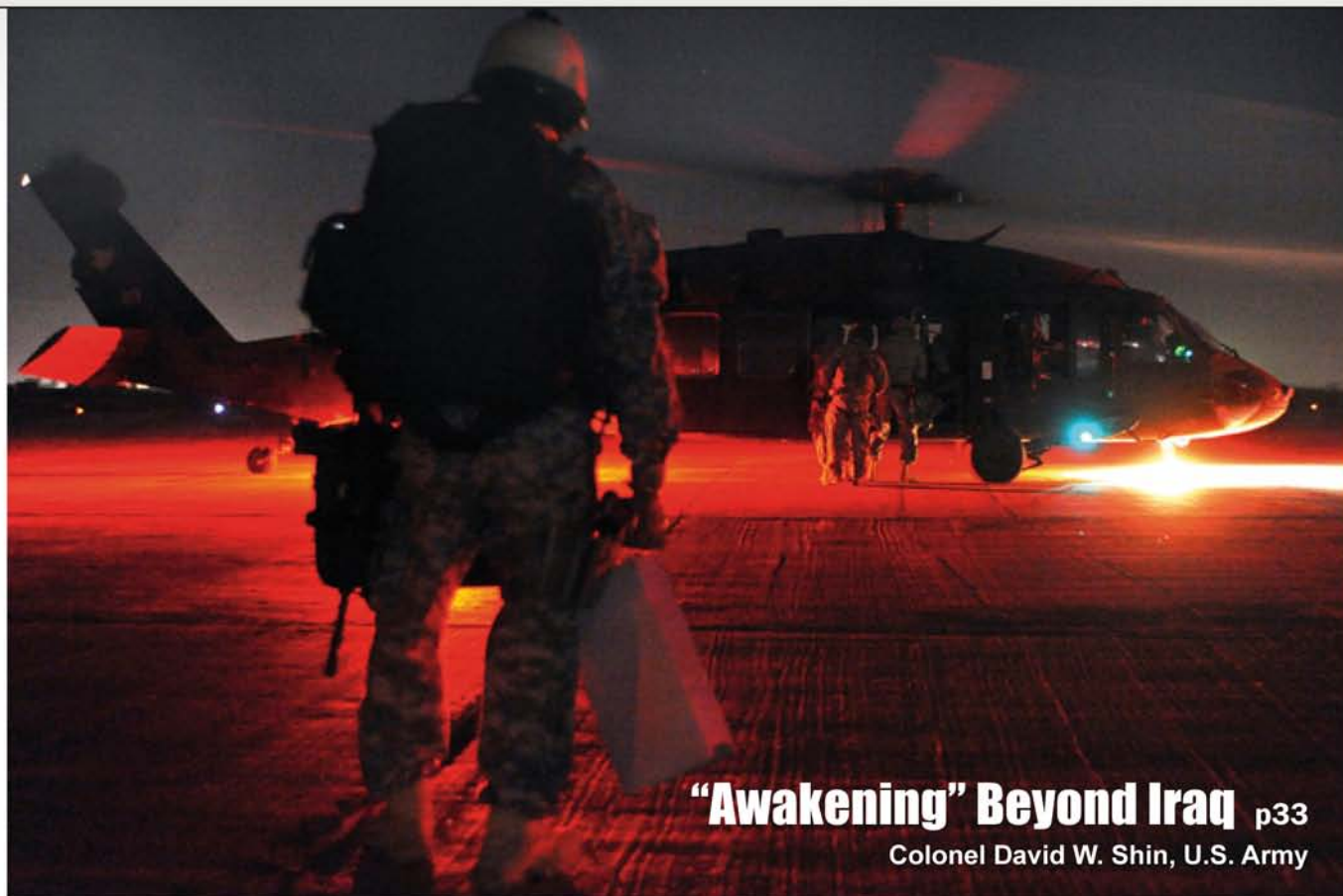


# Military Review

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## **“Awakening” Beyond Iraq** p33

Colonel David W. Shin, U.S. Army

## **The Inclination for War Crimes** p17

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Rielly, U.S. Army, Retired

## **The Embedded Morality in FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency** p24

Lieutenant Colonel Celestino Perez Jr., U.S. Army, Ph.D.

## **Iran and Venezuela: The “Axis of Annoyance”** p78

Commander Kavon “Hak” Hakimzadeh, U.S. Navy

## **FEATURE: Learning to Leverage New Media** p2

Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell IV, U.S. Army; Mr. Dennis Murphy; and Mr. Anton Menning

## Report Documentation Page

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## FEATURED ARTICLES

### 2 Learning to Leverage New Media: The Israeli Defense Forces in Recent Conflicts

*Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell IV, U.S. Army; Mr. Dennis M. Murphy; and Mr. Anton Menning*  
The Army must learn to embrace lessons from the explosion of information availability and the latent power of the new media. The Israeli Defense Forces recent experience presents several instructive lessons.

### 11 Continuing Progress During the “Year of the NCO”

*Command Sergeant Major James W. Redmore, U.S. Army*  
The level of personal and professional maturity of our noncommissioned officer corps is nothing short of remarkable. We have come a long way in the last seven years during the War on Terrorism.

### 17 The Inclination for War Crimes

*Lieutenant Colonel Robert Rielly, U.S. Army, Retired*  
An Army inquiry into the My Lai massacre 36 years ago provides today's leaders with ways to determine if units are tempted to commit war crimes.

### 24 The Embedded Morality in FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency

*Lieutenant Colonel Celestino Perez, Jr., U.S. Army, Ph.D.*  
Army doctrine tells us to respect *the other's* dignity and, hence, *the other's* life.

### 33 “Awakening” Beyond Iraq: Time to Engage Radical Islamists as Stakeholders

*Colonel David W. Shin, U.S. Army*  
Countering threats from terrorists should be dealt with through international law enforcement and diplomacy, not “preemptive” war.

### 40 Detention Operations, Behavior Modification, and Counterinsurgency

*Colonel James B. Brown, U.S. Army; Lieutenant Colonel Erik W. Goepner, U.S. Air Force;  
and Captain James M. Clark, U.S. Air Force*  
Camp Bucca, Iraq, has a proactive counterinsurgency strategy to identify detainees who no longer pose a threat, educate and train them, and return them to their hometowns to marginalize extremists.

### 48 Direct Support HUMINT in Operation Iraqi Freedom

*Lieutenant Colonel Charles W. “Bill” Innocenti, U.S. Army, Retired; Lieutenant Colonel Ted L. Martens,  
U.S. Army; and Lieutenant Colonel Daniel E. Soller, U.S. Army*  
To remain operationally agile in the counterinsurgency environment, the HUMINT community must shed some of its old ways of doing business.

### 57 Keeping Friends and Gaining Allies: The Indivisible Challenge of Military Public Relations

*Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege, U.S. Army, Retired*  
Maintaining and building positive relations with the public must become an integral part of U.S. military operations. Involved populations will increasingly be the arbiters of operational success or failure.

### 67 Popular Support as the Objective in Counterinsurgency: What Are We Really After?

*Major Lane V. Packwood, Idaho Army National Guard*  
After filling enough government and security force positions to defeat the insurgents, the counterinsurgent must influence public opinion in favor of the government by finding key individuals in the population's gray networks and securing their support.

**Cover Photo:** A U.S. Soldier waits to board a Blackhawk helicopter at Camp Liberty in Baghdad, Iraq, 9 April 2009. (DOD, MC2 Robert Whelan)



## 78 Iran and Venezuela: The "Axis of Annoyance"

*Commander Kavon "Hak" Hakimzadeh, U.S. Navy*

Iran and Venezuela are a cause for concern for U.S. security policy makers. They have indeed earned the moniker "the axis of annoyance."

## 85 It Ain't Over Till It's Over: What to Do When Combat Ends

*Lieutenant Colonel E. Paul Flowers, U.S. Army*

Preserving the peace to secure enduring success requires implementing post-conflict reconstruction.

## 89 Arming the Force: Future Class V Sustainment

*Colonel Alan D. Braithwaite, U.S. Army Reserve*

A new strategy focused on "now and into the future" helps logisticians support Joint warfighter readiness with modernized firearms and weapons systems.

## CONTEST WINNERS

### 97 3rd Place DePuy, Counterinsurgency Operations in Baghdad: The Actions of 1-4 Cavalry in the East Rashid Security District

*Major Thomas J. Sills, North Carolina Army National Guard*

By adhering to the COIN principles of "clear-hold-build" and treating Iraqis with dignity, 1-4 Cavalry brought security to a former Al-Qaeda-dominated area in Iraq.

### 106 3rd Place MacArthur, The Influential Leader

*Major Enrique Silvela, Spanish Army*

Today's military professionals must understand how to influence without authority and how to achieve results within the constraints of a cooperative environment.

## INSIGHTS

### 115 Disunity of Command: The Decisive Element!

*Lieutenant Colonel Carl Grunow, U.S. Army, Retired*

Unity of Command, once thought an unassailable imperative, can inhibit success in stability operations because legitimacy trumps efficiency.

## 118 BOOK REVIEWS CONTEMPORARY READINGS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL

## 127 LETTERS

George W. Casey, Jr.  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

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JOYCE E. MORROW  
Administrative Assistant to the  
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# LEARNING TO LEVERAGE NEW MEDIA

## The Israeli Defense Forces In Recent Conflicts

**Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell IV, U.S. Army;  
Mr. Dennis M. Murphy; and Mr. Anton Menning**

THE CONTEMPORARY MEDIA environment continues to change at an ever-accelerating pace, faster than most could have imagined just 10 years ago. This acceleration has significant implications for today's media outlets and the military. New media is a case in point. It has been described as a "combustible mix of 24/7 cable news, call-in radio and television programs, Internet bloggers and online websites, cell phones and iPods."<sup>1</sup> New media's meteoric rise and increasing pervasiveness dictate fresh terms for the culture of media engagement.

With easy access, enormous reach, and breadth, this upstart has flexed sufficient muscle during recent conflicts to alter or transform our traditional view of information and its impact on populations and military operations. Simple to use, new media leapfrogs ordinary rules and conventions. At the same time, its very user-friendliness encourages unconventional adversaries to manipulate a growing number of related technologies to generate favorable publicity and recruit supporters. For these reasons and more, civilian and military leaders can ill-afford to ignore it. Perhaps more importantly, they must not fail to understand and use the new form of information dissemination, as it possesses serious implications for military operations.

Focusing on the current litany of new media capabilities can inhibit understanding because present developments may fail to account for anticipated technological advances. A more enduring description of new media would recognize its embrace of any emergent technological capability. Such emergent capabilities can empower a broad range of actors—individuals through nation-states—to create and spread timely information that can unify a vast audience via global standardized communications (e.g., the salience of the Internet). Impact and urgency assume such a sufficiently high profile that the currently "new" media might better be referred to as the "now" media. At the same time, there is an overarching dynamism that springs from the exponential increases in capability that seem to occur weekly.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, a key enabler for new media is "digital multimodality": content produced in one form can be easily and rapidly edited and repackaged, then transmitted in real time across many different forms of media.

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The potential for engagement is staggering—with the ability of new media to mimic comparable—albeit much slower—developments in the television industry. Thirty years ago, cable television was in its infancy, with three networks ruling the airwaves. Today, cable channels offer multitudes of options, and scores of satellite channels vie for viewers, fragmenting the broadcast audience. Similarly, over the last decade, the rise of the Internet and easy-to-use technology has fueled an explosion of the blogosphere. By August 2008, some 184 million blogs had proliferated worldwide, according to a *Technorati* report.<sup>3</sup> Three of the top five most visited sites in the United States were social networking or video sharing sites, including Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube.<sup>4</sup> According to The State of the News Media 2009 report from the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, the 50 most popular news sites registered a 27 percent increase in traffic over 2008.<sup>5</sup>

Proliferation and accessibility have played havoc with old rules of the media game in at least two important areas, gatekeeping and agenda-setting. Before the widespread advent of the new media, traditional editors and producers served as “gatekeepers,” determining what stories and features to publish in accordance with varied criteria. In effect, key individuals and organizations controlled access to information.<sup>6</sup> Their decisions consciously or unconsciously set the agenda for coverage of news stories. Some issues received attention over others, and the media told the public not what to think but what to think about. Selection processes enabled media custodians to frame issues of importance for public consciousness. According to a 1977 pioneering study by Max McCombs and Donald Shaw, “complex social processes determine not only how to report but, even more important, what to report.”<sup>7</sup> The conclusion was that gatekeeping and agenda-setting went hand-in-hand. However, this dynamic is changing.

Arguably, for the first time in history, new media has abolished traditional gatekeeper and agenda-setting roles. With the invention of Blogger in 1999, Pyra Labs created an easy-to-use method for anyone to publish his or her own thoughts in blog form. Google’s purchase of Blogger in 2003 helped ignite a blogging explosion. Since that time, blogs have demonstrated the ability to thrust issues from obscurity into the national spotlight, while

***By August 2008,  
some 184 million blogs had  
proliferated worldwide...***

demonstrating the ability to become agenda-setters for the 21st century.<sup>8</sup> In similar fashion, new media has also seized an important role in gatekeeping. YouTube, for example, has become its own gatekeeper by deciding which videos to host on its site and which to erase.

During conflict, the same dynamism plays havoc with traditional notions of the media’s role in informing, shaping, and swaying public opinion. In 2003, Frank Webster argued in *War and the Media* that “the public are no longer mobilized to fight wars as combatants, they are mobilized as spectators—and the character of this mobilization is of the utmost consequence.”<sup>9</sup> Although military historians might argue that this process is at least as old as the nation-state, new media has injected an equation-altering sense of scale and speed into the traditional calculus. In 2006, Howard Tumbler joined Webster in *Journalists Under Fire* to identify a “new” type of conflict the two commentators termed “Information War.”<sup>10</sup> Like many other contemporary observers, they concluded that the familiar industrial model of warfare was giving way to an informational model. The struggle for public opinion retained central importance, but the sheer pervasiveness and responsiveness of new media recast the terms and content of the struggle. There were at least two clear implications. The first was that “the military has a commensurately more complex task in winning the information war.”<sup>11</sup> The second was that there remains little choice but to engage new media as part of the larger media explosion. Failure to do so would leave a vacuum—the adversary’s version of reality would become the dominant perception.

Even a brief survey of new media’s nature and impact leaves military leaders with some powerful points worthy of consideration by senior civilian leaders:

- New media has the capacity to be nearly ubiquitous. With only a few notable exceptions (e.g., Chechnya and Western China), there is little escape from its span and grip.

- Like the old media, new media can also be enlisted to serve specific masters, though perhaps with greater difficulty.

- Properly understood, new media can be a source of great power and influence.

- New media holds a tremendous upside for education and for broadcasting the military’s message.

- New media forces us to modify habits and to think consciously about the practical and constitutional obligations inherent in becoming our own version of gatekeepers and agenda-setters.

- New media is affecting modern conflict in significant ways not yet fully understood.

- Whatever the full implications might be, the military must embrace the new media; there is really no choice. Its power and dynamism dictate that military estimates accord it the attention and focus it deserves.

As the new media story continues to unfold, combat experience produces a stream of implications for theory and practice in pursuing doctrinal development. Two case studies recount the role of new media in recent conflicts waged by Israel. There are marked differences in the way the Israeli Defense Forces handled the media in the Hezbollah conflict during the summer of 2006 and in the Gaza incursion at the end of 2008 and beginning of 2009. The two instances suggest “best practices” that the U.S. military could adopt when dealing with new media and its role on the battlefield. A discussion of each follows.

## The Second Lebanon War: Information as a Warfighting Function?

On 12 July 2006, Hezbollah kidnapped two Israeli soldiers just inside Israel across the Lebanese border. After a botched rescue attempt in which eight Israeli Defense Force (IDF) soldiers were killed, Israel launched a massive air campaign, targeting both Hezbollah and much of Lebanon. There ensued an Israeli ground invasion of southern Lebanon and a kinetic fight that the Israelis subsequently dubbed the “Second Lebanon War.”<sup>12</sup> Although various militaries have sifted the resulting combat experience for lessons learned, little attention has been devoted to Hezbollah’s exploitation of information as a kind of “warfighting function,” with new media as the weapon of choice.<sup>13</sup>

Hezbollah has characteristics that, in the view of some observers, make the organization a paradigm for future U.S. adversaries.<sup>14</sup> Hezbollah is neither a regular armed force nor a guerilla force in the traditional sense. It is a hybrid—something in between. As a political entity with a military wing, Hezbollah plays an important role in providing services to broad segments of the Lebanese population.<sup>15</sup> During the summer of 2006, the military wing demonstrated an impressive warfighting capability with an important information dimension: its fighters expertly leveraged new media capabilities while defending against their employment by the Israelis and while maintaining excellent operations security.

The conflict itself revealed many of the characteristics to which Webster and Tumbler had earlier referred. In a Harvard study on the media aspects of the 2006 war, the veteran journalist Marvin Kalb noted:

To do their jobs, journalists employed both the camera and the computer, and, with the help of portable satellite dishes and video phones “streamed” or broadcast their reports..., as they covered the movement of troops and the rocketing of villages—often, (unintentionally, one assumes) revealing sensitive information to the enemy. Once upon a time, such information was the



The Bint Jbeil website depicts a village in southern Lebanon and the scene of fierce fighting between Israeli soldiers and Lebanese-based Hezbollah guerrillas, 27 July 2006.

AFP Photo

stuff of military intelligence acquired with considerable effort and risk; now it has become the stuff of everyday journalism. The camera and the computer have become weapons of war.<sup>16</sup>

Kalb's observations emphasized a new transparency for war and military operations inherent in the ubiquity and power of new media. New technology and techniques—including digital photography, videos, cellular networks, and the Internet—were used by all parties: the press, Israeli and Lebanese civilians, the Israeli Defense Forces, and Hezbollah. The ease and speed of data transmission, coupled with the manipulation of images, affected the way participants and spectators viewed the war. Israeli soldiers sent cell phone text messages home, both sides actively used videos of the fighting, and civilians posted still and video imagery on blogs and websites, most notably YouTube.<sup>17</sup>

Still, Hezbollah emerged as the master of the new media message. Playing David to Israel's Goliath, Hezbollah manipulated and controlled information within the operational environment to its advantage, using (at times staged and altered) photographs and videos to garner regional and worldwide support.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, Hezbollah maintained absolute control over where journalists went and what they saw, thus framing the story on Hezbollah's terms and affecting agendas for the international media.<sup>19</sup> The widely reported use of Katushya rockets against Israel became both a tactical kinetic weapon and a strategic psychological one. But less is written about the fact that Hezbollah employed near-real-time Internet press accounts as open-source intelligence to determine where the rockets landed. Post-conflict reporting indicates that non-affiliated organizations used Google Earth to plot the location of the rocket attacks.<sup>20</sup> While there is no firm evidence that Hezbollah used this capability to attain greater accuracy of fire, the fact remains that this new media capability could have been used to increase accuracy and multiply the strategic information effect.<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile, Hezbollah used its own satellite television station, Al Manar, to extend its information reach to some 200 million viewers within the region.<sup>22</sup> As a direct link between Hezbollah's military activities and these viewers, Al Manar timed coverage of spectacular tactical actions for maximum strategic effect.<sup>23</sup> For example, within minutes of the Israeli naval destroyer *Hanit* being hit by missiles, Hezbollah's secretary general, Hassan Nasrallah, called in "live" to Al Manar to announce the strike, and Al Manar obligingly provided footage of the missile launch for distribution by other regional media and subsequently by YouTube.<sup>24</sup> It took Israel 24 hours to respond with its own account of the incident.

The use of information as a strategic weapon did not end with the kinetic fight. Hezbollah continued

***Post-conflict reporting indicates that non-affiliated organizations used Google Earth to plot the location of the rocket attacks.***



AFP, Ramzi Haidar

A poster of Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah appears on a wall overlooking the rubble of his home in the Beirut southern suburb neighborhood of Haret Hreik, 8 August 2006.



to use self-justifying and self-congratulatory information to affect perceptions of blame, responsibility, and victory. Hezbollah leaders even went so far as to place billboards on the rubble of buildings in southern Lebanon that said “Made in the USA” (in English) immediately following the cease fire.<sup>25</sup>

Interestingly and importantly, Nasrallah did not appear to expect the full onslaught that characterized the Israeli response to the Second Lebanon War’s triggering events.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, the way Hezbollah extensively enlisted information as a weapon of choice implies that this penchant is second-nature. That is, the emphasis on information is embedded in planning at all levels and inculcated in the culture of the military arm of Hezbollah. In strategic perspective, Hezbollah used information to reduce Israel’s strategic options (and therefore its depth) in terms of time. An important focus was on proportionality, with Hezbollah exploiting the new media for information effects. Thus, Hezbollah portrayed Israeli Defense Forces military operations as a disproportionate use of force against the Lebanese civilian population, especially in light of the initial kidnapping incident that had spurred Israel to action. Not surprisingly, only 33 days after the onset of hostilities, a ceasefire was declared. And, again not surprisingly, after a David-and-Goliath struggle in which winning meant not losing, Hezbollah unilaterally declared victory.<sup>27</sup>

All this is not to say that Israel neglected various forms of information, including the new media, to support its war aims, but Tel Aviv’s focus was on the traditional use of information in support of psychological operations against the enemy. Leaflets were dropped, Al Manar broadcasts were jammed, and cell phone text messages were pushed to Hezbollah combatants and Lebanese noncombatants. These activities amounted to traditional attempts at turning the public against the adversary and instilling fear in the adversary himself. However, attempts at all levels to garner popular support from broader audiences through trust and sympathy were lacking.

In contrast, Hezbollah information efforts focused directly on gaining trust and sympathy for its cause at all levels. Israel provided no countervailing view, allowing Hezbollah to drive perceptions that could become universally accepted as truth. Consequently, as Dr. Pierre Pahlavi of the Canadian Forces College notes, “the Jewish state forfeited the

psychological upper hand on all fronts: domestic, regional, and international.” Thus, Hezbollah was able to create a “perception of failure” for the Israelis, with consequences more important than the actual kinetic outcome.<sup>28</sup>

The Hezbollah experience presents lessons for potential adversaries of the United States. At the same time, the United States and its military must consider whether the strategy and tactics of Hezbollah might represent those of the next adversary and prepare accordingly. Meanwhile, Israel, only two and a half years after the events in Lebanon, appears to have taken the experience to heart in conducting recent operations against Hamas in Gaza.

## Operation Cast Lead

During lunchtime on 27 December 2008, Israel unleashed a furious air attack that in mere minutes struck 50 targets in the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip. The daylight raid took Gazans by surprise and marked the beginning of a 24-day offensive designed to stop Gaza-based missiles from raining down on southern Israel. A fragile ceasefire between Hamas and Israel had ended just eight days earlier. Israel, determined to avoid mistakes from the “Second Lebanon War,” embarked on a massive public relations campaign that employed new media extensively. In fact, one newspaper featured the headline: “On the front line of Gaza’s war 2.0.”<sup>29</sup> A war in cyberspace unfolded simultaneously with ground and air operations, and both sides employed various web 2.0 applications—including blogs, YouTube, and Facebook—to tell their differing versions of events.<sup>30</sup>

To learn from the Second Lebanon War, the Israelis created a special study group, the “Winograd Commission.” The recommendation that followed was to organize an information and propaganda unit to coordinate public relations across a wide spectrum of activities, including traditional media, new media, and diplomacy.<sup>31</sup> The function of the resulting body, the National Information Directorate, was to deal with *hasbara*, or “explanation.” One news source held that, “The *hasbara* directive also liaises over core messages with bodies such as friendship leagues, Jewish communities, bloggers and backers using online networks.”<sup>32</sup> According to a press release from the Israeli Prime Minister’s office,

The information directorate will not replace the activity of any Government information

body. Its role will be to direct and coordinate in the information sphere so that the relevant bodies present a unified, clear, and consistent message and so that the various government spokespersons speak with a single voice. The directorate will initiate information campaigns and programs, host events, etc.<sup>33</sup>

With the National Information Directorate providing unity of message from the Prime Minister's office, the Israeli version of a strategic communication machine was ready to engage multiple media channels to win the war of ideas.

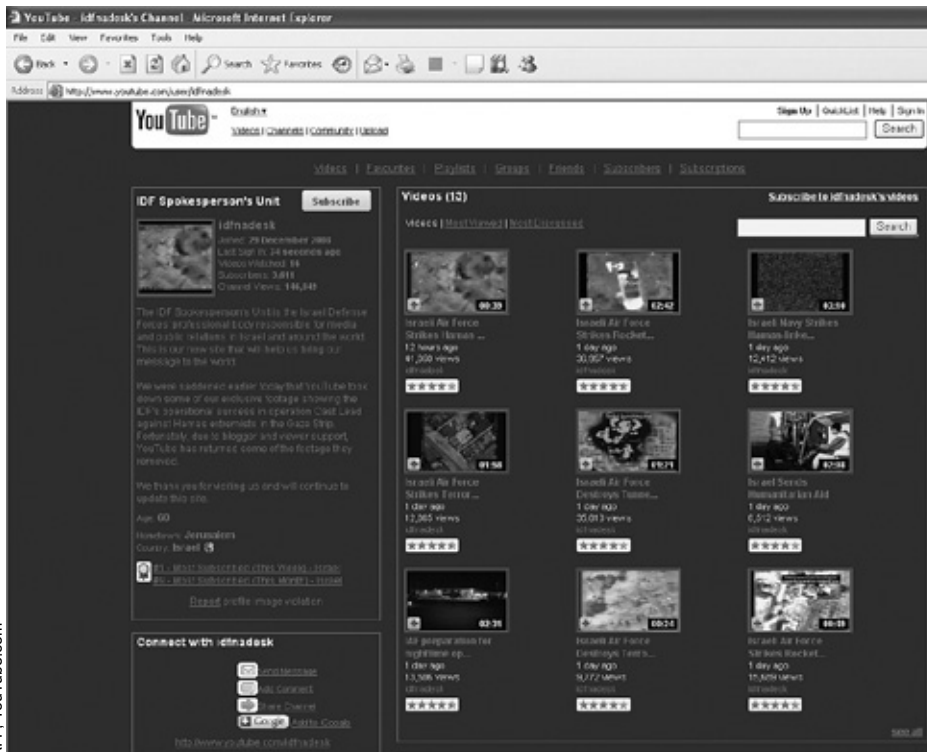
Two days after the airstrikes commenced, the Israeli Defense Forces launched its own YouTube channel, the "IDF Spokesperson's Unit." Within days, the channel became a sensation around the world. During early January 2009, the channel became the second most subscribed channel and ninth most watched worldwide, garnering more than two million channel views. The 46 videos posted to the channel have attracted more than 6.5 million views.<sup>34</sup> The videos depicted precision airstrikes on Hamas rocket-launching facilities, humanitarian assistance, video logs ("vlogs") by

IDF spokespeople, and Israeli tanks moving into position to attack. Hamas, not to be outdone, joined in the cyber-fracas with its own YouTube channels.

