the regular force to gain knowledge of the terrain, enemy location and disposition, enemy methods of supply, possible routes of attack, and locations of potential airfields and bivouac sites.⁴ This provides the theater commander with invaluable information to craft an appropriate battle plan. Tactical reconnaissance provides the infantry commander with more detailed information as to enemy location and disposition in conjunction with an attack.⁵ When providing support to a mobile column, tactical reconnaissance can also supplement normal ground force security by identifying potential ambush sites and, occasionally, disrupting those sites through employment of whatever armament they might possess.⁶

Combat aviation is generally employed in a close air support role. This direct support of ground forces typically consists of interdiction of enemy supply routes and close-in support of

attacking infantry.⁷ A third method of infantry support is the transport of troops and supplies. As discussed above, the regular force will typically establish bases in various sectors of the theater of operations. Given the inhospitable terrain that is often found in these places, and the possibility of insurgent raids upon road convoys, air transport of men and materiel becomes of increasing importance.⁸ Air transport greatly increases a regular force’s ability to match insurgent mobility thereby increasing the likelihood that the enemy can be forced into combat.

[T]o accomplish an objective without resorting to force when possible, the local population must be convinced of the altruistic nature of the regular force.

The advent of air power has changed the dynamics of war, particularly small wars. The increased mobility and transport that air power affords closes the strategic advantage that the insurgent usually enjoys over the regular force. Callwell concluded that the “all-important question of supply is in fact at the root of most of the difficulties, and has been the cause of some of the disasters, to which regular troops engaged in small wars seem ever to be prone.”⁹ In Callwell’s time, supply trains decreased the mobility of regular forces and reduced the number of troops available for attack since

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.* at § 9-1(a).

³ *Ibid.* at § 9-4.

⁴ *Ibid.* at § 9-19.

⁵ *Ibid.* at § 9-20.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.* at § 9-29.

⁸ *Ibid.* at § 9-32. Casualties may also be evacuated on return trips thereby increasing the morale of regular forces.

⁹ Callwell, at 57-8.

provisions had to be made for guarding the supply train. Air transport significantly diminishes the difficulties faced by Callwell. While air transport gave the Marines of the early twentieth century a decided advantage over the regular forces of Callwell's time, the advantage enjoyed today is even greater. Transport by helicopter obviates the need for airfields and allows for nearly pinpoint drops of supplies to beleaguered patrols. Thus, while air power alone does not ensure victory,¹ it does provide significant strategic and tactical advantages and enhances the regular force's ability to conclude operations swiftly.

The warriors of our past have reached out to teach a lesson in combating today's insurgents. They have set forth battle-tested theories that can be enhanced by today's technology. We would do well to listen and remember Callwell's advice that technology is never a substitute for strategy since the insurgent will always develop effective counter-measures. It is the "ability to adapt to terrain and climate, to match the enemy in mobility and inventiveness, [and] to collect intelligence" that will determine success in 4GW just as it did in previous small wars.² 4GW takes place across the spectrum of modern society; the enemy seeks to engage our thought process to effectuate a change in our policies. We cannot combat this form of warfare by using the attrition-based method of 2GW. We must combine the mobility, inventiveness, and vigor advocated by Callwell with the diplomacy and psychology promoted by the Marines' Small Wars Manual to meet today's insurgents throughout the spectrum of combat. By meeting the enemy at every level, be it on the

battlefield, in the media, or otherwise, his message can be countered and he can be forced to fight. Yesterday's small war soldiers are calling out to us; the only question is: are we listening?

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¹ Robert H. Scales, "The Lost Art of Land War," *The American Legion Magazine* 159 (2005), 24-5.

² Callwell, at xi.

‘We’ve Done This Before’

Brent C. Bankus, (LTC, Cavalry, AUS, Ret.)

Given current operations as part of the Global War on Terrorism, it is surprising how many have forgotten the lineage of the US military in other than traditional combat operations. To focus the issue, an excerpt from a military memorabilia collectors’ publication speaks volumes, and states:

“The collector of United States Campaign medals soon discovers that America’s military history encompasses much more than the major conflicts of the Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War I, World War II, Korean War and the Vietnam War. One soon discovers that some of our nation’s early heroes emerged from battles in Cardenas, Cuba; Peking, China; Port-au-Prince, Haiti; or Bluefields, Nicaragua. Long before Marines spoke in hallowed terms of places like Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Iwo Jima and the ‘Frozen Chosin’; there was the ‘Citidel’, Peking, Veracruz, Fort Riviere, and Quilali.