What was Israel's strategy for the use of new media during the Gaza incursion? The answer to this question lies partly in a study of contrasts. During the 2006 Lebanon War, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said: "My government is determined to continue doing whatever is necessary in order to achieve our goals. Nothing will deter us, whatever far-reaching ramifications regarding our relations on the northern border and in the region there may be."<sup>35</sup> He had also spoken about "destroying" Hezbollah.

In contrast, during the Gaza incursion, the Israeli leadership was far less definitive in its aims. It refused to place a timeline on operations and made no statements about completely neutralizing Hamas. Emanuel Sakal, former head of Israeli Defense ground forces, said, "Nobody declared that there will never be any rockets anymore, and nobody said that in five, six, or seven days we will destroy Hamas. They have learned a lot from Lebanon in 2006."<sup>36</sup> As in 2006, Israel knew it was fighting a war not just against Hamas, but against time. In virtually

every conflict since 1948, the United Nations has passed resolutions to stop various Arab-Israeli conflicts. This military action was no exception. On 8 January 2009, UN Security Council Resolution 1860 called for an immediate cease fire in Gaza.<sup>37</sup> In addition, Israel had less than a month to complete operations in order to confront a new U.S. presidential administration with a *fait accompli*. Therefore, Israel used all the informational tools it possessed to buy time. The longer the incursion might be framed in a positive or neutral light, the longer the IDF could continue its actions without undue concern for world opinion. In contrast with 2006, the Israelis would



This screen print from the internet shows the Israeli army's YouTube-embedded webpage on 31 December 2008.

use the media to provide the strategic depth their country lacks. In fact, Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni admitted as much in an email: "Intensive diplomatic activity in recent days is aimed at deflecting the pressure for a cease-fire to allow enough time for the operation to achieve its goals."<sup>38</sup>

Many of the YouTube channels supporting Hamas are no longer viewable. They appear to have fallen casualty to an information war in which both Palestinians and Israelis mobilized fellow countrymen to engage in a cyber battle for control of the social media sphere. Because new media abrogates the traditional gatekeeper's role, those who generate content in new media are their own gatekeepers. As information is added to new media, the process itself snowballs to become an agenda-setter. Both the Israelis and Palestinians understood this dynamic; therefore, both parties sought to control new media through coordinated efforts at creating supportive online communities that might act as force multipliers in cyberspace.

*The Christian Science Monitor* reports—

The online war over Gaza was relentless. Hackers on both sides worked to deface websites with one attack successfully redirecting traffic from several high-profile Israeli websites to a page featuring anti-Israel messages. Facebook groups supporting the opposing sides were quickly created and soon had hundreds of thousands of members.<sup>39</sup>

The Jewish Internet Defense Force rallied to the cause. On its web site, the defense force has guides to Facebook, YouTube, Wikipedia, Blogger, and WordPress.<sup>40</sup> This organization boasts that it has helped shut down dozens of extremist YouTube sites.<sup>41</sup> The Palestinians have retaliated by posting pro-Palestinian and pro-Hamas videos on Palutube.com, a site that is generally supportive of Hamas and its military wing, Al-Qassam. *The Jerusalem Post* even ran an article that described the exact steps necessary to safeguard web sites from hacker attacks.<sup>42</sup>

In the midst of the electronic war for public opinion, traditional media were denied access to the battlefield. The Israeli Defense Forces began limiting access to the potential battlefield several months before combat operations actually commenced in an effort to control the flow of information.<sup>40</sup> The Israelis also sought to limit the images of civilian casualties that had so eroded support during the

war with Hezbollah in 2006. However, this strategy may have backfired. Without an independent foreign media presence, Hamas' claims of atrocities against civilians and exorbitant death tolls went unchallenged. Jonathan Finan pointed out the gaffe in a *Los Angeles Times* article:

No doubt the Israeli government is worried about sympathies generated by stories of Palestinian suffering. But it cannot be enjoying media coverage from Gaza dominated by a context-free stream of images of the wounded, disseminated by people with unknown agendas. Claims from Palestinian officials of more than 900 people killed and a humanitarian crisis underway have been left to stand unverified, as have Israeli reports that Hamas militants are deliberately drawing fire to hospitals and schools.<sup>44</sup>

Even as Israel generated its own content on YouTube and Twitter, and even as Israel catered to influential bloggers, Gazans sent out tweets, updated blogs, and used cell phones to transmit photos of carnage to the outside world. *Al Jazeera* reporters, who were stationed in Gaza prior to the restrictions levied on entering journalists, provided riveting accounts of the war to the Arab world.

Despite reports that the National Information Directorate began planning the information element of Operation Cast Lead nearly six months prior to execution, IDF spokesperson Major Avital Leibovich admitted that the YouTube channel was the "brainchild of a couple of soldiers."<sup>45</sup> *Wired* blogger Noah Schachtman likewise reports that "the online piece was no strategy either. I met the kid who ran Israel's YouTube site... He thought it'd be kinda cool to share some videos online. So up went the site."<sup>46</sup> Schachtman goes on to assert that Israel's new media strategy collapsed as soon as mass casualty stories began to emerge from Gaza. However, Israel had bought the time it needed to conclude the operation.

## Looking Forward as the Media-scape Continues to Fragment

Israel's experiences as gleaned from these two recent military actions illustrate the complex manner in which traditional and new media interact on the battlefield. In a 2006 *Military Review* article, Donald Shaw termed traditional media as "vertical" and alternate media (including new

**... the military is forced to understand the complex interaction  
between traditional and new media...**

media) as “horizontal.” Vertical media does indeed have a top-down agenda-setting power. However, “vertical media’s reach has declined while that of the alternative media—horizontal media that primarily interpret details—has increased.”<sup>47</sup> The upshot is that the military is forced to understand the complex interaction between traditional and new media, while appreciating the limits of each.

By limiting the access of international media to the battlefield during Operation Cast Lead, the Israelis ensured no voice would refute Palestinian claims of atrocities and civilian targeting. Conversely, in 2006 the presence of outside media contributed to possible tactical and operational successes by Hezbollah. This observation gains more significance when one considers media reports in combination with the capabilities of Google Earth and other spatial applications.

As the media environment continues to fragment in the future, engaging ever-diversifying platforms and channels will become more difficult for the military. But, as General Creighton Abrams reputedly once said, “If you don’t blow your own horn, someone will turn it into a funnel.” Under condi-

tions of the current new media blitz, his possibly apocryphal words might be paraphrased to say, “If you don’t engage, someone else will fill the void.” Surrendering the information environment to the adversary is not a practical option. Therefore, the military must seriously consider where information and the new media lie in relationship to conventional warfighting functions. One thing seems sure: we must elevate information in doctrinal importance, and adequately fund and staff organizations dealing with information.

The “era of persistent conflict” that characterizes today’s operational environment is likely to endure for the foreseeable future, “with threats and opportunities ranging from regular and irregular wars in remote lands, to relief and reconstruction in crisis zones to sustained engagement in the global commons.”<sup>48</sup> We must prepare thoroughly for the roles that new and traditional media are so certain to play in a less-than-stable future. Only by fostering a culture of engagement where the military proactively tells its own story in an open, transparent manner can we successfully navigate the many challenges of the media environment now and in the future. **MR**

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**F**ROM EACH OF THESE several sorts of soldiers, the youngest alone excepted, ten men of distinguished merit are first selected; and after these, ten more. These are all called commanders of companies; and he that is first chosen has a seat in the military council. After these, twenty more are appointed to conduct the rear; and are chosen by the former twenty. The soldiers of each different order, the light troops excepted, are then divided into ten separate parts; to each of which are assigned four officers, of those who have been thus selected; two to lead the van, and two to take the care of the rear. The light-armed troops are distributed in just proportion among them all. Each separate part is called a company, a band, or an ensign; and the leaders, captains of companies or centurions. Last of all, two of the bravest and most vigorous among the soldiers are appointed by the captains to carry the standards of the company. It is not without good reason that two captains are assigned to every company. For as it always is uncertain, what will be the conduct of an officer, or to what accidents he may be exposed; and, as in the affairs of war, there is no room for pretext or excuse; this method is contrived, that the company may not upon any occasion be destitute of a leader. When the captains therefore both are present, he that was first chosen leads the right, and the other the left of the company. And when either of them is absent, he that remains takes the conduct of the whole. In the choice of these captains not those that are the boldest and most enterprising are esteemed the best; but those rather, who are steady and sedate; prudent in conduct, and skillful in command. Nor is it so much required, that they should be at all times eager to begin the combat, and throw themselves precipitately into action; as that, when they are pressed, or even conquered by a superior force, they should still maintain their ground, and rather die than desert their station.



# Continuing Progress DURING THE “YEAR OF THE NCO”

**Command Sergeant Major  
James W. Redmore,  
U.S. Army**

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PHOTO: SSG Demetreus Perez, left, and SPC Jackie Greenlee keep watch over a mountain pass following a mission near Forward Operating Base Lane in the Zabol province of Afghanistan, March 2009. (U.S. Army, SSG Adam Mancini)

**W**E HAVE HAD GREAT PROGRESS with the professional maturity of the noncommissioned officer (NCO) corps in the seven years since the War on Terrorism began. Our noncommissioned officers have evolved to a level of excellence unmatched by any other warfighting organization in the world. This evolution makes the Army theme “Year of the NCO” appropriate for 2009.

When the “Warrior Ethos” and “Soldiers’ Creed” were introduced, they provided the direction needed to help transform to a mind-set consistent with a more expeditious and modular approach in our warfighting units. The warrior-first mentality has had a profound impact on how we approach training and on the expectations we place on our noncommissioned officers. It has helped develop the confidence and spirit needed to face the enemy and endure the challenges of combat.

## **Focus on Warfighting Skills**

One of the most powerful evolutions derived from the warrior-first mentality is the universal focus on a common skill set. All Soldiers, regardless of military occupational specialty, must be able to perform the basic warfighting tasks required to fight and win on the battlefield. Today, we have Soldiers in low-density military occupational specialties that are as confident and competent in their warfighting skills as the combat arms Soldier. The days of “I only work in the motor pool” are done. Everyone is a warrior first. Today, there is nothing uncommon about seeing artillerymen entering buildings and clearing rooms, logisticians being responsible for commanders’ personal security details, food service specialists providing convoy security,

or armor crewmen conducting dismounted patrols in an urban environment.

This transformation is reflected throughout the structure of today's Army. We now can see the most diverse and flexible task forces ever assembled. Task Force Mountain has consisted of cavalry, armor, mechanized infantry, light infantry, and fires brigades; all performing as maneuver forces. Each brigade also continues to conduct operations unique to their traditional roles, and admirably so.

Noncommissioned officers are the force behind this transformation. They are responsible for the development of our Soldiers' individual-, crew-, and team-level tasks. They understand the importance of inspiring and motivating their Soldiers, even in tasks beyond their ordinary scope of expertise. I see the success of their actions every day during battle-field circulation. I have conducted dismounted and mounted patrols with every unit in our task force, and witnessed the level of professionalism we have in our Army—it is inspiring.

Our renewed focus and mentality has helped shape our core competencies as warfighters and strengthened our mental and physical toughness. It has developed the spiritual foundation needed to have the will to fight under the most adverse conditions. Soldiers are prepared for day-to-day patrols in 120-degree heat on the streets of Baghdad wearing full armor, or for patrolling in the mountains of Afghanistan at elevations where only animals should roam. This toughness, this drive, has been our way of life for the past seven years. Our noncommissioned officers have instilled these strengths in our Soldiers—confidence through competence.

## **Transformation to an Agile Force**

The last time the Army celebrated the “Year of the NCO” was in 1989. Much has changed since then, both in the Army and in the world. As our force has transformed into a more agile, modular force to respond to a wider variety of threats worldwide, our Soldiers and noncommissioned officers have rapidly adapted to those changes. The role of the noncommissioned officer, however, has not changed. They are still leaders who train, inspire, and motivate Soldiers. They enforce the highest standards to meet their commanders' vision. During the past 20 years, new challenges have both enhanced the noncommissioned officer's role and made his job more difficult.

***The aggressive operational tempo we have endured the last six years has seasoned our NCOs...***

The Army Force Generation process increased our ability to attain proficiency in our warfighting requirements and develop a sophisticated mastery of them while deployed in theater. This is a significant change from what we used to experience with peaks and valleys in the band of excellence. The aggressive operational tempo we have endured the last six years has seasoned our NCOs and given them an exceptionally high level of understanding of the global situation. Today's Army maintains the highest degree of experience and toughness in its history.

Whether our Soldiers are heading to Iraq or Afghanistan, the training requirements are the same, and our current training cycle reflects the need for this kind of flexibility. This need was demonstrated recently when the 3d Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, was sent to Afghanistan after months of training for Iraq. They were able to deploy to an entirely different theater on short notice with little effect on their readiness. This adaptability has grown out of our new training requirements, which have become a lot more demanding and sophisticated as well.

Today, 90 percent of battlefield casualties survive because of the force's level of disciplined proficiency and the competence and skill of our medics. Our noncommissioned officers use the Medical Simulations Training Center to train our first responders to a higher degree, and under more realistic conditions, than ever before. For instance, they replicate the point of injury at a remote mountainside in Afghanistan or a roadside in Iraq, with all of the sounds, smells, and confusion of battle. They perform tactical combat care on state-of-the-art mannequin casualties, gaining invaluable and realistic experience. In the second phase of training, they refresh their skills by performing life-saving emergency surgery procedures on cadavers. In the final phase, they culminate their training by practicing critical and essential life-saving tasks on living tissue.



U.S. Army, Doug Schaub

**A Soldier training at the Medical Simulations Training Center, Fort Campbell, Kentucky, in 2008.**

After receiving this training, many of our medics have the opportunity to test their skills in Afghanistan and Iraq. In one notable case, a forward operating base come under attack from ten 107-mm rockets. One rocket hit its intended target, instantly killing one Soldier and severely injuring two others. Medics on the scene responded without hesitation. The training they conducted prior to their deployment gave them the edge of steady confidence in their skills and a calm attitude in a time of chaos. The casualties were immediately evacuated and the medics credited with saving the Soldiers' lives. This methodology has allowed us to develop the most competent, confident, and capable medics possible to support Soldiers on the battlefield.

## New Skill Sets

As equipment and weapons become more advanced, NCOs are expected to master more complex systems and then train others to master them as well. In 1989, when I served in the 2d Ranger Battalion, we had the best equipment available at the time, which today would seem antiquated. We carried load-bearing equipment versus the improved outer tactical vest with modular components. We had first-generation Gortex and polypropylene as our cold- and wet-weather protection. Now, we have the seven-layer system that can allow our Soldiers to endure temperatures to minus 40 degrees below zero. Additionally, we now have a rapid fielding initiative program that provides all Soldiers state-

of-the-art personal protective equipment and clothing prior to their deployment. We have comfortable, convenient equipment, which can be tailored to the Soldier's individual needs and desires.

A Soldier's weapon is no longer just a rifle—it is a system. As the standard changed from an M-16 rifle zeroed with iron sights to the M-4 with close combat optics, the lethal capability of the Soldier was greatly enhanced. These new capabilities challenge noncommissioned officers, because they are expected to master all of these new components. To train their subordinates, NCOs must understand, become proficient with and master each task associated with these new systems.

Noncommissioned officers train their Soldiers to exploit their weapons systems regardless of job specialty. At the rifle range training has changed. Today, our Soldiers conduct reflexive firing drills as part of their short-range marksmanship. They conduct tactical rifle ranges instead of just the standard qualification tables of old. Our Soldiers are required to maintain proper situational awareness and proper weapons handling when conducting training. Leaders are responsible for the clearing procedures of their Soldiers' weapons.

This responsibility is consistent with the way we do business in combat and must be maintained when we conduct predeployment training. We must replicate the most realistic conditions to help prepare our Soldiers for what will be expected when they are deployed. The days of getting “rodded off the range” with clearing rods are over. When our Soldiers are deployed, they carry live ammunition everywhere. When they leave the wire, they lock and load their weapons. To help mitigate negligent ammunition discharges, weapons discipline is critical to sustain. The marksmanship training model we use today is strictly realistic and focused.

A very beneficial and critical position in every modern squad or section is the “designated marksman.” Many of our Soldiers receive this formal training at Fort Benning, and it has a significant impact on our ability to place accurate shots at longer distances.

Prior to our deployment to Afghanistan, one of our female noncommissioned officers from a forward support company attended the marksmen training and was the first female to graduate from the course. Truly inspirational to our Soldiers, she



exemplified the warrior-first mentality. All Soldiers need the skill set required to face the enemy in close combat, regardless of their gender or MOS. Our advanced training courses currently reflect this. Noncommissioned officers bear the responsibility of keeping all Soldiers' combat skills proficient. The level of confidence and competence of our Soldiers to employ their weapons systems today is unmatched in our history.

Another variable having a profound impact is the Army's emphasis on "combatives training." All Soldiers train on these critical tasks as part of their common warrior skill set. Fort Benning is the proponent for the modern Army combatives system, which consists of four levels from beginning to advanced. Today, our Soldiers leave basic training with level-one certification. This focus has sparked such significant interest in our Soldiers, that it is common to see some form of combatives training being conducted in all units. In the past, there may have been martial arts or bayonet training, but never with the level of interest as in today's combatives programs.

Noncommissioned officers understand the importance of combatives training to enhance their warfighting capability and build confidence and aggressiveness within their Soldiers. There are formal competitive events planned at the unit level as well as intensive individual training in preparation for competing in professional tournaments. It's equally important to maintain this emphasis while deployed. At our invitation, professional martial arts instructors came to Iraq and Afghanistan to help sustain this skill set by conducting seminars. They were always well received by our Soldiers and definitely added value to the units' existing combatives programs and Soldiers' technical abilities. This paradigm change associated with combatives has had a huge impact on our entire Army. All of our Soldiers now have the ability and spirit to "close with" the enemy and destroy him, bearing both the confidence and discipline of a true professional.

## Responsibility and Growth

Another profound consequence of the warrior-first mentality is how much more we expect of our noncommissioned officers. Given the magnitude of responsibility noncommissioned officers have at

***This paradigm change associated with combatives has had a huge impact on our entire Army.***

squad and platoon levels, in two separate theaters of conflict, every noncommissioned officer is critical to achieving success and saving lives. This requires them to perform at the highest level imaginable, with no micromanaging or suppression of initiative from superiors. They are required to make decisions that can determine the life or death of the Soldiers they lead. They are doing things that far exceed what was required of them in the past. They must "leave the wire" prepared to face the enemy with courage and confidence in their ability. Their subordinates look up to them with trust and respect, knowing that their sergeant is going to take care of them.

Noncommissioned officers are thus required to have a thorough understanding of their surroundings in combat. They must be intimately aware of the potential threat and the actions required to mitigate risk. They must be able to manage their emotions and the actions and emotions of their subordinates to ensure force escalation is proportionate with the perceived threat. They must have the visceral fortitude to lead their Soldiers during the most chaotic and violent engagements and achieve success professionally—with honor.

During our tour in Iraq, one of our mounted patrols hit a command-detonated improvised



The author (left) with coalition leaders on Forward Operating Base Delta in Wasit Province, Iraq, 18 July 2008.

U.S. Army, SSG Michel Saurer

explosive device. After the blast, the patrol executed its battle drill and identified what appeared to be three individuals responsible for initiating the IED. The Soldiers pursued these three until they found them hiding in the reeds of a ravine. They could have easily made the choice to kill the suspects on sight. Their buddies—in the vehicle hit by the IED—were injured, one severely. During the pursuit, the Soldiers maintained the moral discipline of restraint. They ultimately detained the suspects and turned them over to the proper authorities.

In another case, while in town during a security halt, a patrol noticed a disturbance among a group of local Iraqis. When the patrol intervened to mollify them, a teenager threw a piece of brick at one of our gunners who was standing in the turret of his vehicle. He was struck in the face, and his jaw was broken. The gunner could easily have shot at the teenager, but he chose to respond with nothing more than a stern look. This is the level of discipline and professionalism that the Army expects, and it prevails within our ranks due to the leadership of our NCOs.

As operations in Iraq and Afghanistan shift increasingly from conducting lethal and kinetic operations to building civil capacity and assisting those countries' security forces, our NCOs are called on to perform tasks they never would have been required to do 20 years ago. Today's NCO understands governance, economic development, the importance of reconstruction, and the nuances of reconciliation. They associate with provincial leaders, sheiks, village elders, and school principals. They get to know them personally and talk to them professionally. In this situation, NCOs' leadership and values are as important as their warfighting skills.

Today's NCOs are required to be both warriors fighting insurgents and civic leaders building relationships with the local townsmen. No training can adequately prepare them for this complexity, yet they continuously demonstrate their ability to adapt and lead. The maturity and resourcefulness of modern NCOs is visible in their ability to rapidly change modes from warrior to nation builder as the situation changes. They are credible in the eyes of local leaders, and that fact speaks volumes.

Perhaps one reason for this higher level of maturity in our noncommissioned officer corps is that

they are generally smarter and better educated today than they once were. Twenty years ago, a Soldier with a high school diploma was considered the norm. Now, it is not unique for an enlisted Soldier to have a master's degree. With older men and women entering the service, they bring a new level of maturity as well. They understand how to rise to the level of their potential based on past challenges and experiences. They also bring leadership and management skills with them, adding value to the corps as a whole. Those who have served back-to-back deployments also bring a level of experience to the force not seen in a long time.

With this success, however, there has been sacrifice. Our operational tempo has required many of our Soldiers to deploy multiple times in the past few years, which puts a significant strain on their families. They miss the birth of their children, the first baseball and soccer seasons for their sons and daughters, and the school plays that are so important for families to experience together. Their absence during holidays, when life-long family memories are made, is also challenging to accept for our Soldiers and Army families. These types of experiences can never be recovered.

Our NCOs not only deal with these stressful events personally, but they help their subordinates overcome them as well. One of the ways our noncommissioned officers help connect our Soldiers with their families during these very important times is with the use of modern technology. We have witnessed high school graduations, promotions, birthdays, and even an attempt to show the birth of a child through video-television conference. This has had a profound impact on the morale of our Soldiers, and clearly shows our Army families that we try to do everything we can to take care of them.

Another cost associated with our operational tempo is the day-to-day stress inherent with facing the enemy in combat. Our NCOs are required to recognize the symptoms and understand the proper

***...Soldiers may have a hard time acclimating to regular life upon redeployment.***



**SGT Cory Culpepper, right, and SGT Thomas Marstin, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army Europe, work on communication issues during precombat checks near Forward Operating Base Lane, Zabul, Afghanistan, 11 March 2009, before a humanitarian aid mission near the base.**

actions to take for post-traumatic stress. Depending on the level of trauma experienced and the available coping mechanisms, some Soldiers may have a hard time acclimating to regular life upon redeployment. They bring the stress home and then are challenged with responding to family issues. Unfortunately, there is still a certain degree of stigma attached to seeking help. Not only do our NCOs need to have the courage and self-confidence to receive the appropriate care, but they must be advocates for their Soldiers to do the same. We have seen an increase in the number of referrals to our behavioral health specialists upon redeployment. This is largely due to NCO involvement in Soldiers' well-being and efforts to ensure that they receive the required assistance. To learn how to identify Soldiers with post-traumatic stress, our junior NCOs need mentorship and coaching from more experienced leaders.

## Mentoring our Subordinates

Finding time to mentor our junior NCOs is challenging. Generally, units have a 12-month period to reset, train, and deploy. During this period, the focus is on training the specific tasks needed to set the conditions for success during the deployment. When not training these tasks, NCOs are helping prepare their families for separation. NCOs do not

have the time to socialize with their unit members. This has affected junior NCO development. Noncommissioned officers need time other than training to talk with their subordinates to better understand our Soldiers' strengths and weaknesses and learn what motivates them, both personally and professionally. Furthermore, social time with unit members builds cohesiveness and esprit de corps. We used to have scheduled events during off-duty time to help with team building processes and to get to know our Soldiers better. Now, all available time is spent on much-needed family maintenance.

The fundamentals required to help shape a junior noncommissioned officer's leadership foundation also do not get the focus they once did. Before

the requirement to have forces deployed to both Afghanistan and Iraq, our training cycle permitted more time to focus on this area. Our NCOs' understanding of the basic reception and integration processes for their Soldiers was thorough. Their ability to conduct personal and professional counseling for performance improvement of their Soldiers is why we have the best NCOs in the world today. Our junior NCOs have not had the opportunity to learn these techniques. Our Army is developing new programs and revising our NCO education system to assist in this area. This will certainly help, but the real benefit will come when our senior NCOs have the time needed to coach subordinates.

## We've Come a Long Way

The level of personal and professional maturity of our noncommissioned officer corps is nothing short of remarkable. We have come a long way in the last seven years during the War on Terrorism and the transformation of our Army. We recognize the challenges we face with an aggressive operational tempo and need to take advantage of the most innovative ways to overcome them. We have the best NCOs of any warfighting organization in the world. They are the backbone of our Army, and it's clearly appropriate to make this year the "Year of the NCO." **MR**

# The Inclination for WAR CRIMES

**Lieutenant Colonel Robert Rielly, U.S. Army, Retired**

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PHOTO: Exhibit photo for the Peers Inquiry (Report of the Department of the Army Review of the Preliminary Investigations into the My Lai Incident). RON HAEBERLE, Former U.S. Army Photographer: "I happened upon a group of GIs surrounding these people and one of the American GIs yelled out, 'Hey he's got a camera.' So they kind of all dispersed just a little bit, and I came upon them and looking at the photograph I noticed the one girl was kind of frantic and an older woman trying to protect this small child and the older woman in front was just, you know, kind of pleading, trying to, beg, you know, begging and that, and another person, a woman was buttoning her blouse and holding a small baby. Ok, I took the photograph, I thought they were just going to question the people, but just as soon as I turned and walked away, I heard firing, I looked around and over the corner of my shoulder I saw the people drop. I just kept on walking. At the time I was just, you know, capturing a reaction, but when you look at it later on in life, you know, now that those people are dead, they were shot, it's just kind of an eerie type feeling that you, that goes over, you know, goes through your whole body and you think back, could I have prevented this? How could I have prevented this? And it's a question I still kind of, you know, ask myself today." (Library of Congress)



**D**O YOU THINK your unit cannot be involved in a war crime? How do you know? Most leaders believe it would never happen in their unit, yet one story after another concerning American Soldiers and Marines who allegedly participated in war crimes has been in the news. Abu Ghraib, Haditha, Hamandiya, and Mahmudiya

are now part of military history. Investigations are ongoing, and some courts-martial have been held, yet the questions haunting commanders of these Soldiers and Marines remain. What went wrong? Did I miss something? Could I have prevented this? Other commanders are thankful that war crimes did not happen in their unit. Some are convinced it could never happen in their organizations. While there are many differences between the incidents listed above, the tragedy for the military is not just that these acts were committed, but that groups of Soldiers or Marines committed or condoned them. Thus, in effect, none of the safeguards the military associates with cohesive groups worked in these units.