These ‘Little Wars’ helped define America as a world military power and provided the esprit-de-corps and traditions that would steel our soldiers, sailors and Marines for World War I and the horrors of Belleau Wood, Verdun and the Somme.”

In point of fact, while the US military (past and present) spends most of its time involved in Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW), or Small Scale Contingencies, the training focus is traditional symmetric operations – for example a major theater of war. For current operations, research suggests, a contributing factor for this mindset is that from 1945 to 1991 and the Cold War the focus

was to defeat the Soviet Union and its allies on a symmetric battlefield, with few distractions save perhaps the Vietnam experience. However, with US involvement in small-scale operations beginning in the early 1980s, for example Panama and Grenada, the ‘battlefield’ focus has once again shifted to asymmetrical, much the same as the period from 1865 to 1917 and during the 1920s to 1930s in US military history. Additionally, as the military’s primary mission is to fight and win our nation’s wars, indications are decision-makers past and present principally rely on the flexibility of the military leadership at the operational and tactical levels to adapt itself ‘on the fly’ to meet local requirements.

To further complicate the matter, many tasks for MOOTW operations, for example current operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Balkans etc., are not far removed from traditional war-fighting tasks. This is certainly true in Iraq and Afghanistan. In an attempt to undermine the relief effort coalition vehicle convoys are constantly plagued by insurgent Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and a variety of other ambush tactics. To codify the relationship between traditional operational tasks and MOOTW or Stability Operations tasks, a study was conducted by the US Army Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Results revealed platoon- and company-level tasks of US Army Infantry, Armor and Cavalry units comparing traditional tasks to MOOTW tasks were 84–87 per cent compatible. Many of the ‘tasks’ were the same but the ‘conditions’ and ‘standards’ were different. For example, the ‘task’ of conducting

a patrol is the same, yet in a traditional setting this ‘patrol’ relies on cover and Concealment to avoid detection. In a MOOTW setting, however, the ‘patrol’ relies on discovery to demonstrate presence.

Adaptation of conventional training is certainly not a new phenomenon for the US military. As far back as the Indian Wars Campaign of the 1860s–1890s the US Army concentrated most of its training time on conventional tactics, techniques and procedures, particularly officer training at the US Military Academy at West Point. Until the late 1870s or early 1880s, individual officer training on MOOTW at West Point was relegated to an occasional field training exercise or classroom lecture. The primary method of adapting traditional soldier skills to the ‘irregular battlefield’ was relegated to unit training passed down by veterans as replacements were introduced to the isolated US Army posts of the West.

The trend of modifying conventional training to the MOOTW environment has changed little since those early days of ‘irregular warfare’. Institutional officer training in the US Army’s ‘Basic Course, Career Course, Command and General Staff College, and the US Army War College’ either offer no or very little in the way of training outside traditional operations. As for unit training, leaders at the tactical and operational leaders have remarked, ‘We don’t have enough time to spend on honing war-fighting skills, let alone train specifically for a smaller contingency operation’. The lack of unit training time continues to plague decision-makers,

particularly since US forces are responsible for a variety of operations ranging from traditional operations, to peacekeeping/peace enforcement to counterinsurgency, to humanitarian assistance, and the list goes on. Also, the US military is much smaller today than during the ColdWar years and units are being deployed more frequently with little ‘down time’ between rotations, causing second- and third-level effects in recruiting numbers.

Doctrine as well has tended to lag behind and is not commensurate with current operations. The US military is designed to teach the individual, the unit and in institutions, for example Military Occupational Specialty producing institutions. Common sense suggests the preponderance of time should focus on small-scale contingencies, since US forces are predominately engaged in this type of operation. That, however, is not the case.

Again, using the US Army as an example, research suggests individual, unit and institutional training continues to focus on traditional operations giving only cursory attention to the specifics of other scenarios, for example Iraq and Afghanistan. Consequently, traditional operations continue to be the training and doctrine focus, and small-scale contingencies are an afterthought. This is also an age-old story as in earlier contingencies, for example the Indian Campaign, the Philippines and operations in the Caribbean, US forces were also ill prepared to execute their assigned missions. Each campaign demanded adapting traditional tasks to accommodate other than traditional tasks specific to the area of operation.