Leaders are now left searching for answers and wondering if it will happen again. Unfortunately, the record indicates that it will. How to identify the likelihood of a unit committing a war crime is a leadership concern. Part of the answer to that question may be in the findings of an inquiry conducted 39 years ago into another regretful and tragic event in American military history, the My Lai Massacre. The Army conducted an inquiry into why the My Lai tragedy occurred. The results of this inquiry are important. They give today's leaders ways to monitor and assess units to determine if they could possibly commit a war crime. Leaders can then implement preemptive measures to prevent this from happening.

## The Peers Inquiry

The words "My Lai" are synonymous with a significant breakdown in leadership. All too often, we dismiss events such as My Lai as isolated incidents, the actions of a rogue platoon or a failure of direct-level leadership. This simple analysis fails to grasp the depth, breadth, and complexity of the events and decisions associated with My Lai. Many people, although horrified with My Lai's magnitude, recognized a similar current and worried that My Lai

could happen again given the right circumstances. The Army recognized this as well and, much to its credit, attempted to find out why the events of 16 March 1968 occurred. Although few people realize it, in addition to the criminal investigation conducted into My Lai, the Army also investigated additional areas associated with the operations that day.

In November 1969, Army Chief of Staff General William C. Westmoreland selected Lieutenant General William Peers to conduct an inquiry into My Lai to determine—

- What had gone wrong with the reporting system.
- Why the commander of U.S. Forces in Vietnam, at the time, had not been fully informed.
- Whether the operation had been investigated.<sup>1</sup>

The investigation's official title was the "Department of the Army Review of the Preliminary Investigations into the My Lai Incident." But it was more commonly referred to as the Peers Inquiry. One of the most significant parts of the report is in the chapter discussing factors contributing to the tragedy. This chapter contains information of immense value to commanders today.

In deciding who would direct the investigation, General Westmoreland could not have selected a better-suited officer. William Peers was the chief of the Office of Reserve Components, had a reputation for objectivity and fairness, and had served in Vietnam as the 4th Infantry Division commander and the I Field Force commander. He had joined the Army immediately after graduation from UCLA in 1937 and served in Burma during World War II. Because Peers did not graduate from West Point, Westmoreland recognized no one could accuse him of loyalty or favoritism to fellow West Point graduates.

Peers had an unenviable task. The Army was essentially investigating itself and would be open to severe criticism if it did not handle the investigation properly. In addressing the members of the inquiry, Peers explained, "No matter what any of us might feel, it [is] our job only to ascertain and report the facts, to let the chips fall where they may. It [is] not our job to determine innocence or guilt of individuals, nor be concerned about what effects the inquiry might have on the Army's

***...My Lai could happen again given the right circumstances.***

image, or about the press or public's reaction to our proceedings."<sup>2</sup> To ensure objectivity, Peers even went so far as to include two civilian lawyers on the panel, Robert MacCrate and Jerome Walsh, to serve as the "public conscience."<sup>3</sup>

The inquiry was under a time crunch from the start. It had to finish the investigation in four months because military offenses such as negligence, dereliction of duty, failure to report, false reporting, and misprision of a felony all had a two-year statute of limitation.<sup>4</sup> Under Peers's direction, the Soldiers and civilians of the inquiry completed their investigation in 14 weeks, interviewing over 400 witnesses, many of whom had separated from the service.<sup>5</sup> The inquiry members had to arrange travel, schedule the appearances of witnesses before the panel, and collect all the associated documents—which eventually comprised over 20,000 pages of testimony alone. In December 1969, barely two months into the investigation, Peers and several panel members traveled to Vietnam to get a firsthand look at the village of My Lai.

In the end, the inquiry members compiled a "list of 30 people who had known of the killing of non-combatants and other serious offenses committed



LTG William R. Peers, 10 December 1969, heading an Army panel investigating the My Lai massacre.

AP Photo

during the My Lai operation but had not made official reports, had suppressed relevant information, had failed to order investigation, or had not followed up on the investigations that were made.”<sup>6</sup>

When concluding the report, Peers asked panel members to draw some conclusions as to why My Lai occurred based on the evidence they had examined. Peers believed it was important to include findings detailing why and how the operation developed into a massacre. Several members argued against including conclusions because there appeared to be no single reason or pattern. Bob MacCrate, one of the two civilian attorneys working on the inquiry, argued that including the chapter could invalidate the entire report if readers found the conclusions faulty. Peers understood the risk, but believed that the chapter needed to be included “to not only highlight the deficiencies in the My Lai operation but also to indicate some of the differences between this operation and those of other units in South Vietnam.”<sup>7</sup> He also wanted to “point out problems of command and control that existed within the Americal Division, problems that would require vigorous corrective action by the Army in order to prevent repetition of such an incident in the future.”<sup>8</sup> Ultimately Peers was able to persuade the panel to include the chapter, and after much study, the panel determined that 13 factors contributed to My Lai.

This list of factors compiled by the Peers Inquiry provides commanders today with a way to assess their organizations and determine if Soldiers or small units in their command have an inclination to commit war crimes. Peers’ intuition to include the panel’s findings was correct and he unknowingly provided the Army a tool with far-reaching implications.

## Nine Factors

Although the official report listed 13 factors that contributed to My Lai, Peers pared the list down to nine in his 1979 book. In doing so, he seems to have combined several factors rather than eliminate any of the original 13. The nine factors Peers arrived at include—

- Lack of proper training.
- Attitude toward the Vietnamese.
- Permissive attitude.
- Psychological factors.
- Organizational problems.
- Nature of the enemy.

**...the [Peers] panel determined that 13 factors contributed to My Lai.**

- Plans and orders.
- Attitude of government officials and leaders.
- Leadership.

Each of the nine factors deserves some explanation.

**Lack of proper training.** The inquiry determined that “neither units nor individual members of Task Force Barker and the 11th Brigade received the proper training in the Law of War, the safeguarding of noncombatants, or the rules of engagement.”<sup>9</sup> The inquiry determined the lack of training was due to an accelerated movement schedule, large turnover of personnel prior to deployment, and the continual arrival of new Soldiers to the unit.<sup>10</sup> However, the problem of lack of training was not so cut and dried. The investigation discovered that some Soldiers did receive Law of War training, but some could not remember it. The inquiry determined that part of the reason for this was that the training was conducted in a “lackadaisical” manner. Furthermore, higher headquarters passed out pocket cards and memoranda, but never explained or reinforced the information they contained.<sup>11</sup> Peers states, “Some panel members thought the MACV policy of requiring Soldiers to carry a variety of cards was nothing short of ludicrous. They might have served as reminders, but they were no substitute for instruction.”<sup>12</sup>

In today’s military, many leaders would argue that lack of training is not a problem because all units receive training on Law of War, safeguarding of noncombatants, and rules of engagement prior to deployment. However, the same problems that plagued the 11th Brigade in 1968 also plague units today. Accelerated movements, excessive personnel turbulence, turnover of small unit leadership, and new arrivals in theater all occur during operations today. The lesson for leaders at all levels is to ensure the quality of the training matches the subject’s importance and that they constantly conduct, integrate, and reinforce it. Assessing training quality and ensuring training is continuous and that Soldiers understand the rules provide the leader a check on the climate of his organization.

**Attitude toward the Vietnamese.** If Soldiers make derogatory or racial comments and seem to treat the local population as a lower form of human being or as beneath the status of an American, commanders should take notice. The low regard in which some unit members held the Vietnamese, routinely referring to them as “gooks,” “dinks,” or “slopes,” disturbed Peers.<sup>13</sup> One only has to talk with U.S. Soldiers and Marines today or read magazine and newspaper interviews to hear derogatory terms used to describe Iraqi citizens. Even if the commander does not actually hear it, it would be naïve to think some Soldiers in the command do not possess a negative attitude toward the local population. This problem is greater during an insurgency when the population’s loyalty is in question or there is a significant cultural gap, both of which are likely conditions in the contemporary operational environment.

To prevent this from occurring, leaders must assess their organization’s attitude, beliefs, and

operating norms toward the enemy and the local population. In addition, commanders must prevent junior leaders from condoning a derogatory attitude from their Soldiers and Marines toward the local population.

One of the historically tried and true ways armies have attempted to overcome their soldiers’ fear of killing others in combat was to dehumanize the enemy and get soldiers to hate them. Killing out of hate is a powerful motivator but can yield unintended consequences. For example, if we train a unit to hate insurgents and kill them in combat, and the unit finds it increasingly difficult to distinguish the insurgents from the population, in the minds of the Soldiers, the population may soon become the hated enemy and thus victims of unlawful conduct. To deter this, as leaders prepare their Soldiers and Marines for the realities of combat, they must emphasize positive rationales for killing the enemy.

**Permissive attitude.** Peers writes, “The Americal Division and the 11th Brigade had strong, well-designed policies covering the handling of prisoners, the treatment of Vietnamese civilians, and the protection of their property. However, it was clear that there had been breakdowns in communicating and enforcing those policies.”<sup>14</sup> In fact, incidents of mishandling and rough treatment of prisoners did not start at My Lai but were present for some time prior to the operation. Peers suggests that commanders failed to discover unlawful treatment was occurring or allowed it to occur by tacit approval. The result was that it quickly became part of the way the units operated. As operations continued in Vietnam, Soldiers suspected the local population of collusion with the enemy because of the population’s ability to avoid mines and booby traps.<sup>15</sup>

Historical examples of counterinsurgency operations have shown Soldiers and Marines will become frustrated by the ambivalence of the population they are trying to help and protect. This can frustrate Soldiers and Marines, and disrespect and rough treatment of the population can quickly follow. Incidents in Iraq have led to emphasis on the proper treatment of prisoners, detainees, and civilians, but in a stressful environment attitudes can quickly shift. Commanders must set the proper tone for the organization and assess how their units

***One only has to talk with U.S. Soldiers and Marines today... to hear derogatory terms used to describe Iraqi citizens.***



Scott Andrew Ewing

**Graffiti left in an Iraqi’s house after an American unit conducted a search, September 2005.**

are treating prisoners, detainees, and civilians and their property. Leaders at all levels must clearly articulate to their subordinates what behavior to tolerate and what not to tolerate and continually reinforce that guidance.

**Psychological factors.** When enlisted Soldiers at My Lai testified before the inquiry, Peers stated that they frequently used the words “fear,” “apprehension,” and “keyed up” to describe their emotions.<sup>16</sup> Soldiers from Charlie Company 1-20 Infantry in particular were apprehensive and frustrated by the number of casualties the unit had suffered from mines and booby traps and from their inability to establish any contact with the enemy. To the men of Charlie Company, seeing fellow Soldiers wounded or maimed on operations without any way to retaliate led to a mounting frustration.

In addition, commanders in the Americal Division and Task Force Barker had pressured units to “be more aggressive and close rapidly with the enemy.”<sup>17</sup> In the case of My Lai, Task Force Commander Lieutenant Colonel Frank Barker’s aggressive nature and his promotion of competition between companies put pressure on the Soldiers to gain contact with an elusive enemy.

Apprehension, frustration, and pressure from above are a volatile mix for any organization. Each of these elements in isolation can lead to troubles, especially in stability and support operations. As casualties mount from an unseen, elusive enemy, commanders need to be more visible and exert more influence and guidance. Leaders must assess and monitor the attitudes of their Soldiers and their small cohesive units to determine if there is an unhealthy level of pressure and frustration. In addition, commanders must set a climate in their organization that promotes open discussion of Soldiers’ emotions, especially fear.

**Organizational problems.** Peers writes that although “organizational problems existed at every level, from company through task force and brigade up to the Americal Division headquarters,” the problems could be found in every major unit in Vietnam.<sup>18</sup> Task Force Barker was an ad hoc battalion with one company from each of the battalions assigned to the brigade. The commander was actually the 11th Brigade operations officer and he took his staff “out of hide” by pulling a minimum number of personnel out of the brigade staff to assist him. Peers opined that although organizational

problems contributed, they could not be “cited as the principal cause.”<sup>19</sup>

We can see many of the organizational problems the units encountered at My Lai in organizations today. Small staffs, ad hoc organizations, temporary attachments, and shortages of personnel are still issues some organizations face. Leaders struggle with the “troops-to-task” ratio associated with fighting an insurgency. Determining if units have enough men to accomplish their missions without fracturing their chain of command or group cohesion is an important consideration. To alleviate any potential problems associated with organizational structure, unit commanders should assess the impact their organizational structure has on operations as well as the effect new organizations have on the original organization when they join the unit.

**Nature of the enemy.** Much as it is with operations today and will probably be for the near future, it was difficult to distinguish combatants from noncombatants in Vietnam. Peers wrote that in “traditional communist strongholds and VC [Viet Cong] dominated areas..., it could be fairly well assumed that every male of military age was a VC of some form or another.”<sup>20</sup> However, this was not the case throughout the country.

Commanders will face situations like this in the future and must consider the nature of the enemy when assessing their units. Because the enemy has little or no respect for the Law of Land Warfare, does not play by what we consider “the rules,” and will constantly test our commitment to morality, it becomes tempting for stressed troops to respond in kind. Enemy forces will continue to use this tactic to their advantage. In an environment like this, commanders must appreciate the effect the enemy’s tactics are having on their own troops and assess the impact on the organizational climate and small-unit operating norms.

**Plans and orders.** Peers observed that in My Lai, “as Barker’s orders were passed down the chain

***We can see many of the organizational problems the units encountered at My Lai in organizations today.***



of command, they were amplified and expanded upon, with the result that a large number of Soldiers gained the impression that only the enemy would be left in My Lai 4 and that everyone encountered was to be killed.<sup>21</sup> The problem was exacerbated due to a command climate in which subordinates were afraid to question or to ask for clarification on any instructions provided by the company commander, Captain Ernest Medina, by TF commander Barker, or by the division commander Major General Samuel Koster.<sup>22</sup> In addition to setting a climate where Soldiers believe they can ask questions, commanders must ensure all personnel in their units or attached to their organizations believe subordinates can approach them at any time with any kind of information. In ambiguous, fluid situations, leaders must ensure they and their subordinates issue clear orders that units at all levels understand. Furthermore, although training and institutional schooling emphasize the importance of clarity in orders and plans, leaders do not always stress the importance during actual operations, where time and familiarity affect the process. Leaders must continually ensure that all personnel, especially those in attached organizations, clearly understand their orders or instructions.

**Attitude of government officials.** The United States will not always have the luxury of working with national and local governments that have a high regard for human life. Peers writes that the local Vietnamese officials believed anyone living in the area of My Lai was either Viet Cong or a Viet Cong sympathizer, and therefore considered it a free-fire zone, automatically approving any request to fire in the area.

Leaders could encounter similar situations today where a local government does not value the lives of its citizens or is using the area for political purposes such as controlling opposition party support through military operations. At the time of My Lai, the attitude of the South Vietnamese officials rubbed off on some American Soldiers, who soon began to view the population as expendable. If the government is nonchalant about civilian casualties, U.S. forces can also become nonchalant and careless in reducing noncombatant casualties, as happened at My Lai.<sup>23</sup> As commanders assess their units they must take into account the beliefs, attitudes, and customs of the local and national govern-



Haberle, Library of Congress

**U.S. Soldier burning domestic agricultural items at My Lai, Vietnam, 1968. Such acts are war crimes.**

ments toward their citizens. If a nonchalant attitude exists, they need to ensure their subordinates do not adopt a similar attitude. It will be difficult but critical to determine if the attitude exists at the local government level.

**Leadership.** The Peers Inquiry determined that, above all, a lack of leadership was the main cause of the massacre.<sup>24</sup> Failure to follow policies, lack of policy enforcement, failure to control the situation, failure to check, failure to conduct an investigation, and lack of follow up were all present. The panel members determined that, although Barker used mission-type orders, he failed to check to determine if his subordinates carried out his orders properly.<sup>25</sup> In addition, the command climate throughout the organization did not foster open communications. In the task force, Barker did not have “a close working relationship with his subordinates.”<sup>26</sup> Thus, no one questioned his orders. It was much the same situation with the Charlie Company commander, Ernest Medina, whom his Soldiers and subordinates held in high regard. The inquiry commented, “Nobody questioned his authority or his judgment.”<sup>27</sup> Major General Samuel Koster further exacerbated this situation by creating a command climate in which his staff was afraid to approach him with bad news or a problem.<sup>28</sup> Thus, when information began to come forward about what happened at My Lai, no one on the division staff had the courage to tell the commanding general. Instead, members of the chain of command ignored the information.

The inquiry concluded that Charlie Company platoon leaders identified more with their men than they did with higher headquarters. The lieutenants wanted to fit in with the men of their platoons and be one of the boys. Peers concluded that because they were young and inexperienced, they did not take positive corrective action to correct wrongdoings.<sup>29</sup>

Failure to foster the right climate and enforce standards is bad enough, but it falls short of being the comprehensive reason for a leadership failure. Among the My Lai massacre's principal causes is the fact that a cohesive unit's values and norms tolerated committing these crimes and also ensured loyalty to the group rather than to the institution, thus condoning silence about the crimes. In the case of My Lai and some recent incidents, it took the courage of individuals outside the organization to report what happened, because no one inside the unit did. Cohesion was too strong.

Leaders often assume their Soldiers and Marines will place loyalty to the organization above loyalty to their comrades. Historian Richard Holmes' research proves otherwise. Holmes writes, "There is every chance that the group norms will conflict with the aims of the organization of which it forms a part."<sup>30</sup> A sobering conclusion for any leader—but one to heed. Findings from the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) validate Holmes' conclusion that one of the challenges small-unit leaders face is identifying too much with the men with whom they are living and sharing the dangers of operations. CALL cautions that the mission rather than relationships should be the key element of decision-making.<sup>31</sup>

## Implications for Today

Commanders today have to assess unit climate to determine if their subordinates feel that they can question ambiguous or unclear instructions or take bad news to higher headquarters. It is equally as important for commanders to assess the climate of subordinate units. Leaders must recognize that values can change during significant emotional events such as combat, and assess small unit cohesiveness and the underlying values present in such groups. Commanders make a mistake in assuming that once inculcated, every unit forever

***Iraq [has] taught us...  
that war crimes can still happen,  
even in a professional,  
disciplined military.***

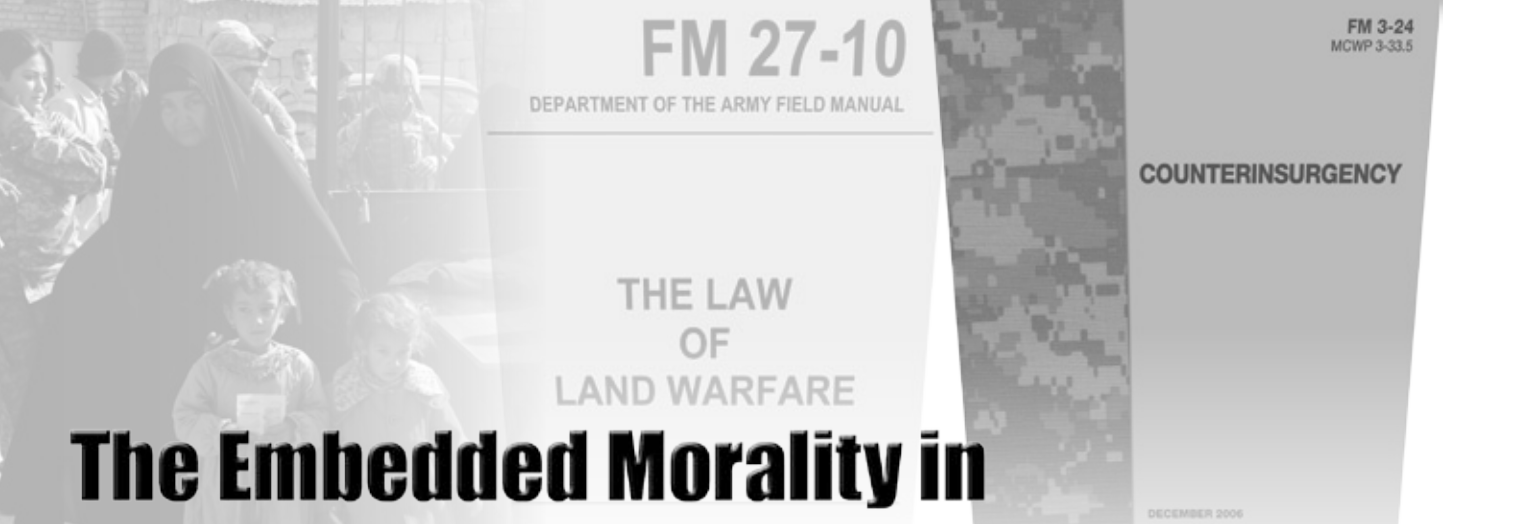
retains good organizational values. Values need constant reinforcement, and commanders must monitor the values of small groups in their organization to determine if they meet the standards of their institution.

The most significant lesson these latest incidents in Iraq have taught us is that war crimes can still happen, even in a professional, disciplined military. Commanders have to remain vigilant and realize it could indeed happen in their units. Understanding the areas to assess in their organizations may give them an edge in identifying incipient problems and attitudes. William Peers and his commission did the Nation a service by identifying areas military commanders should monitor and assess. Sustained vigilance and commensurately focused education will help future commanders prevent a war crime from occurring. **MR**

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### NOTES

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FM 27-10

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY FIELD MANUAL

THE LAW  
OF  
LAND WARFARE

FM 3-24  
MCWP 3-33.5

COUNTERINSURGENCY

DECEMBER 2006

# The Embedded Morality in

# FM 3-24 COUNTERINSURGENCY

**Lieutenant Colonel  
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U.S. Army, Ph.D.**

*This article received an  
honorable mention in the  
2008 DePuy Writing Contest.*

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PHOTO: An Iraqi woman brings her children to be seen by the medical staff at the Fira Shia Tabuq Primary School in Samalaat, Iraq, December 2008. (U.S. Navy, Senior Chief Petty Officer Kevin S. Farmer)

TODAY'S ARMY DOCTRINE describes a new era of "persistent conflict" in which military professionals must apply their skills in "complex" and "multidimensional" environments and conduct operations "among the people."<sup>1</sup> Marines and Soldiers trained in the nuances of attack, defense, and movement-to-contact must become, in General David Petraeus's words, "pentathlete leaders comfortable not just with major combat operations but with operations conducted throughout the middle- and lower-ends of the spectrum of conflict."<sup>2</sup>

The profession of arms once demanded a strict separation between war and politics. Young leaders today have become politically savvy dealmakers, agenda framers and setters, and economic planners. Senior military leaders do not consider these young professionals' agility to be above and beyond the call of duty. On the contrary, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, states, "Soldiers and Marines are expected to be nation-builders as well as warriors."<sup>3</sup>

The world's heightened complexity has an ethical component. Remote desert warfare poses mostly instrumental challenges related to the synchronization of means. Operations conducted among and with the people demand that U.S. forces continuously demonstrate ethical judgment. Although the scandal of Abu Ghraib signifies failure, innumerable successes occurring daily in Iraq and Afghanistan show that the overwhelming majority of military professionals are meeting the ethical challenge.

Nevertheless, the Military Health Advisory Team IV survey yielded troubling results when it became public in May 2007. The survey queried fewer than 2,000 Soldiers and Marines who had served in units with "the highest level of combat exposure" in Iraq and found that—

- "Approximately 10 percent of Soldiers and Marines report mistreating noncombatants or damaging property when it was not necessary.
- Only 47 percent of the Soldiers and 38 percent of Marines agreed that noncombatants should be treated with dignity and respect.
- Well over a third of all Soldiers and Marines reported that torture should be allowed to save the life of a fellow Soldier or Marine.
- Less than half of Soldiers or Marines would report a team member for unethical behavior."<sup>4</sup>

**Approximately 10 percent of Soldiers and Marines report mistreating noncombatants or damaging property when it was not necessary.**

Although Army doctrine specifies that “preserving noncombatant lives and dignity is central to mission accomplishment” in counterinsurgency, the survey reported that between one-third and one-half of the Soldiers and Marines who answered the survey’s questions dismissed either the importance or the truth of the dignity attendant to noncombatants.<sup>5</sup>

Shortly after the publication of the MHAT’s findings, General Petraeus urged troops to use the survey results to “spur reflection on our conduct in combat.” He stated, “We should use the survey results to renew our commitment to the values and standards that make us who we are and to spur re-examination of these issues.”<sup>6</sup> This essay follows General Petraeus’s call to reflect on the values “that make us who we are” and reexamine our commitment to them by focusing on human dignity.

Army doctrine explicitly emphasizes “human dignity,” although it is not immediately clear whether the Army posits that preserving human dignity as an intermediate end (or means) or as an ultimate, moral end. Also not readily apparent is the relationship between human dignity and the military ends sought. Nevertheless, FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, contains an ethical subtext and entails an implicit but substantial morality. This implicit morality raises two questions:

- How does the military professional come to accept these implicit obligations?
- How is this morality relevant to our current military struggles?

## Reading Between the Lines

There are two ways to understand the declaration that “preserving noncombatant lives and dignity is central to mission accomplishment.”

In one sense, this counterinsurgency tenet is utilitarian; that is, we ought to preserve lives and dignity because it pays, or is in our interest, or is conducive to mission success. If a Soldier fails to

preserve the dignity of indigenous persons, enemy insurgents will reap success. Preserving the dignity of indigenous people increases the probability of a counterinsurgent’s tactical, operational, and strategic success. Similarly, the nation-builder may choose to become culturally appreciative merely as a means to mission accomplishment. This concern-for-consequences approach to cultural awareness is certainly present in our doctrine:

Cultural awareness has become an increasingly important competency for small-unit leaders. Perceptive junior leaders learn how cultures affect military operations. They study major world cultures and put a priority on learning the details of the new operational environment when deployed. Different solutions are required in different cultural contexts. Effective small-unit leaders adapt to new situations, realizing their words and actions may be interpreted differently in different cultures. Like all other competencies, cultural awareness requires self-awareness, self-directed learning, and adaptability.<sup>7</sup>

This text suggests that respect for the human dignity and culture of *the other* is a way to develop a militarily expedient solution and end state.

Nevertheless, a non-utilitarian understanding of the declaration that “preserving noncombatant lives and dignity is central to mission accomplishment” also emerges from the doctrine. Inherent is the claim that the human dignity of *the other* is in fact the ultimate end that determines (or makes sense of) the vast array of tactical and operational ends in military orders and campaign plans. Such dignity is both central to military success and a fundamental moral end.

Field Manual 3-24 considers military action to be in the service of human dignity. Yet it is not explicit about this relationship. I must therefore justify my interpretive approach, which is—to put it plainly—to read between the lines and thereby draw out the implications of the language. FM 3-24 introduces the terms *ideology* and *narrative*

**Field Manual 3-24 considers military action to be in the service of human dignity.**

as concepts useful for analyzing enemy insurgents. Hence, “ideology provides a prism, including a vocabulary and analytical categories, through which followers perceive their situation.”<sup>8</sup> Moreover, “the central mechanism through which ideologies are expressed and absorbed is the narrative. A narrative is an organizational scheme expressed in story form. Narratives are central to representing identity, particularly the collective identity of religious sects, ethnic groupings, and tribal elements . . . Stories are often the basis for strategies and actions, as well as for interpreting others’ intentions.”<sup>9</sup>

The FM’s discussion of ideologies and narratives occurs mostly within the context of the insurgent’s thought. Yet political philosophers and theorists have long recognized that all persons and groups possess narrative self-understandings. At times, these self-understandings become explicit. President George W. Bush’s first inaugural address in 2001 provides an example of a self-consciously produced narrative:

We have a place, all of us, in a long story—a story we continue, but whose end we will not see. It is the story of a new world that became a friend and liberator of the old, a story of a slave-holding society that became a servant of freedom, the story of a power that went into the world to protect but not possess, to defend but not to conquer. It is the American story—a story of flawed and fallible people, united across the generations by grand and enduring ideals.<sup>10</sup>

Wherever there is a *we*—be it a political party, a football team, a town, a movement, a nation, or an insurgency—there is an accompanying narrative that describes one *we* in contradistinction to another *we*. Bush’s narrative resonates with most Americans *as Americans*, irrespective of political stance, since his narrative is merely a variation of the typical American narrative.

Political theorists and social scientists agree generally about the role that explicit narratives play within communal and political life. They also agree that we possess implicit and often

unarticulated beliefs about how we understand ourselves, others, and the world. These background premises enable or sustain our explicit narratives. Our narratives, in turn determine the reasons we choose to perform such actions as waking up in the morning, seeking employment, praying, or developing a national security strategy.

The political theorist Stephen White approaches this intangible but decisive aspect of reality with two related concepts. One concept is the *lifeworld*, which he describes as “the unthought of our thought, the implicit of our explicit, the unconscious background of our conscious foreground.”<sup>11</sup> White employs a second, related concept, which he calls an *ontology*. By using this term, which has a contested pedigree, he means to put his finger on a person’s “most basic sense of human being”<sup>12</sup> or a person’s “most basic conceptualizations of self, other, and world.”<sup>13</sup>

My argument relies on three social-scientific claims. First, I rely on the plausibility of FM 3-24’s conclusion that a group’s self-generated meanings, strategies, and goals are in large part a function of the group’s aggregate narratives. Second, I rely on the plausibility of White’s claim that narratives are



AP Photo, APTN video

Many Iraqis sympathized with Muntadar al-Zaidi, the journalist who threw his shoe at President Bush in December 2008. They consider him a hero for calling attention to their perception that the U.S. often failed to protect the population.

in large part a function of implicit, unarticulated premises that sustain (or make possible) our conscious thoughts and outspoken declarations about ourselves, others, and the world.

I rely on a third claim, which is that our often unarticulated premises determine what we hold to be morally right and wrong. Thus, the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor's version of White's "unthought of our thought" is the "social imaginary" (or "image of a moral order"), which "is an identification of features of the world, or divine action or human life that make certain norms both right and (up to the point indicated) realizable. In other words, the image of order carries a definition not only of what is right, but of the context in which it makes sense to strive for and hope to realize the right (at least partially)."<sup>14</sup>

**...our often unarticulated premises determine what we hold to be morally right and wrong.**

A concrete example illustrates the plausibility of these three claims. No one in the West entertains the Divine Right of Kings doctrine partly because John Locke's *First Treatise of Government* demolished it in the 1600s. Moreover, Locke's *Second Treatise* has shaped our political self-understandings insofar as such notions as political rights, private property, political consent, and church-state separation roll trippingly and without controversy off our tongues. Today, Americans never need to articulate general arguments against kingship and in favor of rights, property, consent, and secular politics because these principles have become part of our implicit intellectual baggage. These implicit and taken-for-granted notions are part of our equally implicit ontologies. We are Lockean, even if we don't know it. It is precisely the ontological depth of the human being that drives the requirement for cultural-awareness training, explains the substance of our military and national security strategies, and shapes our ethical stance toward innocent human life.

Reflection on the relationships among ontologies, narratives, and our actions may serve as a way to evaluate moral commitments. Yet the Army's ethical

training does not focus on narratives or ontologies. The Army's institutional approach to ethics hinges on lists and models. The Army Values, the Soldier's Rules, the Code of Conduct, the Warrior Ethos, the Law of Land Warfare, and specific rules of engagement and escalation-of-force requirements clearly prescribe rules of behavior. Some Army leaders receive additional instruction in the Army's Decision Making Model and the Ethical Triangle.<sup>15</sup> Yet the implicit morality discernible in our doctrine is more expansive than simple rules or decision criteria.

A Soldier's rules are not encapsulated, stand-alone structures. Rules only exist and are fully intelligible when considered in the wider context of a person's (often inchoate) notions about himself, others, the world, and symbols of ultimate meaning. Such notions, overlapping matrices of self-understanding, are often barely perceptible.

Ethical decisions involve not simply the application of rules and models, but an orientation. The philosopher Russell Hittinger reveals this fact when he describes the situation of a professor returning home from an academic conference:

An agent who is seriously inclined to, and who actually deliberates about, marital infidelity might make the "correct" decision according to rules advocated by one or another theory, yet the correctness of the decision does not alleviate, and indeed can obscure, the specifically moral dimension of the quandary. We can imagine, for example, a professor who returns from an academic conference and confesses to his wife that although he felt strongly urged to commit a marital infidelity, he deliberated about the moral significance of the action and concluded that it was a violation of the golden rule (if he is a deontologist), or perhaps that he came to his senses and saw that such an action would not bring about the greatest good for the greatest number (if he is a utilitarian). None of us would blame his spouse if she were as much or more concerned with the man's character than with the fact that he successfully resolved a quandary according to a rule.<sup>16</sup>

If our ethical choices involved nothing more than a cut-and-dried application of rules or theories, Hittinger's observation would not appear as strange as

it does. The hypothetical professor appears to us as morally depraved *despite* his fastidious application of venerable ethical rules and theories.<sup>17</sup> Our ethical selves do not “kick into gear” only during those moments of ethical decision; we carry a lifetime’s worth of implicit baggage into these moments.

## The Ethical Subtext of Field Manual 3-24

Stephen White’s technique is to unearth the underlying premises of a thinker’s or group’s narrative. He explains: “I want to shift the intellectual burden here from a preoccupation with what is opposed and deconstructed, to an engagement with what must be articulated, cultivated, and affirmed in its wake.” White holds that “conceptualizations of self, other, and world” are “necessary or unavoidable for an adequately reflective ethical and political life.”<sup>18</sup> If he is right, one way for the military professional to reflect on the place of human dignity in military theory and practice is to examine the implicit claims of our doctrine, particularly insofar as that doctrine takes a definite moral stand.

We can tease out our doctrine’s unarticulated premises by attending closely to FM 3-24’s critique of what it describes as the “all-encompassing worldview” of the extremist. Applying White’s technique enables the careful reader to discern what FM 3-24 leaves in the wake of its critique of the extremist’s worldview. It turns out that Army doctrine is demanding and stern, ethically speaking; that is, the manual is no specimen of moral relativism.

Counterinsurgency doctrine takes a strong normative stand against the narratives and goals of the enemy we have fought and are fighting against:

Religious extremist insurgents, like many secular radicals and some Marxists, frequently hold an all-encompassing worldview; they are ideologically rigid and uncompromising, seeking to control their members’ private thought, expression, and behavior. Seeking power and believing themselves to be ideologically pure, violent extremists often brand those they consider insufficiently orthodox as enemies.<sup>19</sup>

Whether our enemies are religious (e.g., bin Laden) or secular (e.g., Stalin and Hitler), they adopt worldviews and narratives that—

- Eschew compromise in favor of violence.

***Our ethical selves do not “kick into gear” only during those moments of ethical decision; we carry a lifetime’s worth of implicit baggage into these moments.***

- Advance an all-encompassing or totalitarian worldview that specifies licit and illicit private, public, and political activity.

- Encourage the control of a person’s private thoughts, expressions, and behavior.

- Applaud the application of violence against persons whose worldviews differ from theirs.

Field Manual 3-24’s description of the extremist’s intellectual and spiritual habits includes a subdued but integral normative preference for non-extremist or reasonable worldviews and narratives that—

- Prefer compromise to violence.

- Acknowledge a difference between private life, public life or civil society, and politics.

- Value freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, and freedom of action.

- Tolerate or even rejoice in the fact that a plurality of peoples, each with a distinct complex of worldviews and narratives, exists in the world.

Army counterinsurgency doctrine distinguishes between the extremist, who calls for the forceful imposition of his worldview on others at the price of death, and those whose worldview cherishes the free flourishing of moral and cultural diversity.

Let us be clear about FM 3-24’s preferences. Throughout the field manual, the reader (i.e., the warrior) comes to appreciate the prohibition against “causing unnecessary loss of life or suffering.”<sup>20</sup> In fact, the manual asserts an aggressive preference for life: “*Under all circumstances*, [the American warrior] . . . must remain faithful to basic American, Army, and Marine Corps standards of conduct of proper behavior and respect for *the sanctity of life*.”<sup>21</sup> Each and every life, whether belonging to the American warrior or an indigenous person encountered during deployment, has “sanctity.” The sanctity of life and human dignity extend even to those whom the warrior *rightly* aims to destroy or capture, as we can see in rules specifying the treatment of captured, wounded, or killed enemies. The prohibition against

desecrating the enemy dead or dehumanizing enemy prisoners makes no sense apart from a narrative that specifies the sanctity and dignity of each human being.

A substantial understanding, or ontology, of the person and the world begins to emerge from and between the lines of FM 3-24: the world entails diversity. It is not surprising that diversity arises when persons are free to live, think, and act. Moreover, each person individually possesses sanctity and dignity simply by virtue of his or her existence. If not restricted by extremist ideologies or crushing poverty, persons think and act in ways that sustain and multiply a vast array of narratives, worldviews, and cultures. A multiplicity of moral norms, religious attitudes, and voluntary civil associations flourish because of the free exercise of moral and cultural freedom. They produce diverse political attitudes and systems. Field Manual 3-24 values freedom of thought, conscience, and activity by espousing the democratic principle of consent. Regardless of the specific governmental system that arises, in its implicit and often utilitarian fashion, the manual acknowledges the value of consent: “Long term success in COIN [counterinsurgency] depends on the people taking charge of their own affairs and consenting to government’s rule.”<sup>22</sup>

Whereas the extremist is “rigid and uncompromising,” FM 3-24’s principal advocate, General David Petraeus, in his opening remarks to the Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on Iraq in April 2008, stated that he hopes to see local reconciliation, an attitudinal shift against indiscriminate violence and extremist ideology, debate over violence, and “political dialogue rather than street fighting.”<sup>23</sup> Note carefully that General Petraeus calls for (a) “reconciliation,” (b) an “attitudinal shift,” and (c) mutual antagonists’ participation in “debate” and “dialogue.” This approach places heavy demands on the *interior* or *spiritual* dimension of Iraq’s protagonists and antagonists.

Surprisingly, FM 3-24 prescribes the adoption of an alarmingly substantive interior disposition toward *the other*. If we wonder whether FM 3-24’s prescription to respect human dignity is an end in itself or merely a means for an end, we soon learn that the warrior assumes the “responsibility for everyone in the AO [area of operations]. This means that leaders must feel the pulse of the local populace, understand their motivations, and care

about what they want and need. *Genuine compassion and empathy for the populace are effective weapons against the insurgents.*”<sup>24</sup>

The manual directs Army leaders not to simply *exhibit* or *portray* compassion and empathy for people, but to *cultivate genuine* compassion and empathy for them. In this era of the strategic Soldier, it seems plausible that leaders must cultivate not only their own sense of authentic compassion, but cultivate it as well among those serving within his or her command. Hence, “Leaders at every level establish an ethical tone and climate that guards against the moral complacency and frustrations that build up in protracted COIN operations.”<sup>25</sup> Field Manual 3-24 suggests that the cultivation of genuine compassion is one way to establish this ethical tone and climate.

True to its stated norms, FM 3-24 eschews cultural imposition:

Cultural knowledge is essential to waging a successful counterinsurgency. American ideas of what is ‘normal’ or ‘rational’ are not universal . . . For this reason, counterinsurgents—especially commanders, planners, and small-unit leaders—should strive to avoid imposing their ideals of normalcy on a foreign cultural problem.”<sup>26</sup>

On the other hand, the FM cherishes—

- Compromise.
- Distinctions between spheres of life (e.g., private, public, political, religious, and secular).
- Freedom of thought, conscience, and action.
- Moral and cultural pluralism.
- Political legitimacy via consent of the governed.

These norms are not utilitarian ends, but ends in and of themselves. They prescribe the cultivation of *genuine* compassion and empathy. Just as the manual prescribes a substantive morality or ethos for American warriors, *it expects American warriors to promote this same morality among the indigenous population.*<sup>27</sup>

***The manual directs Army leaders not to simply exhibit or portray compassion and empathy for people but to cultivate genuine compassion...***



## Does the Warrior “Buy In”?

A composite rendering of FM 3-24’s implicit and explicit understanding of the world suggests that one’s estimate of the dignity of *the other* during deployments is equal to that of one’s friends and loved ones back home. The American warrior accepts no difference in moral worth between the elderly taxi driver who lives in the village where he patrols and an elderly taxi driver back home. The American warrior accepts no difference in moral worth between those indigenous children who nag him for pens, soccer balls, and chocolates and their counterparts back home. And, perhaps most surprisingly, the American warrior accepts no difference in moral worth between the insurgents or terrorists whom he rightly strives to kill or capture and the warrior’s own best friends from home.

What are the implications of FM 3-24’s embedded morality for the moral preparation of the military leader? How ought a leader to respond when he overhears a young specialist declare: “I would torch this entire village if it would bring back my buddies”? Or when a captain recommends, “We should just blow this country and its people off the face of the earth”? Or when a major concludes “The problem with this country is Islam itself”?

Before deployment, the military professional lives within a complex of social structures and institutions, each of which demands a narrative and supporting ontology. He has intimate relationships, a network of family and friends, a job, an array of recreational activities, a political view, a spiritual orientation, and his Nation. Moreover, each of these associations and activities has some relationship to the others. Were he to ascribe consciously a purpose to his involvement in each of the relationships and activities, the purposes or ends may be sufficiently complementary such that his life is free of contradictory aims. Another possibility is that his purposes and ends are grossly incongruous. For an extreme but illustrative example, one can imagine the moral incongruity of a Nazi military officer who attends Mass on Sunday, shows up for work to the human crematorium on Monday, instructs a child’s soccer team on the character-building aspects of sports on Tuesday, and engages in spousal abuse on Wednesday. The same inter-narrative frictions would appear were an American noncommissioned officer to be a closet white supremacist, or an officer were to

act on the premise that women have no place in the military.

Is it possible for someone to develop a coherent framework in which all aspects of one’s life—work, recreation, love, family, friendship, household management, finances, worship—are part of a rational plan for a well-lived life? If all human actions, from the minutest to the gravest, aim to realize or preserve a specific goal or end, are the retail and wholesale ends in each of life’s aspects congruent and justifiable? For instance, how does the American military officer accommodate his vocation with his religious beliefs? How does one’s religious catechism mesh with the principles of the U.S. Constitution or the military requirement to obey orders?<sup>28</sup>

Accommodating the retail and wholesale ends in one’s life has a special urgency for the U.S. military officer, who must justify a decision to risk a life’s worth of devotions and concerns as well as other persons’ lives, devotions, and concerns for the sake of an ultimate end or value. Yet, the accommodation is necessary. A military officer must operate “on all cylinders” in a new era that demands that he “achieve victory . . . by conducting military operations in concert with diplomatic, informational, and economic efforts.”<sup>29</sup>

General Petraeus has said, “Our primary mission is to help protect the population in Iraq.”<sup>30</sup> To this end, over 4,200 professional warriors have sacrificed their lives. Over 31,000 American men and women have been injured. These military professionals have sacrificed their lives and health during stability operations as well as offensive military actions to destroy an enemy. They have put their lives at risk to preserve life, improve essential services, advance civil associations, facilitate education, help the economy, and create self-sustaining governance. Each of these endeavors makes sense only to the extent that they enable the flourishing of human beings in accordance with the morality embedded in FM 3-24, which posits not employment, or governance, or military targeting as ends in themselves, but as ways to preserve and enhance the sanctity and dignity of human life and freedom of thought, conscience, and action.

If FM 3-24 does have an embedded morality, one of many challenges for the American military professional is to make sense of his associations at

**...military professionals have...  
put their lives at risk to preserve life  
...[and] enable the flourishing of  
human beings in accordance with  
the morality embedded in FM 3-24...**

home so that he will be better able to perform his duties overseas and explain to his peers and subordinates why they must perform their duties as well.

The manual states, “Performing the many non-military tasks in COIN requires knowledge of many diverse, complex subjects. These include governance, economic development, public administration, and the rule of law. Commanders with a deep-rooted knowledge of these subjects can help subordinates understand challenging, unfamiliar environments and adapt more rapidly to changing situations.”<sup>31</sup>

Thus, Army doctrine requires a fair amount of technical knowledge of economics, politics, and law in addition to cultural understanding. And (to complicate things further), today’s military leader must devote some reflection to the moral purposes inherent in economics, politics, law, and the other structures that touch upon modern human life.

## The Interior Dimension of Our Campaigns

General Petraeus’s opening remarks to the Senate Armed Services Committee in April 2008 mostly focused on the establishment of security to enable political progress in Iraq. He emphasized that the security gains were “fragile and reversible,” and the political problems were significant: “In the coming months, Iraq’s leaders must strengthen governmental capacity, execute budgets, pass additional legislation, conduct provincial elections, carry out a census, determine the status of disputed territories, and resettle internally displaced persons and refugees. These tasks would challenge any government, much less a still-developing government tested by war.”<sup>32</sup>

Clearly, we have a series of obstacles to surmount if we are to achieve peace in Iraq. There are the problems of establishing security against a variety of enemies, and achieving political consensus on a variety of questions whose resolution is necessary to establish self-governance. Yet, if the embedded

morality in FM 3-24 is correct, in the long term the key to resolving the security and political challenges is promoting widespread acceptance of FM 3-24’s values.

Having established local security, our forces may pacify an area by spending large sums of host-nation and U.S. money on reconstruction efforts to improve employment, governmental legitimacy, and the quality of life, but a bigger challenge remains. Do Arab youths refrain from violence out of a respect for the sanctity and dignity of all life or merely because we pay them to do so?<sup>33</sup> If too many young persons are motivated by the latter incentive, then our reconstruction spending equates to a policy of peace through placation. Rational-actor analysis simply does not exhaust the full range of politically relevant variables at play. For this reason, Iraqi reconstruction must be more than just paying people not to slaughter innocents.

A robust, deeply rooted, and long-term peace will require what General Petraeus calls an “attitudinal shift.” Put simply, either we shall see an attitudinal shift that rejects extremist ideology and embraces the sanctity, dignity, and flourishing of human life, or the attitudinal shift will remain but only amidst “fragile and reversible” improvements. Fleeting decisions not to forgive, not to reconcile, not to respect the dignity of life, not to respect life’s flourishing will drive diplomatic, informational, military, and economic decision making. If this is true, is the key to reconciliation and campaign success principally a military, or even a political, matter?

Socrates tells us that true statesmanship consists not in deliberation and lawmaking, but in the cultivation of souls. Hence, in Plato’s *Gorgias*, true statesmanship requires the desire to serve, curiosity about the highest good as an end in itself, and reflection on how to make people into good citizens.

If political leaders oblige the Soldier to be a student and a practitioner of politics, elected servants and military professionals must consider the implications arising from the insight that true statecraft provides more than mere security and essential services. True statecraft is soulcraft. To use General Petraeus’s term, we will know we have achieved the best effects of our political and military art when we finally observe the attitudinal shift that our young military professionals await with hope, even as they continue to fight and build. **MR**

## NOTES

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17. If "moral orders" and "social imaginaries" are truly operative in the United States and the West, perhaps a more rigorous cultural awareness demands that leaders come to learn those "moral orders" and "social imaginaries" that have shaped and are operative in those theaters wherein we work.
18. White, 8.
19. FM 3-24, para. 1-79.
20. *Ibid.*, para. 1-142.
21. *Ibid.*, para. 7-2. The emphasis is mine.
22. *Ibid.*, para. 1-4.
23. David Petraeus, "Gen. Petraeus's Opening Remarks on Iraq: Addresses the Senate Armed Services Committee Hearing," *CQ Transcripts, Washington Post online*, 8 April 2008.
24. FM 3-24, para. 7-8.
25. *Ibid.*, para. 7-12.
26. *Ibid.*, para. 1-80.
27. Of course, this embedded morality may be of interest in civil-military discussions about a posited gap between the Soldier and the state.
28. I note briefly that non-Muslims in academic and public fora are asking these same difficult questions of our Muslim neighbors.
29. FM 3-0, Foreword.
30. Petraeus, "Opening Remarks."
31. FM 3-24, x.
32. Petraeus, "Opening Remarks."
33. This critical mass may be a small minority yet still be gravely problematic.

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# “AWAKENING” BEYOND IRAQ

## *Time to Engage Radical Islamists as Stakeholders*

Colonel David W. Shin, U.S. Army

*The “Anbar Awakening” of Sunni tribal leaders and their supporters that began in September 2006 near Ramadi seemed to come out of nowhere... It was the result of a concerted plan executed by U.S. forces in Ramadi.<sup>1</sup>*

—Major Niel Smith, “Anbar Awakens”

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH declared after 9/11 that his foreign policy would place special emphasis “on fighting a global war on terrorism and engaging in preemptive strikes.”<sup>2</sup> He stressed that deterrence “means nothing against shadowy networks with no nation or citizens to defend.” Bush also suggested traditional containment was impossible when rogue states with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) can deliver them on missiles or transfer them to terrorists.<sup>3</sup> This reasoning led him to conclude that terrorists seek the capability to harm us and our friends, and “we will oppose them with all our power.”<sup>4</sup> This worldview made the U.S. much more inclined to use preventive force.<sup>5</sup> As evidenced by the invasion of Iraq, such inclination to use preventive force has been costly.<sup>6</sup>

Today, progress is being made in Iraq, in part because of an alternative strategy that was pioneered in June 2006 by the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division. It became known as the “Anbar Awakening,” and key elements of this strategy focused on conducting kinetic operations, providing civil security through forward presence, training host-nation security forces, developing human and physical infrastructure, engaging in public diplomacy, and most importantly, *co-opting local leaders*.<sup>7</sup> In the early stages of the insurgency, many of these tribal sheiks “directly and indirectly supported former-regime nationalists insurgents against U.S. forces,” and had even established an alliance of convenience with Al-Qaeda forces.<sup>8</sup> The adoption of the Anbar strategy elsewhere in Iraq appears to have had a positive impact on the overall security situation in Iraq.<sup>9</sup> This raises the question of whether the United States can replicate the success in Anbar by embracing a similar strategy in its global approach to radical Islamist groups, perhaps leading to a global awakening among these groups.

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PHOTO: Under the concealment of smoke, Soldiers from 1st Armored Division move to their next objective while looking for weapon caches, 3 September 2006. (U.S. Air Force, TSGT Jeremy T. Lock)

The purpose of this paper is to argue that such opportunity *may* exist, but the U.S. must be willing to “accept risk in order to achieve results.”<sup>10</sup> For example, some U.S. officers who did not belong to the 1st Brigade Combat Team were concerned that armed local tribal militias working with the brigade would later haunt them by subsequently fighting against U.S.-trained Iraqi security forces in the future.<sup>11</sup> This concern remains, as demonstrated in one case when U.S. and Iraqi recently exchanged gunfire with “Sunni security volunteers” in Baghdad over the arrest of one of its leaders of the local Awakening Council.<sup>12</sup> Others have highlighted that giving non-governmental actors (i.e., local tribal militias) the power to legally use violence in Anbar undermines the U.S. effort to establish rule of law in Iraq. They also warned that attempts to disarm them in the future may be difficult, and it is unclear whether they will “abide by the [new] system.”<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the significant contribution of the Anbar strategy in reducing the violence in Iraq, especially after the troop surge in 2007, calls for accepting some risks via U.S. engagement with radical Islamist groups.<sup>14</sup> In the end, bold engagement like the one seen in Anbar could result in a similar “awakening” by many radical Islamist leaders who have grown wary of Al-Qaeda’s violence, often against other Muslims.

The following discussion examines the feasibility of the current U.S. strategy against terrorism and proposes an alternative strategy that promotes bold diplomatic engagement with the radicals of the Muslim world.