*‘Peacekeeping is not a
job for soldiers, but
only a soldier can do it’*

In the turn-of-the-century Philippines for example, as the mission called for a shift in focus from war-fighting tasks to 'benevolent assimilation' of the populace and nation-building tasks in 1901, 'on the fly' leaders made prolific use of US State Volunteers (later named the National Guard) and their acquired civilian skills to contribute in the nation-building effort, which also occurs today in Iraq and Afghanistan. This practice paid huge dividends in the rebuilding and improving of the infrastructure of the Philippine archipelago. Additionally, the US Army leadership of the period was rich with experience from the American Civil War, the Indian Wars Campaign or both. So, although leaders were used to training for and conducting traditional operations, they were also well acquainted with MOOTW operations particularly counterinsurgency tactics, techniques and procedures, and overcame training shortfalls. This can also be said of US forces in Iraq today, as most leaders are veterans of the Balkans, or other small-scale contingencies. However, in some instances, for example Vietnam, the US military did have 'irregular warfare doctrine', but only for a short time and the refinement and maintenance of the doctrine was neglected and forgotten.

Leader experience, however, should not mitigate the requirement for codified training and doctrine curricula particularly at the individual and institutional level to properly prepare US forces for a variety of small-scale contingencies. Unlike earlier experiences, since 1905 with the introduction of printed field manuals, the US military, particularly the US Army, has made tremendous progress in training and doctrine policies and procedures. As the latest version of the US Army Field Manual (FM) FM-1, The Army states:

Since the 1980s, The Army developed a comprehensive doctrinal construct for assessing current capabilities and managing change. The Army maintains a trained and ready force and develops future capabilities by carefully balancing six imperatives: doctrine, organizations, materiel, leader development, training, and Soldiers.

These six imperatives are to be synchronized with one another to ensure an effective fighting force. Yet without a proper reflection of current operations in the doctrine imperative, which influences the training imperative, it is questionable whether the current method of ignoring the trend of current operations is a sound decision. To continue to allow a preponderance of training and doctrine to reflect traditional war fighting vice MOOTW, and rely on the innovation and agility of leaders seems unsound and appears to be an 'accident waiting to happen'. A misleading comment voiced several times further complicates the situation and goes something like this, 'it has worked this way so far'. Another old adage, 'learn from someone else's mistake, so you don't make the same', seems more appropriate. It is of little doubt that the American military is the best in the world and possibly the best ever in training, doctrine, weaponry, tactics and leadership. Each of the six US Army imperatives is closely tied with the other. Ignoring the changes in the battlefield and failure to reflect those changes in the development of doctrine and training puts US forces at an unnecessary risk.

In a speech prior to his death in a plane crash in the Congo in 1962, Secretary General of the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld stated, 'Peacekeeping is not a job for soldiers, but only a soldier can do it'. It is strongly

urged that the training and doctrine regimen be given more than just cursory attention when considering MOOTW versus traditional tasks.

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We believe that Small Wars are an enduring feature of modern politics. We do not

believe that true effectiveness in Small Wars is a 'lesser included capability' of a force tailored for major theater war. And we *never* believed that 'bypass built-up areas' was a tenable position warranting the doctrinal primacy it has held for too long -- this site is an evolution of the MOUT Homepage, Urban Operations Journal, and urbanoperations.com, all formerly run by the Small Wars Journal's Editor-in-Chief.

The characteristics of Small Wars have evolved since the Banana Wars and Gunboat Diplomacy. War is never purely military, but today's Small Wars are even less pure with the greater inter-connectedness of the 21st century. Their conduct typically involves the projection and employment of the full spectrum of national and coalition power by a broad

community of practitioners. The military is still generally the biggest part of the pack, but there a lot of other wolves. The strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack.

The Small Wars Journal's founders come from the Marine Corps. Like Marines deserve to be, we are very proud of this; we are also conscious and cautious of it. Small Wars Journal seeks to transcend any viewpoint that is single service, and any that is purely military or naively U.S.-centric. We pursue a comprehensive approach to Small Wars, integrating the full joint, allied, and coalition military with their governments' federal or national agencies, non-governmental agencies, and private organizations. Small Wars are big undertakings, demanding a coordinated effort from a huge community of interest.

We thank our contributors for sharing their knowledge and experience, and hope you will continue to join us as we build a resource for our community of interest to engage in a professional dialog on this painfully relevant topic. Share your thoughts, ideas, successes, and mistakes; make us all stronger.

“...I know it when I see it.”

“Small Wars” is an imperfect term used to describe a broad spectrum of spirited continuation of politics by other means, falling somewhere in the middle bit of the continuum between feisty diplomatic words and global thermonuclear war. The Small Wars Journal embraces that imperfection.

Just as friendly fire isn't, there isn't necessarily anything small about a Small War.