## **Feasibility of the Current U.S. Strategy**

The current U.S. strategy to counter terrorism is problematic because it seeks global cooperation while not every nation perceives the same intensity of threat. For example, most Asians believe the war on terror is “largely irrelevant,” most in Latin America feel the war has “little to do” with their security concerns, and Sub-Saharan Africa is more concerned about abandonment by advanced countries than they are about terrorism.<sup>15</sup> At the other extreme, many countries in Europe have long experience with terrorism, and question America’s reliance on the military means to fight it, specifically the *legitimacy* of the war in Iraq.<sup>16</sup> Finally, in the Middle East, the perception persists that

***...in the Middle East, the perception persists that America continues to prop up corrupt regimes in exchange for oil.***

America continues to prop up corrupt regimes in exchange for oil.<sup>17</sup> This perception was reinforced during the early stages of the Iraq invasion when it was apparent that the only ministry the U.S. military protected was the oil ministry.<sup>18</sup> Tellingly, since the war in Iraq, approximately 90 percent of the Muslims view the U.S. “as the primary security threat to their country.”<sup>19</sup>

Second, use of covert action and the invasion of Iraq have raised an interrelated mix of political, constitutional, and ethical concerns. Although most Americans understand the need for our government to protect the homeland from terrorists, many also expect the government to respect our enduring values of individual freedom, democracy, and human rights.<sup>20</sup> Bush probably weighed these concerns, but still felt compelled to issue a “Presidential Finding” to authorize covert action to “break up terror cells, assassinate terrorists, capture and interrogate Al-Qaeda suspects, gain access to and disrupt financial networks, eavesdrop, and a variety of other activities.”<sup>21</sup> When one considers the intensity of threat perception resulting from 9/11, Bush’s decision is understandable and perhaps expected. Nevertheless, knowing the existing tension between national security and democracy in the Nation, it was only a matter of time before national security demands subsided and concerns for democratic norms ascended again.<sup>22</sup>

As some of our covert activities were exposed (e.g., programs for assassination, rendition, and secret prisons) public scrutiny increased both at home and abroad.<sup>23</sup> For example, some renditions have raised ethical questions because officials sent some of the terrorist suspects to their countries of origin, many of which reportedly torture prisoners. Thus, the U.S. government is accused of knowingly being complicit in torture.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, Bush’s decision to allow wiretapping of U.S. citizens without warrants in terror-related cases was severely

criticized for violating the Fourth Amendment. Eventually, his administration agreed to work within the limits of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.<sup>25</sup> In addition, the decision to forgo one last UN resolution against Iraq prior to the invasion sapped U.S. legitimacy, and the problem was magnified when inspectors failed to find WMD in Iraq.<sup>26</sup> The consequences of these policy choices have had a negative impact on U.S. credibility, legitimacy, and influence—the essence of soft power.

Third, besides the immeasurable loss of U.S. soft power, pursuit of the current strategy has accumulated measurable costs as well. Human losses as of August 2007 were approximately 100,000 Iraqi civilian lives, and displacement of over two million.<sup>27</sup> The war in Iraq and Afghanistan had also killed 4,578 U.S. military personnel and had wounded more than 30,000 as of 13 November 2007.<sup>28</sup> In terms of dollar costs, the U.S. spent a total of \$604 billion from 2001-2007 on the war on terror. Some projections for war costs from 2008-2017 range from \$570 billion to \$1.055 trillion, depending on the number of deployed troops to Iraq.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, the Army alone has received \$38 billion to reset over 300,000 pieces of equipment and has requested \$13 billion per year as long as it remains in Iraq at current levels, and for a minimum of two more years after its withdrawal from Iraq.<sup>30</sup> Finally, the January 2007 decision to increase the strength of the Marines by 27,000 and Army by 65,000 troops will cost another \$102 billion.<sup>31</sup> These are huge costs by any measure, and the monetary expenditure is clearly unwelcome during the current recession. By 2007, the culmination of all these concerns led many Americans “to believe that the costs had outweighed the benefits.”<sup>32</sup>

### Alternative Strategy

America can limit its use of force and better effectively engage Muslims, including those potential reformists within radical Islamist groups. Instead of trying to impose U.S. will and *control* international politics, it should act less and determine more ways to *shape* the environment. First, after stabilizing Iraq, the United States should consider significantly reducing its military presence in the Muslim world, and rely more on intelligence and law enforcement cooperation to pursue Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups. Second, the

**...if the U.S. decides to take military action, it should... maximize legitimacy by participating in a UN-mandated coalition.**

U.S. should reserve the use of military power to defend Muslim states from aggression, similar to the way it defended Kuwait from Iraq in the early 1990s. Third, if America decides to take military action, it should always attempt to minimize the cost and maximize legitimacy by participating in a UN-mandated coalition. Fourth, the United States should continue to support humanitarian operations to build good will, such as Operation Unified Assistance during the Tsunami of December 2004 and after the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan. In fact, the United States could even leverage its current efforts to build interagency capacity for reconstruction and stabilization to help developing Muslim countries build their infrastructure and improve governance.

Most importantly, America needs to have more faith in democracy, and allow others room to fashion their own political future. This process will take time in most countries, and the United States must



U.S. Air Force, TSGT Mike Buytas

**U.S. Army SGT Kornelia Rachwal gives a young Pakistani girl a drink of water as they are airlifted from Muzaffarabad to Islamabad, Pakistan, aboard a CH-47 Chinook helicopter, October 2005.**

learn more strategic patience.<sup>33</sup> This means that in many countries in the Muslim world, elections could result in radical Islamists taking significant part in governance. For America to truly champion democracy, it must resist the historical urge to back pro-U.S. leaders at the expense of democratic values. Unless the United States is willing to engage *all* who have won the right to participate in the political process through legitimate elections, it will continue to face an uphill battle in its attempts to promote democracy. For example, when the former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice outlined her vision for transformational democracy, which highlights activities promoting democracy overseas, the Chinese claimed the United States was using “the pretext of promoting democracy to intervene in other countries’ domestic affairs,” and the Malaysians argued, “U.S.-style democracy may not be applicable in the present day emerging world environment.”<sup>34</sup> Although America has successfully promoted Western democracy in post-War Germany and Japan, it is unlikely that it will have another opportunity to completely reshape another country.<sup>35</sup>

It is time the United States let the political process play out overseas, and be willing to engage all the political actors, to include those with anti-U.S. sentiments and radical views. The government may discover many ostensibly hostile nations are willing to at least tacitly cooperate to achieve peace and stability. They may be willing to become stakeholders in the process if America is willing to respect their views and recognize that they too have a stake in shaping the future.

## Case of the Muslim Brotherhood

Many in America have labeled the Muslim Brotherhood as “radical Islamists” and “a vital component of the enemy’s assault force . . . deeply hostile to the U.S.”<sup>36</sup> However, Robert S. Leiken and Steven Brooke argue that although questions persist about the Brotherhood’s commitment to the democratic process, their discussions with the group’s leaders in Egypt, France, Jordan, Spain, Syria, Tunisia, and the United Kingdom suggest they “all reject global jihad while embracing elections and other features of democracy.” More importantly, “there is a current within the Brotherhood willing to engage with the U.S.”<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, U.S. policymakers continue to view

***The U.S. government needs to recognize that engagement with groups like the Muslim Brotherhood presents an opportunity for an alternative strategy...***

the group and the Islamist movement in general as a monolithic threat.<sup>38</sup> The U.S. government needs to recognize that engagement with groups like the Muslim Brotherhood presents an opportunity for an alternative strategy, and it is possible to create stakeholders for peace and stability within their ranks. America may have lost such an opportunity in October 2006 when Kamal El Helbawi, an imam whom Leiken and Brooke describe as a “figure known for his brave stand against radical Islam,” was forced off a flight en route to a conference at NYU. Helbawi’s public humiliation reinforced the extremist position that it is useless to engage the Americans.<sup>39</sup> The government must recognize that there is “almost infinite variety of political orientations,” and we need to adopt a “case-by-case approach” to determine when engagement with radical Islamists is “feasible and appropriate.”<sup>40</sup>

## Other Radical Islamist Groups

In addition to the Muslim Brotherhood, other radical Islamist groups, some affiliated and others that are not, already participate in the political process through elections in Algeria, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Pakistan, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, and Yemen.<sup>41</sup> Other notables include Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Palestinian Territories.<sup>42</sup> Some would argue that America should never engage Hamas or Hezbollah because they are terrorists and they refuse to recognize Israel. Others point out that the reason Hamas does not recognize Israel is because Israel does not recognize Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian territories. The fundamental issue is that key actors in the region are unwilling to engage unless their preconditions are met, and as a result, the cycle of violence in the Palestinian territories and Lebanon is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.<sup>43</sup> The point is, preconditions for negotiations generally do not work, and

whether the United States likes it or not, there are many radical Islamist groups that already take part in the political process in many countries. Unless America is willing to engage them, we will not be able to influence and moderate their behavior, and ultimately resolve our differences.

In fact, *The Economist* recently came to similar conclusions. It highlighted the fact that Hamas controls the Gaza Strip and its 1.5 million inhabitants, and unless they are part of the negotiations, “no two-state solution can be made to stick.”<sup>44</sup> However, Bush refused to meet with Hamas during his visit to the West Bank in January 2008.<sup>45</sup> His administration “slammed former President Jimmy Carter for talking to Hamas.”<sup>46</sup> At about the same time, Dr. Mahmoud al-Zahar—a founder of Hamas—wrote an article in *The Washington Post* welcoming Carter’s engagement with Hamas. He said, “No peace plan, road map or legacy can succeed unless we are sitting at the negotiating table and without any preconditions.”<sup>47</sup> Although he went on to lay out preconditions for a “peace process” with Israel, one of his key points was that Hamas had gained legitimacy through the January 2006 elections, which were validated by “hundreds of independent monitors.”<sup>48</sup>

Moreover, to weaken the U.S. position toward Islamic extremist groups, the Bush administration sent mixed signals by engaging Kim Jong Il to resolve the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula.<sup>49</sup> This occurred despite the fact that the United States has accused North Korea of helping Syria “build a secret nuclear reactor.”<sup>50</sup> The reality is that the U.S. policy remains inconsistent when dealing with extremist groups and rogue states. It is no secret that the U.S. government has already negotiated with terrorists and state sponsors of terrorism, such as the PLO, Irish Republic Army, and Libya; now may be the opportune time to engage groups like the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, and Hezbollah to move the peace process forward in the Middle East. Instead of isolating these groups, America should adopt a strategy to create stakeholders for peace and stability by inviting a select group of reformist leaders from various Islamist extremist groups to America to promote mutual understanding, and permit our diplomats and other government officials to engage them in order to identify those willing to compromise.



AFP Photo, Gail Tibbon

Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter, an observer in the Palestinian parliamentary election process, looks out from a window of a polling station in the West Bank town of Azariya on the outskirts of Jerusalem, 25 January 2006.

## Engagement and Its Cost

In the end, a strategy of engagement would allow the United States to exploit a key vulnerability of Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups: their violence toward the innocent. Their worldview centered on killing is likely to alienate nearly all potential supporters, to include members of radical Islamist groups who desire political legitimacy.<sup>51</sup> A recent Gallup Poll found that despite “intense political anger at some Western powers, Muslims do not reject Western values wholesale.” Muslims from Saudi Arabia to Morocco and from Indonesia to Pakistan indicated their admiration for democratic values such as freedom of the press and government accountability. However, globalization of American popular culture and projection of its military power for preventive wars is perceived as a threat to Islam. In short, many Muslims view the tension as a struggle over policy, not principles. From their perspective, “it looks like a global civil rights struggle much more than another clash between superpowers.”<sup>52</sup>

These conditions suggest commitment to engagement free of ideology can succeed. There is risk and it will take strong political will to make it a reality, but given the failures of Bush’s strategy in lives and treasure, such perceived costs are hardly a bad bet. The



government needs to reallocate resources from DOD to other Departments, especially State, to enhance our diplomatic engagement, public diplomacy, and reconstruction and stabilization capabilities. The State Department suffered significant personnel cuts in the 1990s, and it simply does not have the people to fill its 7,500 positions around the world. It is in the process of repositioning about 200 diplomats from Washington, D.C. and Europe to the Near East, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The system is further strained by long-term requirements for Afghanistan and Iraq. More money is needed to train our diplomats in foreign languages and cultural studies and to properly man our diplomatic missions overseas. Moreover, our diplomats need to involve themselves in the interagency process in Washington.

The U.S. government also needs to give its new director of Foreign Assistance more authority over the 18 other federal agencies with foreign assistance funding to better align our developmental assistance with our policy objectives. It should also improve public diplomacy. Arguably, public diplomacy has become the “weakest part of U.S. foreign policy and is in need of significant reform.”<sup>53</sup> One option is to designate a person in charge of public diplomacy, similar to the former director of the U.S. Information Agency. The government must improve strategic communications planning and synchronize this effort across the interagency.

If this proposal for engagement sounds too naïve and risky, consider the cost of another large-scale military intervention in the Middle East. The former U.S. Ambassador to Israel and Assistant Secretary of State, Martin Indyk, has already warned that “one of the few ways that the current Palestinian-Israeli impasse might be addressed” is through international military intervention in the Palestinian territories.<sup>54</sup> Such posturing is clearly not in America’s interests, and it is time we seriously considered more creative policy actions that husband American power rather than squander it.

## **Preventive Military Action and the Future**

America should stop using potential terrorist threats to justify and espouse the failed strategy of prevention. All instruments of national power, including diplomatic efforts, should be engaged

commensurately when dealing with global terrorism, rather than persisting in reliance on force. Countering threats from non-state actors and radical Islamist groups should primarily be the work of international law enforcement and diplomacy. They should occur under the principles of law and not through the rubric of so-called “preemptive” war, which in fact was preventive and therefore in violation of all the norms of the Just War Tradition. In hindsight, the ideological doctrine of forcibly spreading democracy, and the Presidential Findings authorizing morally questionable covert activities that also emerged from the Bush administration’s self-definition of Just War, compromised key principles embodied in the Constitution.

America claims to wage war as a global struggle, but this perspective fails to resonate in many countries because of the gaps in our mutual threat perceptions. This unilateral approach has turned much of the Muslim community against the United States, and many are trying to communicate that they do not oppose democratic principles, but rather an array of its contradictory policies. Islamist groups who are willing to become stakeholders in peace and security in the Middle East by cooperating with the West have to be given an audience. The current U.S. strategy has resulted in significant loss of lives, both ours and theirs, and it has been a huge drain on our national treasure. It is no longer sustainable. The first bold step toward strategic engagement may already have been taken, first in Anbar and then elsewhere in Iraq by U.S. forces. Many of the Iraqi tribal leaders that had initially opposed U.S. forces had been labeled “extremist,” but now they are working against Al-Qaeda.

These facts do not mean diplomacy alone will do the job. America still needs to target terrorists with focused lethal operations, but it needs to rely more on intelligence and law enforcement agencies. It needs to rebuild the State Department and enhance public diplomacy capabilities to seriously engage the Muslim community to cultivate mutual understanding for long-term peace and stability. Successful implementation could result in an “awakening” beyond Iraq, and in the end, more stakeholders may embrace peace and stability in the Middle East. Without fresh thinking, the American people may have to prepare for another military intervention in the Middle East. **MR**

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# DETENTION OPERATIONS, BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION, and COUNTERINSURGENCY

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**I**NFLUENCING THE POPULATION is critical in a counterinsurgency, and the detainee population in Iraq represents a particularly salient demographic in that endeavor. Can an Iraqi detainee's extremist behavior be influenced and modified during detention, thereby making him a lesser threat to coalition forces upon release?<sup>1</sup> This question is crucial for Iraq's future. The lengthy insurgency has resulted in a large number of detainees, and of those who are still being held captive, many have extremist backgrounds. If enough of them can be influenced to adopt positive attitudes toward coalition forces

and the Iraqi government, and they return as constructive members of their villages and social networks, the cumulative effects would help tremendously in ensuring long-term national stability.

In Iraq, 160,000 people have been through the detention process, and we estimate that each detainee has a network that includes approximately 100 other Iraqi citizens.<sup>2</sup> As a result, detainee experiences under America's care and custody may influence up to 16 million of Iraq's 26 million inhabitants. To see the potential future effects of current detention operations, one need only recall that many former detainees such as Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Daniel Ortega, and Jomo Kenyatta became important national leaders after their release from custody.

In the past, military practitioners and academics alike did not regard detainee operations as a legitimate subject for study in counterinsurgency, but the Army now regards the enlightened treatment of Iraq's detainee population as an integral part of successful counterinsurgency operations. Academics and military professionals, in literature and doctrine, have examined the problems of detention, but they have viewed them as outside the realm of operations. The normal perspective is that of the legal and moral necessity of collateral military duties tangential to operations, duties that sometimes lead to negative consequences. Notably, the Abu Ghraib incident emotionalized

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PHOTO: Sailors from U.S. Navy Provisional Detainee Battalion 3 stand watch at the Theater Internment Facility (TIF), 7 May 2007. Approximately 20,000 security detainees are held at two TIFs in Iraq, with more than 15,000 held at Camp Bucca. (U.S. Navy, Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist, Jon McMillan)

***...the Abu Ghraib incident emotionalized the subject of detainee care and custody to such an extent that thoughtful discussion of the subject has become increasingly difficult.***

the subject of detainee care and custody to such an extent that thoughtful discussion of the subject has become increasingly difficult.

The characteristics of detention operations make it an ideal arena for combating an insurgency. Both guards and detainees “inside- the-wire” are captive audiences in contact with each other 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Unfortunately, the Army’s detainee counterinsurgency strategy (focused as it is today) is a relatively new development. It only began with Major General Douglas Stone’s assumption of command of Task Force 134 in May 2007.<sup>3</sup> One has to draw conclusions from the data and information available with caution. Nevertheless, developing an appropriate and successful system of detainee reintegration and reconciliation can produce great benefits and lessons for future counterinsurgency campaigns.

With the capacity to hold more than 21,000 detainees, Camp Bucca is the largest internment facility currently supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. Camp Bucca leaders and Soldiers are working to modify the behavior of detainees so that when they reenter Iraqi society, they are no longer threats to the Iraqi government and coalition forces but rather agents of change for the future of Iraq.

## **Detention Strategy**

In conventional warfare, opposing forces usually do not release their prisoners of war until combat ends. In counterinsurgency, however, the reintegration of detainees into the population should take place as soon as they are no longer a risk to society.

Task Force 134’s current strategy regards detention facility operations as a legitimate part of America’s overall counterinsurgency fight. The detention facility is not just a repository for those plucked from the “real” insurgency, but a legitimate arena for counterinsurgency actions. The task force has shifted detention operations from warehousing insurgents to engaging them. The strategy focuses on touching the human spirit and aligning detainee

goals and aspirations with those of a peaceful and prosperous Iraq.

Task Force 134’s motto for this strategy is “Fighting for victory from inside the wire.” Victory means identifying and separating detainees who can become allied with the moderate Iraqis, effectively empowering moderate detainees to marginalize violent extremists, and providing momentum for reconciliation with Iraqi society.<sup>4</sup> Task Force 134’s objectives are to—

- Ensure it meets all standards of care and custody.
- Determine if a detainee is an imperative security risk and if so, reduce the risk.
- Replace destructive ideologies.
- Release detainees when they are no longer a threat and unlikely to become recidivists.
- Identify irreconcilables.
- Defeat any insurgency within the internment facility.<sup>5</sup>

Moderate Iraqi detainees can return to Iraqi society and influence extremists toward less violent action.

**Standards of care and custody.** Task Force 134’s overarching goal is to meet all standards of care and custody in accordance with the Geneva Conventions and the American creed that all men are created equal and endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights. From a real-politik perspective, success prevents detention operations from aiding the enemy. Historically, Abu Ghraib and North Vietnam’s treatment of American prisoners of war are examples of detention operations that significantly damaged the overall war effort of the party holding detainees.

The current U.S. strategy goes beyond simply ensuring that detainees are treated humanely. It recognizes the detainees’ cultural and religious norms in Iraq, and detainee diets, prayer times, and influential hierarchies. During Ramadan, food service accommodates fasting and detainee leaders are able to move about without handcuffs.

***The current U.S. strategy goes beyond simply ensuring that detainees are treated humanely.***

**Determine security risk status.** Detention operations include identifying and separating moderates from extremists and providing the moderates with vocational skills and education to decrease the likelihood of their rejoining the insurgency. This strategy does not assume insurgents are necessarily extremists. Initial studies of detainees indicate that most of them engage in insurgent activity for monetary reasons, money being more important than nationalism and fear of retribution as a motive for insurgent activity.

The threat that the insurgents pose does not reside in some Osama bin Laden-esque desire to kill infidels. It is a function of illiteracy, financial burdens, and skewed religious beliefs. Current statistics indicate a 50 percent unemployment rate and a 31 percent male illiteracy rate in Iraq.<sup>6</sup> As a consequence of the former, financial difficulties make Iraqis vulnerable to threats and intimidation, and as a consequence of the latter, many Iraqis have never read the Quran and rely on others to interpret its commandments.

The key to successful detention operations is timely assessment of both the security risk a detainee poses and his readiness to return to society as a positive agent for change. Detaining a person too long can be as detrimental as releasing him too early because a detention facility can become a “Jihad University” for detainees who are not already insurgents.

A multi-national force review committee assesses a detainee’s risk status and recommends release or continued internment. This process provides detainees their first opportunity to present their side of the story after capture. They come before a panel of three military members. The panel evaluates a detainee’s testimony and the contents of his file and recommends whether to release him, place him in the Theater Internment Facility Reconciliation Center programs at the detention facility, or continue his internment. As of November 2007, the release recommendation rate was 40 percent. This process began in mid-July 2007. Before then, the detainee did not appear before a panel.

The committee is not a court seeking to determine guilt. Its purpose is to determine whether detainees represent a continuing security risk. The word “continued” is used deliberately here. It is possible to have strong evidence of previous insurgent activity and yet conclude to release a detainee from internment based on his behavioral changes during detention. The challenge is to separate fact from fiction and determine the detainee’s motives for his actions

and the likelihood of his repetition of the behavior. The board’s decision is not final; higher authority must approve it. The process has validity. Task Force 134 noted a marked decrease in the number of detainees released and then later recaptured.<sup>7</sup>

Given the chaotic nature of the battlefield and the corruption that can and often does take place during an insurgency, a process to distinguish between those who should be held and those who should not is a necessity. In the chaos of war, people who do not need to be detained often are, simply because they were in the wrong place at the wrong time. In addition, coalition forces often rely on the testimony of local citizens in deciding whom to detain, but unfortunately, this testimony sometimes turns out to be problematic. Whether due to tribal disputes, religious differences, or other sources of tension, false accusations are inevitable. The release board identifies detainees who do not need to remain in detention, including those who were not actually in the insurgency at the time of their capture but might join it if they spend much more time in detention.

## **Establishing Alliances and Empowering Moderates**

Establishing an alliance with moderates is not easy. Doing so implies establishing a kind of pact between coalition forces, moderate detainees, and moderate community leaders. Currently, parts of the strategy are in place, but others remain in the planning phase. We build alliances with detainee leaders in the internment facilities. Chiefs meet with the military commander and other military leaders, the tribal leader speaks for the group, and the guard force and detainee chiefs develop important *wasta* (influence) with each other.

Three things have to be true to build alliances and empower moderates. First, moderate detainees must have the strength to free themselves from extremist influences and liberate others in their social network from extremist influence. Increased membership in the moderate camp has culminated in “awakenings” in several Iraqi provinces, as well as in Camp Bucca. In October 2007, detainees in Compound 2 at Camp Bucca presented the guard force a letter declaring their awakening. The letter read, in part, “We believe that if we want to fulfill our aims, we should wake up . . . We must work together, side by side to reach our noble aims of freedom, justice.”



U.S. Army, PFC Amie J. McMillan

**Detainees attend a class on civics at the internment facility in Camp Bucca, Iraq, 8 April 2008.**

Next, moderates must take the opportunity to marginalize extremists. Such marginalization has broad implications. Of course, the moderates must be willing and capable, and they must have the knowledge and skills to perform the task and the self-confidence to engage with extremists despite their fear of violent reprisals. To empower moderates, we must determine if their beliefs and attitudes are in line with our strategy. If so, we can give them the tools necessary to affect the larger majority. The hammer in the toolbox is education. Education extends from religious discussion to learning the basic skills of reading, writing, math, civics, and English. Although the focus is on moderate leaders, others can contribute, too.

Finally, the detainees need to be willing to change their behavior and participate in Internment Facility Reconciliation Center activities to obtain release recommendations from release boards. A combination of education, vocational training, and religious discussion helps integrate detainees back into Iraqi society.

***Empowering moderates gives them the opportunity to help marginalize extremists.***

A number of services are currently available at the reconciliation centers, although many are under development and the system cannot handle all of the enrolled detainees. Work details provide a means of paying detainees for their labor, and the money they earn goes into their property accounts and is either paid to them in cash when they leave or distributed to family members during visitations. In a society where unemployment may be the number-one recruitment incentive for the insurgents, this policy shows detainees and their families that America is committed to their well-being. It also rewards

cooperation with the authorities.

Because of the reconciliation center process, several changes have occurred. To gain favor with future release boards, detainees are now volunteering their time and effort to help beautify their areas. Detainee uprisings and riots have virtually ceased. The cycle of positive behavior is self-reinforcing; additional educational and developmental opportunities and vocational training and programs are the rewards for good behavior.

### **The Strategy's Effects**

“Winning hearts and minds” is a hackneyed and historically dubious slogan. U.S. experiences in international conflicts suggest confidence about winning hearts and minds has often been misplaced.<sup>8</sup> The current strategy seeks to modify behavior through the humane treatment of detainees, educational and vocational training, and opportunities for detainees to present their points of view. The intent of the strategy is behavior modification both in internment facilities and in Iraqi society. The objective does not reflect a vague hope to win hearts and minds in a popularity contest, but a desire to promote commonalities and goal alignment between the Iraqi people, the Iraqi government, and the United States. One could argue that this approach is authentic in that it accounts for moral realities. But this is an initial assessment

of the strategy, and as time passes and more data becomes available, the real picture will be revealed.

**Violent behavior reduced.** The process appears to have produced a marked decrease in violence inside the internment facility. “I don’t get two to three calls in the middle of the night anymore like I did back in the spring [of 2007],” says the Vigilance Theater Internment Facility commander, referring to the drop in detainee misconduct.<sup>9</sup> Echoing this point, Sailors who guarded extremist compounds for nine months during the heavy rioting of early 2007 reported all was calm during the second half of the year.

In the short term, good behavior earns the rewards of extra privileges, and a good observation report remains in the detainee’s file indefinitely. In the long term, release boards evaluate good observation reports and disciplinary reports to determine if detainees are an “imperative threat to the security of multi-national forces, the Iraqi people, or the Iraqi government.”<sup>10</sup> Detainees are recommended for release when the board determines they are no longer an imperative threat. One of the questions the release board asks is “Have you disobeyed the rules while you have been detained?” The answer, whatever it is, has a deterrent effect because the individual shares his experiences with the rest of the detainees in his compound and learns that the facility documents all misconduct and that this affects his likelihood of release in the future.

The history of Abu Ghraib casts a shadow on detention operations, and, of course, everyone detained is, as the name implies, a “detainee,” not an adjudged criminal. To ensure that the camp follows international laws and norms, punishments are well defined and carefully applied. Punishments at Camp Bucca are a complex subject. United States forces have had time to learn about Iraqi culture and reflect on the effects achieved by various punishments.

For example, commanders increasingly direct their forces to use interpersonal communication skills rather than force to remedy misconduct. This style of dealing with misconduct closely mirrors a recommendation in a recent RAND study, which concluded, “The use of force can reinforce [progression from frustration to faith to terror] by validating the argument that the ummah and Islamic purity are being attacked by a physically stronger power and therefore require heroic jihadis

to defend them. Interfering with the progression from Muslim to martyr is thus better done with brainpower than firepower.”<sup>11</sup>

This willingness to avoid using kinetic force is evident during guard-force responses to major disturbances and riots. Increasingly, the guard force will maintain vigilance over the situation and only engage in discrete, directed uses of non-lethal force. As a result, detainees in other compounds rarely join in the fray and those in the affected compound have less reason to join the ranks of disgruntled protesters.

In the spring of 2007, Compound 2 rioted with a very high participation rate among the detainees, and two adjacent compounds rioted in support. However, when Compound 2 initiated another riot in the fall of 2007, less than 10 percent of detainees within the compound participated in it, and no other compound joined in. When the guard force uses force to deal with an uprising, it must apply it professionally and decisively so as to leave no confusion about who the winner will be in a physical confrontation.

Guard actions affect detainee attitudes in the long run. For example, a guard who uses force to achieve an objective may well promote the very response he wants to eradicate (i.e., aggression). On the other hand, a guard that applies logic and reason to resolve a situation is likely to reinforce logic and reason as a desired behavior. Soldiers should avoid both applying excessive force and giving the impression of weakness.

Of course, Arabic culture respects a certain degree of strict authority. Muslim scholar Bernard Lewis comments on the centrality of physical force within Islam. Referring to the Islamic view towards Christendom, he says, “In principle, there was of course a permanent state of war.”<sup>12</sup> Lewis also talks of the “general Arab propensity for fighting.”<sup>13</sup> Culturally, physical force is more acceptable to Arabs than Americans think it is. Raphael Patai notes that

***...a guard who uses force to achieve an objective may well promote the very response he wants to eradicate...***

the frequency and severity of Arab corporal punishment noticeably exceeds American standards.

**Recidivism rate declining.** The average recidivism rate for prisoners in U.S. jails is 51.8 percent. The rate for those detainees released since the strategy's inception in June 2007 is 0.1 percent. This compares to a 1.2 percent rate for all of 2007 and a 7.7 percent rate for the three years before that.<sup>14</sup>

The passage of time is one reason for the dramatic difference in rates; the longer a person has been released from detention, the less likely of his being detained again.

## Opportunities

This section discusses well-positioned levers that coalition forces can use to facilitate the counterinsurgency strategy inside the wire.

**Guard force.** An intra-compound dynamic exists between the guard force and detainees, and it plays an important role in counterinsurgency. Most detainees never really get a chance to know Americans. The detainee roll-up and interrogation process provides only a single impression of America (i.e., how it engages in warfighting).

Although the guard force is made up of combatants, the opportunity exists for a more balanced interaction with Iraqis. During detention, U.S. guards are likely the first real Americans the detainees have encountered on a constant basis.

The relationship between the guard force and detainees is quite dynamic. Many guards used to refer to the mission as “babysitting.” This notion may not be far from the truth; however, a guard does much more than just care for detainees’ basic necessities. Human beings are social and, given the amount of time guards and detainees spend together, relationships understandably emerge. For military leaders, the relationships should remain professional.

Another aspect to consider is guard force military specialties. Leaders may want to keep front-line combat units out of detention

operations. Having experienced the brutality of war, front-line units may naturally choose a “firm but firm” instead of a “firm but fair” inside-the-wire approach. On the other hand, the U.S. Navy’s performance has been consistently strong, says Task Force 134’s commander Colonel James Brown.<sup>15</sup>

The language barrier between detainees and guard force members adds to the complexity of counterinsurgency. Recognizing this issue, the Army has required Soldiers deploying to Iraq to attend language-learning laboratories prior to deployment. However, very few people can learn a language in the short amount of time allocated. This makes it vital to have trustworthy interpreters.

**Visitation.** Impressions of the events that took place at Abu Ghraib persist, worldwide. Fortunately, Iraqis are more likely to believe what they see in person than what they see in the media. Allowing detainees to continue to see their families and friends provides hope. They also see Americans treating their family members with dignity and respect. The visitation program touches Iraq’s most disenfranchised demographic, so



U.S. Navy, MCCS Jon McMillan

Navy Provisional Detainee Battalion Chaplain Anne Krekelberg plays with an Iraqi child as he waits at the Camp Bucca Visitors Center, 27 March 2007.



seeing such attitudes from occupiers has immense, positive implications.

The new “Artist Colony” has been a big hit with detainees. The detainees make stuffed animals and select one for each of their children. During visitation, the detainee is able to give his child the stuffed animal. The impact on the detainee is significant. He is able to “provide” for his children while detained. The impact has been equally significant for the family members. Two of the most telling comments from family members have been, “This changed my opinion about Americans” and “Everything we see outside is armed, angry Americans...Now, we see what the Americans are truly trying to accomplish while trying their best to make our children happy.”<sup>16</sup>

In January 2008, American Soldiers and Airmen built a new detainee visitation center. Detainees completely tiled the facility, painted a mural on the side of the building, and installed playgrounds for children and a large gazebo for visiting families.

One of the brilliant innovations in visitation allowed detainees to give their families the cash they had in their possession when apprehended. The absence of a banking system in Iraq means that many families carry their life savings on their person, so allowing detainees to “repatriate” their money to their families shows that U.S. forces have actually safeguarded their money for them and care enough to allow the families to get access to it. The program at Camp Bucca places the family in the center of the engagement and reconciliation process.

## Communication

Being able to communicate successfully is the most important skill for effective behavior modification. To affect behavior and change attitudes, one must be able to communicate a message the detainee can understand and acknowledge.

The Department of Defense has developed several programs to increase the linguistic and cultural skills of deploying forces. Even so, the linguistic and cultural skills of uniformed members have not reached the desired levels.

One way of increasing information flow is to maximize technology. Plans are currently in place to acquire large stadium-style display screens and to generate a periodic newsletter written by detainees for detainees. Both of these advances will increase information not otherwise known or acknowledged.

***... Camp Bucca places the family in the center of the dynamic engagement and reconciliation process.***

Yet, the radio will likely remain the most efficient mass medium due to the high illiteracy rate of most detainees. We do not know how much information is being correctly interpreted and understood during one-on-one information exchanges with compound chiefs, religious leaders, and detainee interpreters. Technology can help maximize educational opportunities, religious discussions, and other behavior modification programs.

We must acknowledge the nuances of non-verbal communications in a detainee population of many ethnicities, languages, tribes, and cultures. Riots, in fact, are a form of communication. Arguably, a riot is the communication forum of last resort.

Personal relationships are vital if competing cultures are to embrace mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence. While there are certainly extremists in the theater internment facilities, an appreciation of the full spectrum of communication opportunities is important. After the Multi-National Force Review Committee was established in mid-July 2007, reduced violence and fewer large disturbances suggested that quality communication was having a positive effect (i.e., that the review process opened up a dialogue between the capturing force and detainees).

## Toward a Stable Iraq

Some think detention operations are only a sideshow where detainees and guards interact in a post-conflict space. This is a simplistic view that does not take into account the dynamic nature of the battlespace.

Camp Bucca, Iraq, has a proactive counterinsurgency strategy for detention operations. The strategy identifies detainees who no longer pose imperative threats, then educates and trains them, and subsequently releases them to return to their homes as “moderate missiles of the mind” who can marginalize extremists. We can marginalize extremist detainees who show an unwillingness to

change over time by keeping them in detention and confining them to areas where they are unable to influence moderates or former extremists moving toward moderation.

Such progress-oriented detention operations are central to reconciling former combatants, and we should use them for that purpose in future counterinsurgent campaigns. Detainee change does not come through brainwashing or indoctrina-

tion, but through the freedoms of basic education and vocational training. Detainee transformation (behavior modification) occurs as a result of first-rate medical care, culturally appropriate food, and the lifting of the human spirit by American guards, whom express the Nation's humanistic ideals through their words and deeds. Planting the seeds of change is a worthy endeavor in a society filled with hatred, fear, illiteracy, and poverty. **MR**

## NOTES

1. The authors think "behavior modification" is a more suitable term than "winning hearts and minds." America may fail at winning hearts and minds, but could conceivably succeed in modifying behavior until hatred against America will not manifest itself in terrorist acts or other destabilizing behaviors.

2. Major General Douglas Stone, Commander, Task Force 134, United States Marine Corps, comments made at a leadership conference, Camp Bucca, Iraq, 10 November 2007.

3. It is interesting to note that Major General Stone is as atypical a leader of detention operations as his strategy is to the world of detention operations. He is a Marine, often touted as the service most willing to embrace small wars, filling a traditional Army position. He is a reservist rather than active duty officer. Having spent many years running successful businesses, he is a thinker with a doctorate in public administration.

4. Task Force 134, "Detention Operations Process" slide (2007).

5. *Ibid.*

6. Office of Management and Budget, "Iraq Relief and Reconstruction," 27 March 2003, <[www.whitehouse.gov/omb/iraq\\_2.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/iraq_2.pdf)>, 18 November 2007, 2; GEN Barry R. McCaffrey, U.S. Army (retired), "After Action Report—Visit Iraq and Kuwait 5-11 December 2007" (18 December 2007), 6.

7. Task Force 134, "Recapture Rate" slide (2007). In what may be termed "large," "unlimited," or "conventional" war, America has been somewhat successful in winning hearts and minds through the continued, punishing application of lethal force as

occurred in World War I and II. In the accepted usage of the phrase, though, winning the hearts and minds is meant to occur through the use of what Joseph Nye has termed American "soft power," set in distinct opposition to the continued, punishing application of lethal force of large wars. In "small" wars such as in Iraq, winning hearts and minds has proved much more elusive for America, as we have seen in Vietnam, Somalia, Haiti, and the Global War on Terrorism. "Winning hearts and minds" is not a practical vision for fighting insurgencies. However, modifying behavior is.

8. LTC Patrick Williams, Commander, 705th Military Police Battalion, discussion with the author, Camp Bucca, Iraq, 28 October 2007.

9. Multi-National Force Review Committee, "Committee President Binder," 2007.

10. David Gompert, "Heads We Win: The Cognitive Side of Counterinsurgency (COIN)" (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corp, 2007), 26.

11. Bernard Lewis, *From Babel to Dragomans: Interpreting the Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 141.

12. *Ibid.*, 221; Raphael Patai, *The Arab Mind* (New York: Hatherleigh Press, 2002) 27, 36.

13. Patrick Langan and David Levin, "Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994," Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice (2002), 1.

14. Task Force 134, "Recapture Rate" slide (2007).

15. COL James Brown, Commander Task Force Bucca, comments at various staff meetings, Camp Bucca, Iraq, November 2007.

16. Anonymous voluntary comments made by two Iraqi citizens to U.S. forces.

**Slip away fire fingers of the red sun. Know that night has begun.**

**Stand fixed toward the west. The millennium of minutes of another day has past.  
Marking the passage of ten thousand random thoughts, like sand.**

**Bats flutter free. The night avengers to the sparrows sunny canvas.  
They herald the reaper, who claimed more of us. Screeching the Archangel's  
trumpet culled the living with the scythe of God's redemption.**

**Amidst the heaven stars pinpoint our home.  
Archer Orion in repose sleeps. A thousand warriors doze while in Ramadi cars explode.  
Yet in falling temps we vigilant keep watching for insurgent spree.**

**Flares burn bright a flickering light of freedom shines. Life's toil undone by smite.  
For Hamurabi's laws had it right. The plight of man called to task.  
Twilight's hue of purple crowned newly king the night.**

TWILIGHT  
IN  
AR RAMADI



—MAJ Joseph A. Jackson, Ar Ramadi Iraq, Oct. 2004

(The months of September and October 2004 saw increasingly lethal engagements in the city of Ar Ramadi, Iraq. Those activities, the losses the battalion and brigade suffered then and throughout its deployment inspired this poem. After serving nearly two years in the Republic of Korea, Major Jackson participated in the historic deployment of the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Korea directly to combat operations in Ar Ramadi, Iraq. He successfully commanded Service Battery, 2/17th Field Artillery during that period. Major Jackson graduated in 2008 from the Command and General Staff College where he earned both the General George C. Marshal and General Douglas MacArthur awards. He holds a Masters of Military Arts and Science in Military History from the Command and General Staff College. Major Jackson is pursuing a second MMAS in Operational Planning from the School of Advanced Military Studies. Major Jackson completed a BA in History and Russian from Purdue University.) (DOD photo)



# DIRECT SUPPORT HUMINT in Operation Iraqi Freedom

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PHOTO: U.S. Army Soldiers conduct home searches for weapons accountability and intelligence gathering in Warijaj, Iraq, April 2008. (U.S. Army, PFC Rhonda Roth-Cameron)

**H**UMAN INTELLIGENCE (HUMINT) collection has been a central facet of intelligence support to combat operations in Iraq since March 2003. The experiences of the past six years have provided a volume of information on the successful use of HUMINT capabilities and improvements to maximize HUMINT effectiveness. This article focuses on echelon above division (EAD) HUMINT assets, most commonly used in direct support relationships, and their employment in support of maneuver commanders. EAD HUMINT capabilities comprise a significant percentage of all HUMINT collection capabilities at any level in Iraq. A larger aperture for analysis exists because they are employed countrywide in every brigade combat team (BCT) operating environment. As forces inevitably draw down in Iraq, the demand for and possible employment of EAD HUMINT assets will rise to support expanded operational environments that center on strategic hubs containing advisory and assistance brigades.

The lessons discussed in this article also apply to BCT-organic HUMINT capabilities. Strategic HUMINT and HUMINT not related to tactical operations are beyond the scope of this article. Those assets typically support the theater commander and their contributions to tactical maneuver operations are less directly observable than those of HUMINT assets found within FORSCOM organizations.

Since the start of the war, three military intelligence (MI) brigades have played a significant role in HUMINT collection in Iraq. The 205th MI Brigade, the 504th MI Brigade, and the 525th MI Brigade rotated through Iraq several times and provided most of the EAD HUMINT assets employed in Iraq. Commanders of Combined Joint Task Force-7 and the Multi-National Corps-Iraq used them throughout Iraq.

Having served in multiple rotations to Iraq as leaders in two of the three brigades, we will address how operational and tactical commanders in Iraq can improve the effectiveness of EAD HUMINT assets operating in their area of operations. This article examines HUMINT collection teams (HCTs) provided by MI brigades and suggests ways commanders can maximize the support they receive from those assets.<sup>1</sup>

The MI HUMINT community has learned much from its experiences in Iraq, working closely with maneuver commanders. For example, Fort Huachuca reorganized HUMINT formations to expand the HUMINT Collector

Military Occupational Specialty 35M because these Soldiers were in greatest demand and were cost effective to educate and train. The introduction of the HUMINT Joint Training Center of Excellence at Fort Huachuca has gone a long way toward professionalizing the force through the improved Defense Source Operations Course and Advanced Source Operations Course. In addition to updating technical training, tactical training of HCTs ensures they are tactically competent to conduct missions either alone or in conjunction with maneuver units.

There is an awareness that to remain operationally agile in the counterinsurgency (COIN) environment, the HUMINT community must shed some of its old ways of doing business. This will mean being more responsive to the targeting process and working with other intelligence disciplines both jointly and operationally to meet maneuver commanders' needs. With the transformation of tactical MI brigades to battlefield surveillance brigades (BfSBs), the BfSB now provides EAD HUMINT assets. The Army's second BfSB, the 504th, is now deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. In addition to HCTs, the BfSB also provides multifunctional teams that bring a much enhanced HUMINT, signals intelligence, and tactical site exploitation capability. The MI community has improved its ability to enable targeting and replace ad hoc augmentation of skill sets at the BCT level. Despite the recent transition, the HUMINT collection mission of the BfSB remains similar to that of legacy MI brigades.

There are four primary areas to improve in EAD HUMINT operations:

- HCTs are best suited to conduct source operations and should make source operations their primary focus when not conducting interrogations or similar occupational specialty-specific tasks.
- Unit boundaries should not constrain HUMINT operations and reporting.
- HUMINT is not optimized for weighting a decisive operation, at least in the traditional sense, so commanders should reposition HCTs judiciously.
- Mission, enemy, terrain, weather, troops, support and time available, and civil considerations should drive HUMINT command or support relationships.

A typical HUMINT structure in Iraq contains four elements:

- Staff support.
- Analysis.
- Command and control.
- Collection.<sup>2</sup>

Staff support includes the intelligence staff officer for division, brigade, or battalion and supporting agencies. The analysis and control element or unit intelligence section conducts analysis. Command and control may include technical control by the assigned or supported unit through companies and their operational management teams or at the BfSB level in the HUMINT coordination element.<sup>3</sup> HUMINT collection teams perform the collection tasks.

## Human Source Contact Operations

Human intelligence collection teams are the best asset to conduct military source operations (MSO), especially source contact operations (SCO). HUMINT collection activities include "tactical questioning, screening, interrogation, debriefing, liaison, human source contact operations (SCO)..., document exploitation (DOCEX), and captured enemy equipment operations (CEE)."<sup>4</sup>

Doctrine defines MSO as a subset of HUMINT collection: "MSO refers to the collection of foreign



U.S. Army, SFC Robert C. Brogan

CPL Jason Smith, right, from 3d Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and an interpreter examine documents while questioning a local man in Abu Karmah, Iraq, August 2007.

military and military-related intelligence by humans from humans. MSO sources include one-time, continuous, and formal contacts from contact operations, and sources from interrogations, debriefings, and liaison activities.”<sup>5</sup>

Human SCO is a subset of MSO. Human SCO focuses on establishing relationships that develop continuous and formal contacts: “Human SCO are operations directed toward the establishment of human sources who have agreed to meet and cooperate with HUMINT collectors for the purpose of providing information.”<sup>6</sup> The sources included in human SCO are one-time contacts (level-one sources); continuous contacts (level-two sources); and formal contacts (level-three sources).

One-time contacts are individuals encountered only one time who may provide information of value, such as civilians encountered on a patrol, detainees questioned and then released, or those stopped at checkpoints.

Continuous contacts are sources that provide information more than once. However, neither one-time contacts nor continuous sources can be *tasked* to provide information. Human intelligence collection teams can only sensitize them to the information they are looking for and debrief them; these teams cannot formally task them to actively seek information.

Formal contacts are individuals who agree to cooperate with HUMINT collectors and provide information to them. They are the only contacts that collectors can task to seek out and provide information. Several regulations provide specific guidelines for the recruitment and handling of formal contacts.<sup>7</sup> These guidelines acknowledge the serious risks involved when the source becomes a formal contact, including the possibility of his death and the subsequent loss of intelligence information.

Human intelligence collection operations are one of the BfSB’s primary missions. The BfSB’s MI battalions comprise a large number of HCTs and other HUMINT assets. (By Army design, over two-

thirds of the organic BfSB MI battalion collection capability is related to HUMINT). Thus, the BfSB emphasizes focused training on HUMINT collection operations in preparation for deployment. Because the collection teams reside in BfSB MI battalions, they are among the best trained in the Army for human SCO. Because HUMINT is the MI battalion mission, the unit provides the expertise, focus, and resources to train and employ SCO, a relatively low-cost but highly technical capability (similar to aviation or field artillery, both of which require precise training of individual Soldiers). When looking for expertise in such fields, one turns to their parent organizations for assistance. The many DOD, Joint, and Army policies, regulations, legal requirements, and technical nuances associated with MSO and human SCO require the capabilities of a qualified person trained in the collection mission.

Still, mistaken beliefs persist. Some commanders believe MSO means simply meeting with and engaging local leaders or religious figures. On more than one occasion, we heard a commander say, “I’m the best intelligence collector in my organization.” This belief may be accurate in many tactical formations, but it may also lead units into questionable moral or legal situations, especially if leaders think it is permissible to task a source for information. They may not understand the difference between soliciting information and tasking someone for it. Well-meaning but untrained personnel conducting source operations can make mistakes that lead to tragedies such as the murder of a source or members of his family, but human intelligence collection teams are trained to conduct source operations and to understand the nuances involved in working with different kinds of sources. Combat patrols should interact with the population to gather intelligence; their interaction with local civilians and political leaders is a core competency associated with COIN operations and is central to the “every Soldier a sensor” concept. Indeed, combat patrol contact with local civilians often leads to identification of potential sources for future MSO conducted by HCTs. However, we emphasize that *only* HUMINT personnel have the training and legal authority to conduct human SCO.<sup>8</sup>

Human intelligence collection teams are trained to properly report and document sources. Whenever a team meets with a source more than once, they must register him in the source registry and

**... guidelines acknowledge the serious risks involved when the source becomes a formal contact...**

***Well-meaning but untrained personnel conducting source operations can make mistakes that lead to tragedies...***

follow-up with additional reports to the operational management team. These reports help all HUMINT collectors in the area—

- Evaluate the source's reliability, placement, and access to information.
- Guard against adversary intelligence collection.
- Deconflict complications in source management.

For example, one common but unfortunate trend in Operation Iraqi Freedom is the “professional” source that provides information to multiple HCTs or military leaders in exchange for rewards. Without a standard deconfliction process, the sources will provide the same information, whether valid or not, to multiple entities. While these activities may not be apparent to the maneuver commander, they are critical to support the mission.

## Intelligence Collection

Tactical questioning, interrogations, and human SCO are three different endeavors. Tactical questioning is a HUMINT collection activity, which any DOD employee can perform if he is trained according to the standards established in DOD Directive 3115.09, “DOD Intelligence Interrogations, Detainee Debriefings, and Tactical Questioning.” Tactical questioning is “expedient initial questioning for information of immediate tactical value.”<sup>9</sup>

Soldiers on patrol conduct tactical questioning as they encounter the local populace or capture and detain personnel. Tactical questioning is essentially asking direct questions of another individual. It does not include the use of an approach, and is therefore not human SCO or interrogation. We have seen units order their collection teams to ride along regularly on patrols to conduct tactical questioning, instead of conducting source operations. Having HCTs ride along on patrols in this manner is tantamount to calling a crime scene investigator to investigate a playground fistfight. Put another way, any Soldier should be able to conduct tactical questioning because “every Soldier is a sensor,” but HUMINT collectors should



U.S. Navy, Journalist 1st Class Jeremy L. Wood

**A U.S. Army Soldier assigned to a tactical human intelligence team talks with an Iraqi security official while visiting a village near Kirkuk, Iraq, May 2006.**

focus on MSO. Units preparing for deployment can easily receive tactical questioning training by MI mobile training teams, so the use of a human intelligence collection team to perform tactical questioning is evidence that the units are not taking full advantage of the capabilities provided by these teams through planning and conducting source operations.

Commanders must integrate HCTs into their intelligence collection and tactical operational planning to ensure the collection teams get “outside of the wire” on a regular basis. Teams supporting units in Iraq are usually not adequately integrated into such daily unit planning or targeting processes. We observed that they were seldom included in targeting meetings, intelligence collection meetings, or planning sessions for future operations. Consequently, the collection teams did not focus adequately on their supported commander’s intelligence requirements and were occasionally reduced to trolling for information. Parent and supporting units must train their teams in doctrinal staff integration processes.

No matter whom they work for, collection teams must leave their forward operating bases to be effective. They should not just work with “walk-ins.”<sup>10</sup> This practice cripples their ability to interact with the populace, identify potential sources, and gather information relevant to the supported unit’s mission or targets. It prevents them from conducting effective human SCO. To meet the commander’s collection requirements effectively, HCTs and their parent MI battalions must remain actively engaged with the command they support. They must establish relationships at each level from human intelligence collection teams to battalion. Failing to remain engaged in this way means failing to add value to the supported command.<sup>11</sup>

## Operational Boundaries

Human intelligence activities and information are relevant across operational boundaries and require crosstalk and rigorous attention to documenting and publishing HCT reports. Unit boundaries can severely constrain HUMINT operations in an environment where potential sources are not bound by those notional limits. Populations tend to be mobile unless physical control measures limit their movement. The battalion-, or BCT-level operating environment within urban areas is often not large enough to encompass the many destinations a source might travel to in a normal day or all the networks

that tribes or ethnic groups have established. Units should consider the larger operational environment when conducting HUMINT operations.

Sometimes, the HCT will find information of intelligence value in another unit’s operating environment. There are many reasons for this. A source may not be willing to approach coalition forces because local insurgents know him and may harm him if they see him interacting with coalition forces. The source may feel that the chances of insurgents detecting his actions are reduced if he is in another town where he is unknown. Perhaps he only has access to information about insurgent activities in neighboring towns or areas. In either case, intelligence of value to units outside the operating environment should be actively shared, once collected.

Commanders sometimes inadvertently restrict their units’ collection and dissemination of HUMINT to information that is *only* relevant to their operating environment. The theater HUMINT enterprise and particularly EAD HCTs must remember that intelligence collected in their operating environment may have relevance outside of their supported unit’s boundaries. Intelligence collection assets should focus on the commander’s priority intelligence requirements and specific information requirements—but not at the expense of ignoring other collected information that could be actionable intelligence to adjacent units or higher echelons. Indeed, information collected in central Baghdad can have a direct correlation with events occurring in Mosul or Kirkuk. Information that might be valuable to other units must be documented and published in a universal HUMINT reporting system like the Combined Information Data Network Exchange, so other units can determine if they are interested in the information. The documentation should also provide contact information so units have the opportunity to conduct crosstalk for further exploitation. Such cross-boundary crosstalk is vital to the counterinsurgency effort. Insurgencies are

***...intelligence of value to units outside the operating environment should be actively shared, once collected.***

not limited by boundaries. In fact, insurgents will exploit the use of boundaries by counterinsurgency forces. EAD HUMINT teams are uniquely situated to facilitate cross-boundary coordination by virtue of their parent brigade coverage across Iraq.

## Reinforcing the Decisive Operation

Instead of moving human intelligence collection teams around the battlefield, commanders should consider reinforcing the decisive operation with HCTs in a mobile interrogation team role and change the command relationship, task, and purpose of these teams within an area of operations.

How can commanders use EAD HUMINT assets to reinforce the main effort? Commanders and their staffs often provide collection teams from the BfSB to a designated division, brigade, or battalion unit and ask their echelon command to relocate one or more to support the main effort just days before operations begin. However, this arrangement is usually not the correct answer. A collection team usually requires between 45 and 60 days, and sometimes even longer, to establish itself in a new area where no other team is involved. Consequently, there is no information sharing, or in this case, source handover, normally found when a new incoming unit replaces an existing unit for a relief in place.<sup>12</sup> Within that 45- to 60-day period, the team assesses the population and establishes a rapport with key persons in the area, and develops sources to work with on a regular basis. Trust between the team and the population is essential to make the process work. The commander cannot easily accelerate the time required to establish these critical relationships. Once the HCT moves to another location, it must establish itself all over again.

Even if a team conducts a relief in place with another human intelligence collection team, establishing its presence takes time. While the procedure of source handoff conducted between the outgoing and incoming collection teams can hasten the overall process, trust between the incoming HCT and the local population still takes time to establish.