The term “Small War” either encompasses or overlaps with a number of familiar terms such as counterinsurgency, foreign internal defense, support and stability operations, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and many flavors of intervention. Operations such as noncombatant evacuation, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance will often either be a part of a Small War, or have a Small Wars feel to them. Small Wars involve a wide spectrum of specialized tactical, technical, social, and cultural skills and expertise, requiring great ingenuity from their practitioners. The *Small Wars Manual* (a wonderful resource, unfortunately more often referred to than read) notes that:

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

The “three block war” construct employed by General Krulak is exceptionally useful in describing the tactical and operational challenges of a Small War and of many urban operations. Its only shortcoming is that is so useful that it is often mistaken as a definition or as a type of operation.

Your suggestions and contributions of content are welcome.

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The Necessity for Psychological Operations Support to Special Operations Forces during Unconventional Warfare

MAJ Gregory J. Reck, USA

Psychological Operations has a long history of support in American military tradition, which pre-dates even the official formation of a PSYOP active duty component. Yet, the practical application of PSYOP within theater while attached or under OPCON to a conventional force still has its difficulties: lack of synchronization, under-employment, mis-utilization, and a general misunderstanding of capabilities. These problems are amplified to a much greater extent when PSYOP is paired with Special Operations Forces (SOF);¹ especially when employed during unconventional warfare (UW). While the overall objectives appear similar in a UW setting as in a conventional one, such as efforts to defeat the enemy and actions to counter various forms of subversion, SOF units have less desire to co-opt non-lethal fires than do their conventional contemporaries.² Seemingly forgotten is W.W. Rostow's observation when he was the US National Security Advisor to John Kennedy in 1962 during the height of guerrilla uprisings in Vietnam: "A guerrilla war is an intimate affair, fought not merely with weapons but fought in the minds of the men who live in the villages

and hills."³ In this context, SOF's aversion to using PSYOP is ill-founded.⁴

However, the fault that PSYOP is an oft-overlooked and underestimated force multiplier does not reside fully with any Special Operations force. Over the last several decades, since the end of the Vietnam War, PSYOP has failed to change with the times. PSYOP forces in the active army are predominantly built around regional battalions, which are more accustomed to working from embassies and hotels than from the field. Today, it is a force burdened by its own bureaucracy. It is technologically deficient by using Vehicle Family of Loudspeakers (VFOL), manpacks, and Risograph equipment that have long outlived their usefulness and it is inflexible in force structure. In fact, in today's military there is only one active duty tactical battalion, which is woefully short of Officers, NCOs, Soldiers, and equipment. However, despite PSYOP's shortcomings, it is this paper's intent to demonstrate that PSYOP is a viable entity to counter insurgency when employed properly. Furthermore, included is also a proposal to move PSYOP into the 21st century with a new, flexible force structure, in order to

¹ Bloom, Bradley, "Information Operations in Support of Special Operations," *Military Review* (January-February 2004): 45.

² Headquarters, Department of the Army, *FM 3-05.20: Special Forces Operations* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2001), 2-11.

³ Ford, Christopher M., "Speak No Evil: Targeting a Population's Neutrality to Defeat an Insurgency," *Parameters* (Summer 2005): 51.

⁴ McEwen, Michael T., "Psychological Operations Against Terrorism: The Unused Weapon," *Military Review* (January 1986): 60.

fully engage and defeat the enemy in the Information Operation (IO) spectrum.

In any military operation, consideration is made for the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. Therefore it is unsurprising that PSYOP also can affect all three; units should plan its inclusion accordingly. While SOF is considered a strategic asset, it conducts the bulk of its operations in the tactical realm with the realization, as outlined in the SOF Imperatives, that the implications of their actions have potential operational and strategic implications. Since PSYOP is a SOF asset, it follows these SOF Imperatives.

Forces such as Special Forces (SF) or Naval Special Warfare (NSW) forces benefit from operational and strategic PSYOP without requiring those assets to be either attached or in an OPCON status. This is because the majority of their activities position them to reap the affects of those PSYOP activities because of location or because those activities affect such a large area.⁵ What SOF units lack organically is a capability to affect the immediate battle-space in which they operate; into this niche falls tactical psychological operations.

Tactical PSYOP possesses the ability to directly affect the action as it takes place. PSYOP forces can broadcast non-interference messages, be the commander's voice to disseminate information, or be used in a more aggressive role when the team uses VFOL as a weapon for crowd control. This occurs during civil disturbances, often prevalent in a country with a power vacuum, or where the government

has lost control or has been completely overthrown, such as in Afghanistan and Iraq. In situations where a SOF unit finds itself without proper support or beyond its capability to control the situation without further escalation, such a PSYOP asset is invaluable.