Once a team develops a relationship with the local population and collects information of intelligence value, moving it to another area should be the last option considered.

The commander could liken HCTs to indirect fire assets. Like indirect fire assets, HUMINT collection teams can cover a large area of terrain. In this case, the terrain consists of people living in a geographic area. In a perfect world and in a situation where massing fires is not a priority, we would operationally array indirect fire assets to provide continuous support to all coalition forces in a given operating area without having to move them. The same could be said of collection teams. In an unconstrained environment, we would place HCTs throughout Iraq so that no major populated area would go uncovered.

The best way to reinforce a commander's decisive operation is not necessarily to move assets, but to change their mission and whom they support. It is better to augment the commander's decisive operation by changing the support relationship of an already established HCT than by moving new teams into an area.

However, the analogy with fire support assets falls short when one masses HUMINT assets in a single location. Commanders will often move fire support assets so that they can mass effects on a given area. Today's indirect fire assets can move to a new location, set themselves up, and be ready to accept fire missions in a matter of minutes, but this is not the case for HCTs. Collection teams require weeks to re-establish themselves in order to conduct source operations effectively. A commander may be able to move his organic collection teams temporarily to assist in an operation, but if the HCTs are unfamiliar with the area, they will likely only conduct tactical questioning or limited SCO with one-time contacts. Maneuver units trained to conduct tactical questioning will achieve much more intelligence than a few reassigned HCTs.

The commander can also mass BfSB intelligence support for an operation by using HCTs in a mobile interrogation team role. Equipped to move to a new location and conduct HUMINT collection operations, interrogation teams can screen detainees at

***...place [HUMINT collection teams] throughout Iraq so that no major populated area would go uncovered.***



the point of capture. They consist of two- to four-person teams equipped with the latest in biometric equipment and access to HUMINT databases. They are specifically trained in conducting interrogations. Unfortunately, when supporting maneuver units, interrogation teams in the past worked in a division or brigade detention facility where they never moved. Commanders who do not employ the teams during operations at the point of capture are not maximizing the capabilities these HUMINT assets bring to the fight. Moreover, under the Security Agreement operating environment in Iraq, the use of interrogation teams is even more relevant because coalition forces are not authorized to hold detainees for more than 24 hours without a detention order from an Iraqi judge. These teams can also conduct combined interrogations with Iraqi forces. When maneuver units conduct cordon and search or checkpoint operations, they can very quickly round up a large number of personnel to screen. In the early stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom, many units conducted raids and cordon and searches, yet failed to screen detainees at the point of capture. They simply turned them over to a detention facility. Almost every night, units gathered 40 to 50 personnel and sent them to detention facilities for screening, quickly overwhelming facilities unequipped to process them. While this practice is no longer widespread, it still occasionally happens. Interrogation teams are assets commanders can use to alleviate the detainee burden and better focus human intelligence collection requirements. If commanders include interrogation teams in pre-mission planning and sensitize them to information requirements, the teams can accompany units on raids, screen personnel temporarily detained at the point of capture, and determine whom to send to a detention facility for further questioning. This is a great way to separate those who have information of true intelligence value and those who do not, without overburdening a detention facility. There are obvious benefits to surgically selecting detainees during counterinsurgency operations.



U.S. Army, SPC Sharhonda R. McCoy

**U.S. Army SFC Timothy Brown and 1LT Patrick Henson from 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, dismount outside a busy market intersection to gather intelligence in Hateen, Iraq, 28 November 2007.**

With proper planning and the supported brigade commander's approval, teams can also conduct field interrogations at the point of capture. Commanders know how perishable actionable intelligence is. When it has been determined that a detained individual has actionable intelligence, a team may conduct a field interrogation at the brigade commander's discretion to get that information immediately. This is better than taking the detainee to a facility where it may take hours before an interrogator has a chance to talk to him. Since the security agreement became effective in January, units must now process and interrogate detainees within 24 hours before turning them over to a competent Iraqi authority or acquiring a detention order. Obtaining actionable intelligence at the point of capture can lead to immediate follow-on exploitation operations. However, field interrogation requires detailed preparation. Commanders should integrate interrogation teams into the planning process early on so that the team understands the commander's intelligence requirements for a particular target.

Finally, how does the maneuver commander weight his decisive operation with echelon-above-division human intelligence? Once the staff identifies the requirement for additional support, the staff intelligence officer determines if there is

already an EAD collection team operating within the area. If there is, he requests a temporary change in the support relationship so that team can support his unit in the mission. Once the EAD collection team receives orders to support the new unit, the staff operations, training, and intelligence staff officers should immediately begin working with the team to develop “intelligence preparation of the battlespace” products and target information required for the upcoming operation. The EAD HCT must also participate in detailed planning of the operation.

The intelligence staff officer should then consider the unit’s temporary need for operational interrogation support and coordinate with higher echelons to secure that support relationship. Once an interrogation team is identified to support the operation, the intelligence staff officer should immediately include it in detailed operational planning and connect them with the HCT currently operating in the area. This combination of HUMINT assets will provide the unit with tremendous collection capability.

## **HUMINT Collection Teams and Advantages of Avoiding Turbulence**

The key to successful HUMINT operations using EAD collection teams is to allow them to remain stable in an operating environment. The mission, enemy, terrain, weather, troops and support available, time available, and civil considerations will determine the best command or support relationship for an EAD HCT task-organized to a multi-national division, brigade combat team, or battalion.<sup>13</sup> Stability in an operating environment will maximize expertise about a particular population and area. The permissiveness of the environment and the number of people and coalition units present in an area are important factors to consider when changing support or command relationships with EAD HCTs. Another critical factor is the level of HUMINT expertise already present in the gaining unit. Collection teams require technical and tactical oversight to maximize their capabilities.

A direct support relationship may work best in rural areas or if population centers are widely dispersed and pools of potential sources are relatively static. The gaining unit should also have a good

level of resident HUMINT expertise on its staff. Commanders should be careful not to overburden their existing unit structure with more assets than they can control effectively.

A direct support relationship also works well in a non-permissive environment. When a team leaves the wire in Iraq, it embarks on a combat operation. In areas that require considerable force protection for movement outside forward operating bases, it is always preferable for a collection team to move as part of a combat patrol. If a unit is conducting a focused operation in the same area, the best way to provide additional HUMINT support is simply to place the team in direct support of that unit for the duration of the operation and then return it to general support at completion.

A general support relationship, either at the BCT, division, or corps level, seems to work best when teams are covering large metropolitan areas where sources and networks move freely. Large metropolitan areas are also usually covered by several BCTs and maneuver battalions, which means that the HCT may have to travel across several unit boundaries in a relatively short distance, so a general support relationship would be most appropriate. If the environment is permissive, then the collection team should be able to move using its organic security and rely less on additional support, again favoring a general support relationship.

Finally, if the supported unit does not have resident HUMINT expertise, a general support relationship allows the BfSB to manage most of the technical oversight issues.

Many commanders worry that teams operating within their area of operations will not support them effectively. This is simply not the case. It would be self-defeating for EAD general support teams not to maintain good relations with the units and share the intelligence gathered. The maneuver units maintain the quick reaction forces that the HCTs will call on if they find themselves in trouble.

## **Command Employment of Assets**

Whether in general or direct support, MI battalions from the BfSB must remain involved in HUMINT operations. The MI battalions—

- Provide a level of expertise and HUMINT focus usually not resident in the BCT.

- Provide maneuver commanders and their staffs with technical HUMINT advice from an external vantage point.

- Enable direct support teams to become better collectors for the supported unit through focused attention on team capabilities.

In conjunction with Multi-National Corps Iraq, the BfSB can help standardize direct support or general support teams' HUMINT tasking and reporting procedures to ensure fidelity of data and its timely dissemination.

We would not recommend establishing a command relationship between a BfSB echelon-above-division collection team and a BCT. The complications of making that work and the often-fluid nature of counterinsurgency operations may outweigh the benefits, especially if the BCT has limited resident HUMINT experience on its staff.

Finally, some commanders do not understand the command and support relationship doctrine set forth in Appendix B of FM 3-0. Some units act as though they have a command relationship with a collection team when the HCT is really only in direct support or general support to them. This leads to needless confusion among team leaders and supported and other units. Some units attempt to break apart direct support HCTs to harvest individuals to fill vacancies in their units or to "cover" more ground with HUMINT. This, in effect, shatters the integrity of the team, making it less effective. The doctrine in FM 3-0 works effectively—so long as both supporting and supported units abide by it.

In summary, the HUMINT field is technical in nature and requires minimal overhead. As measured in output versus cost, HUMINT collection is dollar-for-dollar the most economical and most effective intelligence discipline.

Yet, because of its low cost, we often overlook HUMINT's technical complexity and underestimate the training it requires. A collection team's primary mission must be to conduct source operations or interrogations, not tactical questioning or so-called patrol "ride-alongs." HCTs must have the opportunity to conduct HUMINT *operations*: the primary purpose for leaving the wire on any given day is to

**...some commanders do not understand command and support relationship doctrine...**

collect HUMINT. HUMINT reporting, and in some cases HUMINT operations, must cross unit boundaries. Commanders should not arbitrarily move HCTs about the operating environment because the cost-benefits of doing so are detrimental. Mission, enemy, terrain, weather, troops and support available, time available, and civil considerations must drive command and support relationships—not land ownership.

These observations are derived from a sound understanding of operational doctrine, from the technical aspects of the HUMINT field that are analogous to similarly technical spheres such as field artillery or aviation, and from our combined 81-plus months of personal wartime observations in MI units in Iraq. We hope commanders who have the opportunity to work with EAD HCTs will incorporate these thoughts into the employment of HCT assets who are supporting their organizations. **MR**

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#### NOTES

1. A human intelligence collection team (HCT) is an element that collects information from human sources and usually includes two to four human intelligence personnel.
2. Field Manual (FM) 2-22.3, *Human Intelligence Collector Operations*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office [GPO], September 2006), 2-1.
3. An operational management team is an element that provides technical control and guidance to two to four deployed HCTs and often serves as a platoon headquarters consisting of two to four trained human intelligence leaders. A tactical HUMINT operations section is similar to a HUMINT operations cell and in Iraq, it is assigned to the battlefield surveillance brigade headquarters.
4. FM 2-22.3, 1-7.
5. *Ibid.*, 5-1.
6. *Ibid.*, 1-9.
7. These sources are classified and include AR 381-172, *Counterintelligence Force Protection Source Operations and Low-Level Source Operations*; DIAM 58-11, *Conduct & Oversight of Intelligence Activities*; and DIAM 58-12, *DOD HUMINT Management System*.
8. FM 2-22.3, 5-1; and FM 2-34, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: GPO, September 2006), 2-26.
9. FM 2-22.3, 1-7.
10. This refers to sources who walk onto the forward operating base and present themselves at the unit's location with information they believe will be of value.
11. ["Value added" means it must be done right the first time; must change the outcome somehow, the receiving unit must adopt this action or product, and the mission "profits" from it.] MR
12. Listed in both the 205th and 504th MI Brigade AARs for OIF 5/7 and OIF 6/8. Experience has demonstrated that it took an HCT a minimum of 45 to 60 days to establish a source network in a newly assigned area that had no previous HCTs for it to conduct a relief in place.
13. FM 1-02, *Operational Terms and Graphics* and FM 3-0, *Operations*. "Task-organized" is a temporary grouping of forces designed to accomplish a particular mission.



# KEEPING FRIENDS and GAINING ALLIES

## The Indivisible Challenge of Military Public Relations

Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege,  
U.S. Army Retired

Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege, U.S. Army, Retired, was one of the principal developers of the Army's AirLand Battle concept and the founder and first director of the School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS. He holds a B.S. from the United States Military Academy and an M.A. from Harvard University. He also attended the Army War College and the Capstone Course at the National Defense University. He commanded an Airborne Infantry Company and a Vietnamese Ranger Battalion advisory team in combat. His most recent publications, on subjects from tactics to strategy and military "transformation," have appeared in *Armed Forces Journal*, *Army Magazine*, *Military Review*, *Artillery Journal*, *Strategic Studies Institute Papers*, and *AUSA Land Power Papers*.

PHOTO: Greek Hoplites, symbols of Hellenic democracy. Upper tier, side B of the so-called Eurytios Krater from Cerveteri. Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* makes clear that democratic Athens went to great lengths to foster confidence at home and to gain and keep allies. (Marie-Lan Nguyen, Wikimedia Commons)

**I**F THE ARMY is going to take public relations seriously, it needs a "Military Public Relations" branch that is fully aligned with its purposes, a doctrine that clearly articulates the causal logic of its function, and organizations that properly reflect requirements. In "Re-Thinking IO: Complex Operations in the Information Age" (*Military Review*, November/December 2008), I argued: "Keeping the trust and confidence of home and allied publics while gaining the confidence and support of local publics [is] crucial to success for . . . modern free societies conducting any kind of military operation anywhere today." History teaches that gaining and keeping allies is essential for long-term strategic success. Both sides in the Greek Peloponnesian War, for example, knew two truths:

- Keeping the trust and confidence of one's own and allied publics will ensure availability of resources for any mission.
- Winning the respect and support of publics in the battle space is the key to quickly finishing the mission successfully.

America's recent history has not communicated these lessons sufficiently well. Desert Storm could not teach them. That startling event in the desert was mostly devoid of destitute people and the complications of social turmoil and broken governance, and it was brief enough to maintain consensus for support at home and among allies. Other involvements, from El Salvador onward, could have taught these truths, but they were lost because we chose not to draw those lessons while our focus was on major combat operations. The United States can no longer afford to be obtuse about public relations: involved populations will increasingly be the arbiters of success or failure in all military operations, whatever the scale or duration and whoever the enemy. *Maintaining* and *building* positive relations with all the relevant publics must become a more integral part of U.S. military operations.

### Truth, Perception, and Operations

When publics at home and in allied countries develop the impression that their forces are ineffective and illegitimate, which is just what adversaries want them to believe, they will withdraw support. When local populations believe our operations are illegitimate and against their interests, they will oppose us. If the enemy is winning, they will oppose us all the more. In such a milieu, whether a mission succeeds or fails first depends on the efficacy

***The United States can no longer afford to be obtuse about public relations...***

of what the command actually does. Success then hinges on the image the command projects and on the words a command spokesperson utters in support of that image. A military spokesperson has only a limited capacity to mitigate ineffective or counterproductive acts and images. In the best case, a spokesperson can build on effective acts and images and thus multiply their effects, speeding mission success. This economy possesses today a critical immediacy for a fully committed force.

Conditions today have changed dramatically from those that American forces had grown used to after World War II. Populations that today make decisions to support our operations bear a steep price. Realistically, military forces have to *prove* worthy of the great risks these people are asked to accept. Because of this great risk, lessons from commercial advertising and journalism are not applicable. Soldiers and Marines deal not only with “accredited media” but also with the novel and ubiquitous voracity of modern, informal information dissemination. They are not selling soap to locals; they have to communicate their credibility and professionalism and the necessity of their mission.

Transparency in the global operating environment and the speed and diverse ways with which publics inform themselves bring novel and overwhelming immediacy. The sensitivity of politicians to sudden public mood swings can make strategic authorities impatient for results. They are thus prone to over-reaction. That same transparency, speed of information flow, and multiplicity of means, combined with the many ways entrepreneurial adversaries can misinform and distort events, makes gaining the confidence and support of local populations far more difficult than before.

Not long ago, it was possible to think of keeping the trust and confidence of the public and gaining the confidence and support of the population in conflict as two separate problems. Today, no command can separate dealing with the media from dealing face-to-face with the mission-relevant public. It is impossible to separate what is said to people at

home, and in allied homelands, from what is heard by people in the command’s area of operations.

This challenge of media communication is different from, but parallel to, that of gaining the respect, compliance, and support of the people in the area of operations. Our approach to the former is overly centralized, slow, inflexible, and outmoded. It would benefit from a “mission command” approach to control. Gaining respect, support, and cooperation, on the other hand, is grass roots, bottom-up work, not susceptible to economies of scale. Absolute unity of effort is required for success in military public relations because these two related but separate challenges are so entwined today.

### **The Military’s Public Relations**

*Military public relations* is the term that best describes the increasingly important and indivisible art of gaining and maintaining favorable relations with the public at home, abroad with allies, and in the area of operations. While the two halves of military public relations *are* indivisible, the logic, purpose, and art of each remain different. Both halves must contend with people who, as science tells us, find it impossible to maintain strict neutrality. Switching between positive and negative attitudes based on changing perceptions is natural. The first object of military public relations is to keep the trust and confidence of the people who foot the bill and bear the burden of the operation, those who are already favorably disposed. The second object is likely far more complex, and striving for that goal entails commensurate difficulty. It may, for instance, entail causing a still-hostile indigenous polity to accept new and unpleasant facts without active resistance. When the mission is to depose one government and facilitate the establishment of a new one more to our liking, a radical and much more challenging shift in indigenous attitudes is necessary. The majority of people need to become *real allies*.

***Today, no command can separate dealing with the media from dealing face-to-face with the mission-relevant public.***

**Maintaining support at home.** Nothing is as popular as success, and early success followed by steady competent progress is the simple and timeless formula that satisfied the democratic citizens of ancient Athens and every other free society in history. Citizens of 20th-century democracies, like the United States, Great Britain, and France, might have debated long over whether to go to war, but once elected authorities took that step, all but a few citizens united behind the effort. Today's interconnected and interdependent world complicates the use of force by such free societies in several ways:

- It makes it difficult to achieve strategic surprise using large conventional forces.
- It obligates political and senior military leaders to be more conscious of the “disproportionate” use of force.
- It magnifies the impact of collateral damage.
- It affects the decision-making of higher levels of command and involves them in tactical details.
- It makes “covert” operations more difficult to conceal.

These factors combine to add layers of complexity to all types of operations, and not only to counterinsurgencies. Harsh counterinsurgency techniques of the Cold War era and throughout history—including forced population movements, coercion of locals into security forces, stringent curfews, and even lethal pressure on civilians to take the government side—are outdated. The combination of an insurgent's skillful international propaganda and all-pervading media coverage ends the use of such tactics that worked in the obscure jungles of the Philippines, West Java, Malaya, Vietnam, and elsewhere. Using such tactics today would prompt loss of allies and international condemnation, damaging the pursuit of vital national objectives elsewhere.

Nevertheless, isolating the population from the insurgent remains a long-standing tenet of counterinsurgency operations. Because the old tactic of uprooting entire villages and moving them

to easily controlled sites is no longer an option, the task becomes much more troop- and police-intensive. New counterinsurgency doctrine based on extensive historical studies states that population control and protection during troubled times, such as during an active insurgency, requires 20 reliable security troops for every 1,000 persons in a population.<sup>1</sup> Troops have to be able to recognize strangers, live among the people, be present at night, and be respected at least as much as the insurgent. The resources required to do this seem unreasonable to a Western public accustomed to policing levels of about 3 per 1,000 on a normal day.

That is one side of the coin. Working through the traditional media to maintain the support of the public is also becoming ever more complicated. Public officials, including military leaders, must expend much more time and competence on their press relations. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair noted (in a June 2007 speech) that media is becoming more fragmented, more diverse, and above all, transformed by technology.

The competition among an increased number of news media organizations has transformed reporters into analysts in order to gain attention and audience share. The product of uninformed analytical commentary is more troublesome than the reporting of incorrect facts. Facts can be set straight by evidence. Poor analysis is more difficult to set straight, requiring the time and energy of authoritative figures rather than spokespersons.<sup>2</sup> There are roughly 150 million blogs in existence, with over 150,000 being created daily.<sup>3</sup> Forms of communication are merging and interchanging. The print media cannot keep up, and, to stay in business, they have to break stories and give commentary to remain relevant. Blair remarked that, for politicians, “not to have a proper press operation nowadays is like asking a batsman [in cricket] to face bodyline bowling without pads or headgear.”<sup>4</sup>

Having a proper press operation is also critical to military commands at lower levels than ever



Corinthian helmet from the tomb of Denda. From a Greek workshop in South Italy, 500–490 BC.

before, and competence in this field is relatively rare. Unprepared stand-ins can do more harm than good. Soldiers and Marines in the field must realize the stresses within which their political and senior military leaders are functioning, but they must stay above politics and above reproach in the performance of their duty. (The problem of hiring mercenaries not connected with the Department of Defense, and who possess different rules of engagement, is an additional complication.) Furthermore, the competencies associated with the media will be necessities ever further down the chain of command, and antiquated methods of message control will have to give way to new methods that can keep pace with demand. We will not be able to predict the future, but we won't be able to cancel it either. Therefore, appreciating tendencies in this mission dimension is vitally important. The issues Mr. Blair raises are challenging enough, but the transfer of the function of informing publics from traditional newspapers and radio and television media to the internet adds additional layers to the problem. And this trend demands new competencies.

When people had only a few sources of news, the media decided what was newsworthy. The internet encourages people to pursue their own niche interests. Thus, informing the public so that responsible voters and representatives can make informed decisions has become more difficult because the public first has to be drawn to the information. How will military organizations trigger interest in the information they think the public needs to know? Command "outreach" or "strategic communication" efforts are already recognized to be important, but the means and methods will increasingly have to rely on the internet.

This shift has important implications for military doctrine, organization, methods, and means. It demands increasing attention and careful forethought now. *Being first with the truth is paramount.* Minutes and hours matter whether that "truth" is a notable mission success, a failed enemy initiative, or bad news. Just as "mission command" relies on the judgment of commanders to decide how to implement the intent of higher authorities, the judgment of commanders should be relied on to decide what should and could be said in public within the mission area of responsibility. This latitude speeds clearance decisions, keeps spokespersons in their

## ***Being first with the truth is paramount.***

lane, and is *the only* control mechanism that has a chance of meeting the deadlines for success. It implies taking and maintaining the initiative to aggressively "push-to-inform" all media within the area, and all information networks that serve *all* publics relevant to the mission. This effort will consume more of the commander's time, and it means that military public relations must support him to make that time pay dividends. Commanders must be educated to this effect.

**Winning trust, confidence, and support.** Overcoming the prejudices and biases of strangers is always difficult. As aforementioned, legitimacy and the perception of on-going success are critical to winning support. Advertising for mission allies is not good enough, and economies of scale likewise will not work. Only alliance building with specific communities of people and their leaders can succeed. Social dynamics and cultural knowledge are critical.

Modern insurgents have a marked advantage over their Cold War era counterparts. They can plug into a global media network that will instantly amplify their message. Email, satellite phone, and text messaging are all independent and more easily exploited by insurgents than by the Afghan or Iraqi governments. This dynamic of rapidly increasing sources of information and lessening government control of content is still accelerating. Information acceleration means that we have to re-think our approaches to the challenge.

Reconnaissance of the "human terrain" and focused military public relations efforts must precede the first physical encounter with the indigenous population. Such reconnaissance is critical to identifying and assessing potential allies and to condition first impressions. As facts unfold, the aim of military public relations among the local population is to relate a coherent and credible narrative of success, progress, and positive consequences that extends beyond the reach of the command's actual physical presence. Given the nature of military operations, this extension presents difficult work, but doing so is increasingly essential for success. This way of thinking has to overcome lingering 20th-century military attitudes.

While successful 20th-century insurgents and counterinsurgents achieved sociopolitical effects, operations could succeed without the “hearts and minds” of the people in the enemy country ostensibly being liberated. Once people were mobilized for war against an enemy country, there was little differentiation between the enemy regime and its citizens. For most citizens, the enemy was a distant, de-humanized abstraction (e.g., the Japanese). The popular conception was that citizens were considered complicit in whatever wrongs their governments committed. This was particularly true of the two World Wars. The Geneva Convention and the Law of Land Warfare were the only constraints on the military’s treatment of non-combatants. Some national armies were more scrupulous than others, but many millions of non-combatants were killed, injured, or maimed as a normal consequence of industrial-age war machines, especially in Europe and Asia. Rules of engagement were rarely stricter than these conventions required.

For several significant reasons, the enemy is now a far less distant abstraction. It is more commonplace to differentiate between the enemy regime and its citizens, and the contest for the citizenry has become a crucial, many-sided, and complex contest. These trends will continue. Distant people are no longer de-humanized abstractions. The world recognizes suffering for what it is. The Internet provides a way for people of similar interests to form virtual communities regardless of geography or kinship. All sides have rapid access to the ability to capture the attention of billions of people, and the politically savvy can rapidly and favorably spin their messages. The resulting global transparency and new technical capabilities that facilitate it have radically intertwined peoples’ lives.

The full political implications of this transformed global environment are far from clear, but this much is discernible: communities of interest cross national boundaries much more extensively with every passing day. During the war between NATO countries and the Serbian Milosevic regime over genocide in Kosovo, many of the most educated Serbs were more interested in economic development, and eventual political and economic integration with the regime’s enemies, than in supporting their national leader. The precise destruction by NATO aircraft of their property, the economic

***...the contest for the citizenry has become a crucial, many-sided, and complex contest.***

infrastructure their livelihood depended on, and the threats to their safety caused many of them to rally to their natural internal enemy, the nationalist tyrant. Current historical, political, and economic trends favor the developed democracies in such transnational political transactions.

At a minimum, one should not antagonize potential allies needlessly, and military planners have increasingly come to recognize this vital point. Rules of engagement have become more specific, limiting, and strategically important. Population densities are increasing everywhere, especially in underdeveloped and failing states. Military operations cannot avoid populated areas until stability operations kick in. Knowledge of social dynamics and the cultural mosaic are thus increasingly critical. What people think, the decisions they make, and the actions and mass movements that flow from them will matter more. Success in war will hinge on the ability to influence the decisions of varied audiences to support or impede one side or the other. Similarly, success in stability operations



AP Photo, Srdjan Ilic

**Serb Lazar Antic wipes his tears while standing in front of his house which was hit in a NATO airstrike in the town of Aleksinac, some 200 kilometers (124 miles) south of Belgrade, Yugoslavia, April 1999.**



will depend greatly on influencing varied groups to trust their security and future to legitimate governments (we support) rather than to extended families, clans, or tribes that make separate accommodations with violent political movements and organized crime.

In the future, it will be increasingly important to restrict the *public* communication emanating from psychological operations (PSYOP) agents at every level to avoid damaging the military public relations effort. The problem for commanders in the field today is that without the PSYOP capabilities now available to them, they would be short-handed in their public relations efforts. U.S. public law permits the use of PSYOP organizations to conduct military public relations, as long as it takes place abroad, even when it aims to influence allied publics in their homelands. But directing PSYOP against audiences you intend to win over is problematic. Information operations doctrine was originally not intended to venture into winning the trust, confidence, and support of people abroad. It was meant to demoralize the public of an enemy state, induce war weariness, and convince them to petition their governments for peace. This was an important aspect of 20th-century warfare; hence, orienting PSYOP against hostile foreign audiences made perfect sense. In layman's terms this is propaganda, not the logic that applied to regime change campaigns in Panama, Afghanistan, and Iraq or to other campaigns in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda, Haiti, Kosovo, and others.