The ability to broadcast is a tremendous asset to any supported unit. In offensive or defensive operations, the tactical PSYOP element can not only broadcast messages, but can mimic the sounds of trucks, UAVs, gunfire, tanks, and anything that can be recorded and played. This allows a Tactical PSYOP Team (TPT) or Tactical PSYOP Detachment (TPD) to assist in deception operations during cordon and knocks, or any direct action operation, in order to confuse the enemy and give the unit a greater level of surprise. This support gives a unit greater initiative when confronting the enemy or potential enemy.

The capabilities of tactical PSYOP are not limited to broadcast operations. With support from the Tactical PSYOP Company (TPC), the detachment can also disseminate printed product, a tangible and lasting influencer on a target audience. In coordination with the TPC, Psychological Operations Task Force (POTF), or Corps Psychological Support Element (CPSE), a tactical PSYOP unit is able to expand beyond the tactical level and into the operational realm, with such products as billboards and leaflet drops. This gives the supported commander the ability to influence his target audience (TA) without risking their lives by direct contact with US or Coalition Forces. This influences a greater range of TAs.

The role of tactical PSYOP, however, demonstrates its strengths in support of a tactical maneuver unit. In this role, tactical

⁵ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *FM 3-05.30: Psychological Operations* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2000), 4-1- 4-3.

PSYOP has access to greater operational security, and more opportunities to conduct operations that bring them into contact with the TA. In this manner, PSYOP has the ability to strongly affect the TA.⁶ Furthermore, under current doctrine, this is the way in which the tactical PSYOP element is trained to conduct operations. The execution of loudspeaker operations and the dissemination of product permits the TPT or TPD to execute on the psychological operations objectives that PSYOP planners have deemed significant to influence the enemy.

The importance that tactical PSYOP plays in defeating an enemy during conventional warfare has many historical precedents: surrenders by Germans in World War II and surrenders by North Koreans are both attributed to successful PSYOP campaigns.⁷ However, tactical PSYOP can be extremely instrumental in affecting the outcome of a counterinsurgency operation, especially when it works in conjunction with other SOF assets. When applied correctly, PSYOP can assist a SOF commander in Direct Action (DA). More importantly, PSYOP can assist in his other core tasks, such as in non-kinetic stand-off attacks upon a target, recovery operations, Foreign Internal Defense (FID), host nation military assistance, and population security. It is during these operations that combat forces can find themselves in a secondary role, as predominance could go to PSYOP.⁸

There are many reasons why insurgencies occur; however, the Small Wars Manual states it most succinctly, from an experiential perspective:

However, they (the insurgents) may be so accustomed to misgovernment and exploitation that concerted effort to check disorderly tendencies of certain leaders never occur to them. It is this mass ignorance and indifference rather than any disposition to turbulence in the nation as a whole, which has prevented the establishment of a stable government in many cases.⁹

When an insurgency does occur from either ignorance or militancy, characteristic of the majority is that there are three main target groups through which PSYOP can exert influencing effects: the overall population, the insurgents, and external actors.¹⁰ The broad spectrum of PSYOP can affect all three. However, tactical PSYOP only has the practical means to influence two target audiences: the population and the insurgent. These two groups, however, comprise the heart of an insurgency. In a UW environment, PSYOP adds the dimension of non-lethal fires that SOF units habitually lack. Through the synchronization of SOF lethal and surgical strikes with the non-lethal effects of PSYOP, SOF can influence the enemy's decision-making cycle from multiple dimensions. This enhances the ability for US forces to defeat an insurgency.

⁶ FM 3-05.30, 4-4.

⁷ Paddock, Alfred H. Jr., *U.S. Army Special Warfare: Its Origins* (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 99.

⁸ O'Neill, Bard E., *Insurgency and Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare* (Dulles: Brassey's, Inc., 1990), 128.

⁹ The United States Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual*. With an introduction by Ronald Schaffer. (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1940; reprint, Manhattan: Sunflower University Press, 2004), 24 (page references are to the reprint edition).

¹⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *FM 90-8: Counterinsurgency Operations* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1986), 1-4; 1-5.

The most important step in defeating an insurgency is separating the populace from the insurgents.¹¹ Without the support of the populace – without mobilization – insurgents can lose a great deal of financial support, as well as intelligence and human resources. Without these assets, an insurgency's campaign loses momentum.¹² Tactical PSYOP is a SOF commander's tool to accomplish this separation. Tactical PSYOP can mitigate the insurgents' attempts to influence a populace via esoteric or exoteric appeals, provocation, terrorism or other coercive methods. Tactical PSYOP is also instrumental in countering insurgents' demonstrations of potency, terrorism, and charismatic leadership. Through the continuous use of face-to-face communication, loudspeaker operations and dissemination of printed products, tactical PSYOP can quickly drive a wedge between the insurgents and their sympathizers by affecting change in public opinion. PSYOP forces can further use these techniques to disrupt cohesion within the insurgency group. This may cause internecine fighting between groups or individuals by exacerbating social, political, cultural, personal, theological, strategic or tactical disparity.¹³

Tactical PSYOP easily exploits the successes of combat operations against the insurgents in order to accelerate sentiment away from the insurgents. In addition, it is also highly effective against the effects that a "terror campaign," a form of warfare from the insurgents waged on their own populace may

have.¹⁴ Should the guerrillas attempt to coerce support, tactical PSYOP can provide tip numbers, so that people could call anonymously to police or other law-enforcement agencies without fear of reprisal. During any phase of an insurgency, insurgents could use provocation to incite riots or sectarian violence in order to further alienate the populace from the government. Here, military force alone will not stop such alienation.¹⁵ With tactical PSYOP support, a SOF commander can immediately affect his battle-space to provide needed information or guidance to calm people and bring about peace.

The greatest obstacle confronting PSYOP support to SOF, as opposed to that of conventional units, is that SOF needs are usually very different than those of the conventional forces. The larger portion of missions for SOF is DA on time sensitive targets (TST) or high value individuals (HVI). DA missions inherently differ from conventional style warfare in that they are of short duration, or are other small-scale offensive actions conducted under the aegis of special operations. Additionally, they are also usually conducted in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the time-tested core functions and nature of SOF remains centered on foreign internal defense (FID) training missions and daily interaction with the local populace. Therefore, there is little need for PSYOP products that support PSYOP objectives or supporting PSYOP

¹¹ *FM 90-8*, 2-6

¹² Whittaker, David J., ed., *The Terrorism Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 31.

¹³ O'Neill, 93-94.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁵ Graff, Jonathan K. Jr., "United States Counterinsurgency Doctrine and Implementation in Iraq," (MA thesis, Fort Leavenworth, 2004), 27-28.

¹⁶ United States Special Operations Command, *JP 3-53: Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations* (St. Louis: U.S. Army AG Publication Center SL, 2003), II-4.

objectives that are not directly involved in such DA missions. The simple reason is that the responsibility of most operational and strategic PSYOP resides with a POTF or CPSE. The need for a rapid response to emerging targets outweighs the needs for supporting enduring PSYOP programs, which are managed by either the POTF or CPSE. As previously stated, over the last several decades, tactical PSYOP forces have deteriorated. They are in such short supply that the needs of SOF have been neglected.¹⁷ Moreover, the ability for PSYOP forces to adapt to the new global environment has stagnated.

With the advent of the Global War on Terrorism, the necessity for PSYOP support to SOF has never been greater. However, manning and force structure issues impede proper implementation of support to conventional units, let alone SOF.¹⁸ A typical TPD normally consists of three tactical PSYOP teams of three men each. Equipped with one MPLS and one VFOL, the team is the smallest functional PSYOP element. Each company generally has three tactical detachments, which are lead by a captain and a sergeant first class (SFC). Unfortunately, manpower shortages have altered the normal makeup of these teams, and it is not unusual to see a major and a staff sergeant (SSG) leading the detachment headquarters (HQ).

Within the company is the Tactical Psychological Operations Development Detachment (TPDD), which is comprised of a Product Productions Team (PPT), a Target Audience Analysis and Assessment Team

(TAAT) and a Product Development Detachment (PDD). All together, the TPDD form the brains of the TPC. This 16–20 Soldier element analyzes, produces, tests and prints products for teams to disseminate to the populace or TA.¹⁹ This detachment is critical for support; without this specialized detachment tactical PSYOP operations are severely hindered.

While conventional forces comprise the bulk of forces in a theater under command and control (C2) of an MSC, the Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC) may form a JSOTF or CJSOTF to C2 SOF elements.²⁰ Conventional forces will also have the luxury of additional PSYOP planners beyond that of their attached or OPCON'd PSYOP forces. This is usually in the form of a Psychological Operations Task Force (POTF) or in a joint environment a JPOTF. If operations are of such a scale that additional support is required, a Corps Psychological Operations Support Element (CPSE) may also be formed.²¹ However, there is in reality, no separate or special entity that unilaterally supports the Special Operations Task Force, Combined, Joint, or otherwise.

Therein lays the problem. While conventional forces have staff planners, product production capability and greater assets to draw upon; a Special Operations Task Force has fewer options. SOF usually gets fewer opportunities to use PSYOP in a tactical environment. Not only is there a dearth of training opportunities, there are fewer real-world opportunities with SOF, because conventional forces garner a greater share of the assets. Additionally, 9th Psychological Operations Battalion, the only active duty

¹⁷ Bloom, 45–49 passim.

¹⁸ O'Hanlon, Michael, "The Need to Increase the Size of the Deployable Army," *Parameters* (Autumn 2004): 9–12 passim.

¹⁹ *FM 3-05.30*, 6-9 – 6-10.

²⁰ *JP 3-05*, III-3 – III-4.

²¹ *FM 3-05.30*, 5-1 – 5-6.

Tactical PSYOP Battalion in the Army, has been more focused on supporting the Marine Corps than SOF during operations in Iraq. An example of this disparity is that there is presently only one tactical PSYOP detachment in OPCON status to the CJSOTF AP in Iraq, and a small POTF in Afghanistan to support both SOF and conventional forces. Meanwhile, the Marines have a dedicated TPC and other TPDs in their AOs to conduct psychological operations. This situation is a direct result of the Marine Corps' decision to leverage IO assets as opposed to developing their own PSYOP forces, which benefits them at a cost to others.²²

The TPD, discussed earlier, cannot produce or print any PSYOP products, because of the manner in which current MTOE limits them. Currently, they can only provide loudspeaker support and atmospherics to SOF assets. This is a serious impediment to the SOF tactical mission, and has wider implications in the operational and strategic realms, since SOF units have a more focused mission, bringing them into contact with a wider range of people. SOF missions also rely heavily on human intelligence (HUMINT). There is a tremendous need for an asset that can deliver more than just face-to-face or loudspeaker operations. In the SOF arena, an element that does not bring a value-added capability to the fight is worthless.

While supporting conventional forces, leaflet drops have always allowed printed material access into denied areas. Unfortunately, this method does not give adequate feedback. Even with the advent of the Wind Supported Air Delivery System (WSADS), a

system designed to permit PSYOP to penetrate denied areas, PSYOP Soldiers are still not able to adequately uncover impact indicators or measures of effectiveness. Without this, they cannot effectively begin the psychological separation of insurgents from the populace, a PSYOP Soldier's core function. The core ability for SOF units to penetrate deep into areas that may be neutral to or harbor insurgents presents a unique and deep strike opportunity for PSYOP forces to expeditiously disassociate the insurgent and the populace or counter enemy propaganda with tangible product.²³ As Clausewitz postulated over a century earlier, public opinion is "the hub on which all power and movement depends."²⁴ Mao aptly stated that the insurgent is like a fish in the sea when among his people/supporters. Therefore, it is necessary to quickly drain the pond in which he swims.²⁵ Such opportunities are paramount to an insurgency's defeat.

Finally, PSYOP force structure in support of SOF is not properly doctrinally adjusted. For example, a TPD is doctrinally aligned to an SF Group with one TPT per battalion. This is also the force structure for a conventional brigade. There is no similarity in missions. An SF battalion can have over (if there are additional attachments) 15 ODAs operating in over 15 locations. While one may argue that identification of the main effort is essential for distributing forces, the fact is that in an insurgency, terms such as main efforts and rear areas, are antiquated terms loosely applied by staff planners. During a major CONOP or operation, many, if not all ODAs, could execute

²² Eassa, Charles N., "US Armed Forces Information Operations- Is the Doctrine Adequate?" (monograph, Fort Leavenworth, 2000), 18

²³ JP 3-05, II-2

²⁴ Szafranski, Richard, "Thinking About Small Wars," *Parameters* (September 1990): 44.

²⁵ Bulloch, Gavin, "Military Doctrine and Counterinsurgency: A British Perspective," *Parameters* (Summer 1996): 7.

a mission simultaneously. Unlike conventional force operations, the ability to flex tactical PSYOP in SOF missions is practically impossible given the geographical distances at work in certain SOF operations.

PSYOP needs a larger SOF support package. At a minimum, there should be a TPC in OPCON status to a Group. There is precedence for this recommendation, as SF 2010 also saw the need for increased and integrated PSYOP support in the future.²⁶ Each battalion would then get one TPD, which gives each AOB commander a TPT. The AOB commander would then have greater control and flexibility in his AO to determine where and when PSYOP would best be applied for more efficient and coordinated PSYOP effects. While this recommendation has yet to be implemented, current conditions in both Afghanistan and Iraq make strong arguments to accelerate PSYOP force restructuring.

However, increasing the allocations of PSYOP forces from a TPD to a TPC per SF Group is not the final answer. Pushing more people into the fight is not going to provide the SF Group Commander or the battalions better or more efficient PSYOP. Insurgents use whatever means necessary to bolster their support or denigrate the host nation's government. In today's highly technological world, information is essential for psychological dominance effect.²⁷ Modern insurgents, especially in Iraq, have competent PSYOP capabilities of their own, unhindered by our military bureaucracy. They are also perceived as more credible among the

Iraqi people, because they are not Americans. A commander who cannot counter the enemy's psychological efforts effectively and expeditiously risks losing psychological ground quickly to the enemy. Limiting the insurgents to combat operations is the greatest threat to their existence.

What is required is the return to a more flexible PSYOP organization. This proposed restructuring would allow for each TPD to act almost independently of central HQs, thereby not being beholden to them for printed product support. The TPDD must be divided into three sections, placing printing and production capability within each section, and providing habitual training and deployment opportunities to these slice elements. This tactical PSYOP support element would offer a SOF commander everything he needs to conduct tactical PSYOP in his AO, regardless of the distance he is from the TPC. The SOF element would then be able to counter enemy propaganda almost immediately, which would place greater stress on the insurgency, as popular support would slowly and inevitably erode under constant U.S. or Coalition PSYOP pressure. While U.S. PSYOP may lack initial credibility, the tenet upon which it is founded, "truth above all else," will uncover the deception promoted by the insurgents. Once separated from the populace psychologically, an insurgency would inevitably diminish as food, money, people and intelligence dwindle.

With the fall of the Soviet Union, President George H. Bush declared a New World Order, which is effective in the body politic. However, what he failed to mention was that such a world order was more akin to disorder, as the barriers that had held nationalism and extremism in check were wiped away. More detrimental for

²⁶ Haas, Christopher K., "The Special Forces Organization for Internal Defense in 2010," (MA thesis, Fort Leavenworth, 1997), 132.

²⁷ United States Special Operations Command, JP 3-53: Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations (St. Louis: U.S. Army AG Publication Center SL, 2003), VII-2.

the United States is the fact that its huge military force is on the verge of obsolescence, as the conventional style of war slowly fades into history. No longer will mass armies stand opposite one another. Instead, the future will be filled with smaller, more mobile and less predictable bands of fighters poised to battle in the name of an “-ism” against any that would oppose them. Unfortunately for America and the world, the future has come more rapidly than anticipated.

As conventional warfare fades, the oft-ignored unconventional style of combat will continue to flourish.²⁸ In many professional military journals, writers have proclaimed asymmetrical warfare as the future. What they have overlooked is the fact that guerrilla warfare, synonymous with asymmetrical warfare, has existed since recorded history began and is the current *modus operandi* used by the Iraqi insurgents. It is into this New World Order that America has boldly stepped in its pursuit of terrorists across the globe. Unlike the conventional wars of the past, this “war” will require far more attention to people than to the weapons.²⁹

Special Forces, proclaimed Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, will lead the charge in this global conflict. The abilities of these Soldiers are without reproach, but as history has shown, attrition alone will not win wars. The French discovered this in the counter-insurgency operation in Algiers from 1954 – 1962, as did the Portuguese in their struggle

across three African countries from 1961 – 1974. What they discovered then, is what PSYOP acts upon today: the center of gravity does not reside with these terrorists or fighters, but with the people who either support or tolerate them.³⁰

In every case where insurgency or terrorism has gained a foothold, military kinetic force alone has been unable to stop the violence or destabilization of that country. The need to separate the insurgents from the people has been the key to successful counter-insurgency operations. In this regard, PSYOP is the preeminent force to engage the enemy or local populace to change their behavior or influence their actions. As is stated in *FM 3-05.302*, “PSYOP are planned to convey selected information and indicators to foreign target audiences to influence their emotions, motives, and objective reasoning.” Yet, without a greater synchronization and restructuring of PSYOP forces that can work effectively with SOF, the potential for both remain diminished.

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²⁸ Tones, Robert R., “Relearning Counterinsurgency Warfare,” *Parameters* (Spring 2004): 17-18.

²⁹ Peterson, Gregory D., “The French Experience in Algeria, 1954-1962: Blueprint for U.S. Operations in Iraq.” (MA thesis, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2004), 46.

³⁰ Ford, 52.