Military leaders who are realists understand why, even if PSYOP is truth-based, using its capability in this role is myopic. Realistically, *PSYOP should only be directed at parties the commander sees as adversaries and not as potential allies*. Thus PSYOP requires even stricter controls than public law allows, but they should be controls the employing commander exercises based on his own judgment (i.e., mission command).

Crude and broad appeals like those of the past are more inclined to backfire because today people are much more informed and politically savvy. The message has to be far more subtle, and the messenger more clever. Actions will still speak louder than words and in a voice amplified by the omnipresent media megaphone. Clumsy "kinetics" will drown out our messages. Even necessary security measures

that inflict short-term pain for long-term gain may be impossible to implement because they send the wrong message.

## Understanding the Psychology of the Tipping Point

Two books by Malcolm Gladwell, *Blink* and *The Tipping Point*, make modern psychology accessible for military officers inclined to think in terms of mechanistic causality. These two books provide some of the latest understanding of social dynamics, and how and why messages move people to action in some cases and not in others. The logic made clear in these books shows how centralized and homogenized "hearts and minds" campaigns and approaches aimed at the population in general simply miss the target.

In *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell shows us why epidemics are useful metaphors for shaping our thinking about winning the trust, confidence, and support of strangers. His logic can help empower every thinking military professional who has a message to peddle (support my mission) or a campaign to promote (support a new democratically elected government). In fact, his ideas should shape the way we all look at every military operation in the 21st century.

To summarize Gladwell, an idea passes a certain point in currency or acceptance, and then it tips. What was a gradual progress, or stasis, before, suddenly changes at a dramatic, geometric rate. Anyone who has ever been in a combat unit that has panicked, or observed it in the enemy force, has witnessed a virtual epidemic of fear seize the previously brave. It can happen to whole states, and it can occur rapidly and unexpectedly. For instance, historians have highlighted the dramatic collapse of France in May 1940. An example we all witnessed was the inexplicably quick collapse of the former Soviet Union. Gladwell concludes that "Ideas, products, messages, and behaviors spread just like viruses do."<sup>5</sup> Pandemic disease is a function of three things: the people who transmit infectious agents, the agent itself, and the environment in which the agent is operating. When a system is jolted out of equilibrium, it tips. Some, potentially very small, change happens, in one or more areas, and it has dramatic consequences. There is reason to conclude that winning support for our missions would follow the same pattern.



AP Photo, Boris Yurchenko

A crowd gathers around a personnel carrier as some people climb aboard the vehicle and try to block its advance near Red Square in downtown Moscow, 19 August 1991, in a coup attempt by hard-line Communists.

## Mavens, Connectors, and Salesmen

Gladwell also argues convincingly that a social movement, such as winning support for our mission within a community, spreads primarily by word of mouth, and, paradoxically, that word of mouth epidemics are becoming more, not less, important. The flood of information coming at people overwhelms their ability to make judgments. So they rely more and more on very primitive social contacts, traditional forms of communications, and the people in their lives whom they respect, admire, and trust. Among these are three kinds of people who play key, and very specialized roles—opinion leaders called “mavens,” people who are well connected called “connectors,” and people who can become passionate about an idea and sell it to others, “salesmen.”

Research and experience tell us that people adopt new ideas at widely different rates on a bell curve. A small handful of innovators or visionaries are followed by a slightly larger group of early-adapting opinion leaders and a big bulge comprising the early majority and the late majority. At the other end of the curve are the laggards. Understanding the differ-

ent motivations of each group and the fact that they do not communicate well with one another is critical. Visionaries want revolutionary change and are willing to take huge risks to achieve it. The early majority are pragmatists. Change must fit into the world of complex arrangements they inhabit, and they must see a pragmatic improvement. The late majority are conservative conformists who don't want to be left behind. The laggards are the archconservatives. The problem is the usual chasm between the visionaries who “get it” quickly and easily with little translation, and the majority who may have trouble even making sense of the new idea. Mavens, connectors, and salesmen together form a bridge between visionaries and pragmatists. The key lies in finding them and getting their help.

The most important point for Soldiers and Marines engaged in our current struggles for support and allegiance is that all contenders will vie for the same few connectors, mavens, and salesmen in every rural village and urban community. The importance of knowing the people among whom these struggles are waged boils down to finding and converting these few.

## Memorable Messages

The message of the few also has to be one that sticks. Not only do epidemics tip because of the extraordinary efforts of a few select carriers, but also because something happens to transform the virus itself, making it durable. An idea becomes more appealing, and thus more durable, to a target audience. Research indicates that there are specific ways of making a message memorable, and thus durable, such as relatively simple changes in presentation and how the information is structured.

Gladwell argues that for messages to have the maximum impact on all their intended audiences, they require inordinate efforts to ensure that busy practical people remember them and find them attractive enough to take certain risks to act on them.

We cannot assume that this level of persuasion will be easy, or self-evident, because a message's contagiousness is often an unexpected property. Conventional advertisers believe in speaking loudly and often enough—the rule of six hearings—to make a message memorable. But such advertising gimmicks are often impractical in a combat zone, and worse, such tactics can also alienate or invite ridicule. Some of those who are clamoring for attention will have hostile intent, and this is the first hurdle to overcome before any community will even listen. To stir “hearts and minds,” the message must have five essential qualities:

- It must be *credible*. Americans and Pushtun villagers or Sadr City residents will not find the same truths equally credible. An incredible message may be true, but it will not be entertained seriously. And as much as we would like to “spin” a purse out of a sow's ear, such attempts generally backfire.

- It has to be *verifiable* locally and by the *intended audience*. It is essential to think through how local people can verify it.

- It must be understood *in the way it was intended*. Local testing for this quality is vital.

- It must apply to people *personally, and concretely*, not abstractly. For instance, how will supporting *this* election process at *this* time affect their lives?

- It must unambiguously communicate how *they* can act on it in their local community. Localized and clearly conveyed instructions are essential.

Cross-cultural communications and communicating with several different cultural communities at once takes patience, persistence, and some trial and error. Every small and seemingly trivial thing will make a message either effective or counterproductive. A message, like an epidemic, is sensitive to the conditions and circumstances of the times and places in which it occurs. People are extremely sensitive to context; they respond to signals in their physical surroundings and take cues from their social environment.

Features of our environment provide a strong impetus to act a certain way. A troubled person may be tipped toward crime by something as simple and trivial as every day signs of disorder like trash in the streets, graffiti, and rampant petty crime. These send a strong signal that says, “No one cares, and no one is in charge.”

Often it is within our power to change the signals that invite crime or dysfunctional behavior. The principle is to begin somewhere and show steady, inexorable progress. A clear and unambiguous message of unremitting progress, one with no prospect of retreat, has been used in Iraq, and elsewhere, by various commanders. But for such approaches to really work, commanders require enough resources, strong support from above, and a sustained effort over time. They must first meet the people's fundamental expectations of any government—keeping them safe, securing their property, and facilitating their livelihood (not just now and then, but, to a reasonable extent, *always*). When people fear the consequences of acting on a message, it will not matter how memorable it is. No tipping point will follow.

## The Rule of 150

People who have an idea to sell have long realized the value of creating a community around new converts where those new beliefs can be practiced, expressed, and nurtured. This is one effective way to make a fundamental change in people's beliefs and behavior. One successful strategy for rapidly propagating a contagious message has been to collect the most enthusiastic followers in a particular area into close-knit societies. In this way, one super connector/maven/salesman can tie many groups together through occasional visits, and while they are away, daily group dynamics reinforce basic tenets of the movement.

The “rule of 150” refers to the maximum number of people who can be in such a close-knit group. Scientists believe that 150 is the maximum number of individuals with whom human beings can have a genuine social relationship. Anthropological literature confirms this number again and again. In one such study, 148.4 was the number of people in the villages of 21 separate hunter-gatherer societies across several continents. The size of companies of soldiers across time and place has remained steady at no more than 150. Beyond this number, people become strangers to each other, and cohesion erodes. Smaller groups are closer knit and share trust.

The “rule of 150” has several important implications for winning trust and support in any community. Below that number, people are more easily affected with a group ethos. Such groups

are powerful incubators for ideas because people can more easily agree and act with one voice. They can also coalesce and successfully counteract antithetical influences. Unity comes from sharing a common relationship.

Groups that adhere to the “rule of 150” also have another powerful property called “transactive memory.” Groups possess more than the sum of ideas and impressions stored in individual brains: such groups also store knowledge about who in the group knows what about what. People create an implicit joint memory. Since mental energy is limited, people in such groups can concentrate on what each knows best. Truly knowing a person means knowing his or her skills, abilities, and passions—what he or she is truly good at doing. This knowledge gives the mavens in a group much more power to influence others and mirrors, at the organizational level, the kind of intimacy that exists in a family.

### Keeping Good Ideas Contagious

As Gladwell notes, “One paradox of social epidemics is that in order to create one contagious movement, you often have to create many small movements first—all headed roughly in the same direction or focused on one thing.” The implication for operations is that Soldiers and Marines can employ this wisdom themselves. A national “hearts and minds” campaign is won by clan, by village, and by one community of close-knit people at a time. There is no substitute for winning the confidence and trust of each of these, one by one. In this campaign for trust, one perceived falsehood will undermine everything, and clever words cannot overcome obtuse actions. Before acting, we must know how our actions are likely to be interpreted and plan to accompany our actions with messages and personal engagements with community leaders to amplify our intent. Doing so will preempt our enemy’s information deployment, his negative spin.

***Before acting, we must know  
how our actions are likely to  
be interpreted...***

However, we are not now well organized and educated for this work. This work is most usefully done at brigade level and below where imaginative commanders have reorganized to perform it with available, but under prepared people. Progress depends on accurate feedback of local perceptions, and specific knowledge about relationships, agendas, and interests that our intelligence services are ill-equipped to provide. Learning mechanisms in this dimension are stunted and need to grow.

### Toward a New Paradigm

Psychological operations must be performed separately and by different people from those who perform military public relations.<sup>6</sup> Commands succeed or fail in their missions based primarily on how well they do the right things, as aforementioned. Their actions can project an image of doing the right things well, and the words of a command spokesperson can only incrementally add or detract from that message. The capacity of a military spokesperson to mitigate ineffective or counterproductive acts and images is limited, but effective public relations can build on effective acts and images, thus extending effects. Such synergy speeds mission success.

When people at home and in allied countries get the impression that their forces are ineffective and illegitimate, they will withdraw support. When people in the battlespace believe our enemy is winning, they will join them just to survive. When they too believe our operations illegitimate (and against their interests), they will oppose us. These related challenges are as essential to the success of any mission as any warfighting function.<sup>7</sup> As operations unfold, the task of military public relations is to relate a coherent and credible narrative of success, progress, and positive consequences that extends beyond the reach of the command’s actual physical presence.

Military public relations is a *new function* with new demands. Its professionals require substantial expertise relevant to spanning the challenges of this necessarily unified field of competence. Military education needs to adapt to new demands and to expand military capabilities within a broader, more realistic public relations paradigm. Ironically, without the PSYOP capabilities now available to them, commanders would be short-handed. One possibility would be to “re-flag” PSYOP detachments to be military public relations detachments. Another is to

expand and reorient Public Affairs branch detachments to fill the void. If the Army takes this function seriously, it must have a functionally aligned branch of service with deep expertise.

The command's credibility hinges on military public relations. Maintaining the coherence of words and deeds becomes paramount because the command's communicators compete in a realm of moral credibility. When the command sends discordant messages through its actions and messengers, or when it fails to cross-reinforce words and deeds, its credibility is shaken. Only when actions and communications resonate in harmony do words and images acquire a multiplier effect. Truthfulness is the best policy *every time*. The only way to guard the fragile credibility of any command on foreign soil is being first with the truth. The need for alacrity has outdated traditional mechanisms of vertical message control, which must be replaced. Trust streamlines clearance decisions, keeps spokespersons circumscribed, and is the only control mechanism that has a chance of meeting the speed required for success.

Trying to deceive one public and not others is not only impractical and difficult to manage, but also likely to backfire. No open communications should disadvantage the important effort to keep friends and gain allies. The principal message of the command is the mission and how it relates to people. We should always act with clearly communicated intentions. How we act in pursuit of our ends is the strongest evidence of what we mean, and this becomes the source for interpretations of the mission—the message. This includes acting forcefully when that is the language best understood. Well-thought-out actions remain the most convincing way to influence human behavior. Well-chosen, well-targeted words and images that build on such foundations can enhance that sphere of influence. Absolute unity of effort is required for success.

Military public relations is a *dialogue* rather than a *transmission*. The art of gaining and maintaining favorable relations with people in the area of operations depends on accurate feedback of local perceptions, and specific knowledge about relationships, agendas, and interests. This art requires understanding local social dynamics and having the cultural knowledge to build interpersonal alliances with specific communities and their leaders. We need new

doctrine that applies specifically and usefully to the logic of this particular challenge. We also need education and training that arms commanders, staffs, and soldiers with pertinent and useful knowledge. New organizations with the right kinds of knowledgeable specialists in adequate numbers need to take shape. Military public relations relies on distinct, understandable logic and identifiable competencies. It needs increased integration with other functions, and more command attention, education, and resources.

Doctrine is not the place for compromises; it should reflect clarity of thought. While the last FM 3.0 revision made relevant improvements, the doctrine requires further revision to address remaining dysfunctions. For instance, some think the new “information task” labeled “information engagement” is the same as military public relations, but it cannot be since it is defined by the collection of old categories and component means that comprise it, including PSYOP. *Tasks and function should be defined in terms of ends, not means.*

If “information engagement” were so redefined, then it would be clear that PSYOP has no place in it. “Engaging” is a term associated with a category of warfare that is smaller than a “battle,” a fire-fight. The notion of engaging with information is also misleading and grossly simpleminded. It suggests that simply engaging with information can change human behavior. Information engagement is a stale and sterile term best left behind. Whatever we call the public relations function, we should define it by its aim: keeping the trust and confidence of home and allied populations while, simultaneously, gaining the confidence and support of local ones. **MR**

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## NOTES

1. See the new counterinsurgency manual, FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*.
2. Tony Blair, “Like a Feral Beast” <[www.opinionjournal.com/extra/?id=110010235](http://www.opinionjournal.com/extra/?id=110010235)>. Speech delivered 12 June 2007 at Reuters headquarters in London.
3. *Ibid.* This is based on a projection from data roughly a year old taken from Mr. Blair's speech referred to above.
4. *Ibid.*
5. On 12 September 1967, I observed the 39th Vietnamese Ranger Battalion, a unit I had served with for eight months of dogged fighting, suddenly panic when it was attacked unexpectedly from the rear, just as it commenced a cross-country march. It recovered just as quickly when the battalion commander and a few officers pulled their handguns threatening to shoot any rangers who didn't immediately drop down and take up defensive positions on a line to our left and right.
6. My article, “Unifying Physical and Psychological Impact during Operations” (*Military Review*, March-April 2009) addressed the useful employment of PSYOP specialists. Using them for the purposes addressed here may today be a necessity, but there is no doubt that using suspected propagandists to win mission allies is dysfunctional.
7. In other words, while the function of maneuver is to close with the enemy, keeping the trust and confidence of home and allied populations while simultaneously gaining the confidence and support of the local publics and actors must be a function just as integral to full spectrum operations.



# Popular Support as the Objective in Counterinsurgency

## WHAT ARE WE REALLY AFTER?

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PHOTO: Locals mill about a street market in a neighborhood in Afghanistan as U.S. Soldiers pass through the area, 10 February 2009. (U.S. Army, SSG Russell Lee Klika)

COUNTERINSURGENCY (COIN) is a complex and bedeviling form of warfare, so much so that U.S. doctrine actually contains a list of apparent paradoxes Joint Force commanders are likely to face as they design operations and campaigns. The COIN operation's main objective is among the many ambiguities involved. Unlike conventional war where key terrain or enemy forces present clear, tangible objectives, in COIN the objective is often intangible: the people or their support.

This article offers a critique of COIN doctrine. It argues two points:

- U.S. doctrine vastly oversimplifies the operational environment in COIN in the way it defines the people or the population. It does not recognize the population's true complexity. Recognizing complexity will help commanders design more effective operations.
- U.S. COIN doctrine provides no model for operationalizing popular support for the counterinsurgent. Commanders would benefit from a clearer picture of what kinds of support the counterinsurgent needs to isolate insurgents.

This article draws on current research on political violence to propose a four-level framework for popular support to clarify its nature for commanders. The counterinsurgent obviously needs support to fill certain governance and security functions, but history shows this is not enough. The counterinsurgent also needs support from key individuals in the host nation's social, political, and cultural networks to isolate insurgents and tip mass opinion in his favor. Today's networked society makes these key opinion leaders high-value targets in a modern COIN campaign. This criticality has important implications for intelligence, information operations (IO), special operation forces (SOF), and operational fires.

### Popular Support as the COIN Objective

"No one starts a war—or rather, no one in his sense ought to do so—without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it."<sup>1</sup> In this often-quoted passage, Clausewitz describes the importance of clearly establishing the objective for any military operation at the outset. As war theorist Milan Vego writes, "Without a clearly stated and attainable objective, the entire military effort becomes essentially pointless."<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, the conflicts in which the United States finds itself today do not seem to offer clear, decisive military objectives. In fact, the complexities of Iraq and Afghanistan have caused a reexamination of joint COIN doctrine. *The Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept (IW JOC)*; Field Manual (FM) 3-24/Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP)

**Without a clearly stated and attainable objective, the entire military effort becomes essentially pointless.**

3-33.5, *Counterinsurgency*; and *The Multiservice Concept for Irregular War* recognize insurgency as an inherently “complex, messy, and ambiguous social phenomenon.”<sup>3</sup> According to FM 3-24, counterinsurgency is an “internal war.”<sup>4</sup> It encompasses “military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency.”<sup>5</sup>

Clear military objectives in such a “complex, messy, and ambiguous” internal war are understandably difficult to define. The updated doctrine explicitly rejects the view that the primary objective is to destroy insurgent forces with superior firepower.<sup>6</sup> There is now a growing consensus that COIN is primarily a political activity.<sup>7</sup> It is a competition between insurgents and counterinsurgents for political power and a monopoly on force.<sup>8</sup> As described by COIN expert Steven Metz, contemporary COIN environments are “more like a violent and competitive market than war in the traditional sense where clear and discrete combatants seek strategic victory.”<sup>9</sup> Between insurgents and counterinsurgents, there are no front or rear areas, no key terrain or battle positions. The general population becomes the battlespace.<sup>10</sup> But even more than that, because of the sociopolitical nature of insurgencies, gaining the support of the people becomes the main objective. The center of gravity for both insurgents and counterinsurgents is the people.<sup>11</sup>

Some object to equating the people with a true Clausewitzian center of gravity.<sup>12</sup> However, the main objective in COIN is not seizing terrain or destroying enemy forces. As Galula’s “First Law” states, the main objective is to gain the support of the population.<sup>13</sup> FM 3-24, too, describes the objective in terms of establishing the legitimacy of the government under attack. The authors understand legitimacy is ultimately the product of attitudes, perceptions, expectations, and confidence among the population.<sup>14</sup> On a practical level, one can generalize all these cognitive processes as “the support of the people.” *The*

*Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept* defines the focus of COIN as “a relevant population,” and the purpose of COIN is to “gain or maintain control or influence over, and the support of, that relevant population through political, psychological, and economic methods.”<sup>15</sup> In other words, the objective in COIN is gaining the support of the people.

But what, then, is this entity, “the people?” What “support” are we seeking? If the purpose of operations or campaigns is to “gain or maintain control or influence over, and the support of, the relevant population,” what is the nature of popular support, and how does it express itself? Currently, U.S. doctrine does not say. It takes us to the water’s edge on these essential questions, but leaves it unclear who or what popular support is. It provides a general, simplistic, and monolithic view of the people. At the same time, U.S. COIN doctrine provides no model for counterinsurgent popular support. It does not describe which kinds of support are the most critical to cultivate.

## Who Are the People?

In defining the people, FM 3-24 quotes David Galula’s *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* nearly verbatim when it states, “In any situation, whatever the cause, there will be an active minority for the cause, a neutral or passive majority, and an active minority against the cause.”<sup>16</sup> Other expressions of U.S. COIN doctrine define the operational environment as a triad of insurgent, counterinsurgent, and “a neutral or passive majority.” Doctrinal thinking portrays the majority as a single, monolithic block, defined primarily by its attitude about the conflict (neutral). The “active” forces then persuade those who are neutral or passive to support one side or the other. This assumption gives the problem some much-needed clarity: “Success requires the government to be accepted as legitimate by most of that uncommitted middle.”<sup>17</sup> “Both insurgents and counterinsurgents are fighting for the support of the populace.”<sup>18</sup> “In the end, victory comes, in large measure, by convincing the populace that their life will be better under the [host-nation] government than under an insurgent regime.”<sup>19</sup>

Is such an assumption an accurate reflection of the operational environment? COIN doctrine acknowledges that insurgent forces can be highly complex, diversified, and segmented: “Different insurgent

forces using different approaches may form loose coalitions when it serves their interests; however, these same movements may fight among themselves, even while engaging counterinsurgents.”<sup>20</sup> Galula and FM 3-24 only hint at this same complexity within the noninsurgent population. Of course, Galula and the manual are not alone in this regard. Most histories of modern insurgencies, including Mao’s description of the people as a “vast sea” that hides insurgents and drowns the enemy, also portray the people in this monolithic way.<sup>21</sup> Yale scholar Stathis Kalyvas asserts that such “macro-level” accounts represent the prevailing wisdom on political violence, i.e., that “elites and populations are fused and amalgamated. . . [and] elites determine automatically and unilaterally the course of group actions and the groups are monolithic and behave as such.”<sup>22</sup> However, this construct “fails to match the vast complexity, fluidity, and ambiguity one encounters on the ground.”<sup>23</sup>

Taking a broader view of insurgency as a form of political rebellion, University of Chicago Political Scientist Roger Petersen also argues that the people should not be the unit of analysis because rebellious activity varies greatly at the community level and some individuals play different roles in the course of rebellion.<sup>24</sup>

Commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan agree that the environment is far more complex than doctrine indicates. In Al Anbar province, Iraq, Marine Captain Michael Vasquez concludes that FM 3-24’s canonization of Galula’s axiom relies on an oversimplified dichotomy between insurgent and population. Vasquez says the FM “fails to account for the fluid nature of a population where individuals may move back and forth [between categories] on a daily basis.”<sup>25</sup> Major General Peter Chiarelli, while as a Division Commander in Baghdad, described his area of operations as “overpopulated yet underdeveloped, divided into neighborhoods with distinct demographic divergences, reliant on a social system of governance based on tribal and religious affiliations, and interconnected by modern lines of communications.”<sup>26</sup> Army Colonel Ralph Baker notes the great ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic diversity of his area of operations. When he served as a Brigade Commander, Baker criticized the view of Iraqis “as a single, homogenous population receptive to centrally developed, all-purpose, general themes and messages.”<sup>27</sup> However, neither Chiarelli nor Baker

has a better doctrinal construct for this complexity. They categorize all residents neither for nor against the Iraqi government as the “undecided,” a neutral, passive majority of “fence-sitters.”

When one lumps this middle ground of the population together into a single entity, one can no longer appreciate the “tremendous variation in rebellion activity” within it.<sup>28</sup> The counterinsurgent’s objective, popular support, becomes a national or regional entity. We see the people as with us, against us, or as leaning one way or another, when in fact, they make up a much more complex, diverse, and fractured “mosaic.”<sup>29</sup> Each micro-constituency within the people may have its own unique perspectives, interests, and agenda in the war, one that only vaguely coincides with any larger popular feeling, if it does so at all. If the counterinsurgent cannot grasp this, then he does not know his terrain. He is blind to what is really happening around him.

Consider for instance the prominent role of tribalism in current COIN strategy in Iraq. Faced with a chaotic social environment that exceeded FM 3-24’s simple dichotomy, commanders looked for ways to make sense of the insurgency, and, based on scholarship by anthropologists like Montgomery McFate, many turned to Iraq’s tribes as a possible unifying construct.<sup>30</sup> If “the tribe is the most enduring and important social structure for the Iraqi Sunni Arabs” as Iraq study group member Lin Todd and others argue, a COIN strategy based on tribal co-optation gave commanders something solid to act on.<sup>31</sup> However, a similar monolithic expectation soon pervaded this approach. As military author Steven Pressfield put it, “Step one is to recognize that the enemy is tribal. We in the West may flatter ourselves that democracy is taking root in Iraq. . . What’s happening is the tribal chief has passed the word and everybody is voting exactly as he told them to.”<sup>32</sup> Thus, the tribe simply substitutes for the people as the monolithic bloc. “The tribe can’t be reasoned with. Its mind is not rational; it is instinctive. The tribe is not modern but primitive. The tribe thinks from the stem of its brain, not the cortex. Its code is of warrior pride, not of Enlightenment reason.”<sup>33</sup> Tribal sheiks thus became key power brokers for bringing whole monolithic blocs of Iraqis into line at once.

The reality on the ground is far more complex. Vasquez writes, “Because of a fundamental misunderstanding of tribal bonds within the Marine



***The tribe can't be reasoned with.  
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it is instinctive.***

Corps, the principal contributing factors that led to the security gains of 2007 have gone largely unrecognized.”<sup>34</sup> Practitioners in Iraq routinely report that the tribes themselves seethe with “interpersonal rivalry, feuds...family and village quarrels...and intergroup hostility.”<sup>35</sup> Many Iraqis see the tribal sheiks “as illiterate, embarrassing, criminal, powerless anachronisms that should be given no official recognition.”<sup>36</sup> Moreover, at least 25 percent of Iraqis, including most foreign jihadist, have no relevant tribal affiliation.<sup>37</sup> Research suggests that tribes are dynamic, factional networks of competing sub-groups quite unlike the model in FM 3-24.<sup>38</sup>

## **Defining Popular Support**

Nevertheless, gaining popular support is still the objective, whether the people are a single monolithic block trapped passively between warring combatants or a shifting mosaic of subcultures and factions. The counterinsurgent’s challenge is not to find a way to move a single mass of neutrals over to his side, but to piece together a sufficiently stable coalition of factions that isolates the insurgents or cuts them off from their critical bases of support. The insurgents and counterinsurgents do not woo independent voters to win a majority over to their side; they engage in Tammany Hall-style coalition building in a cutthroat competition.<sup>39</sup> Martin Scorsese’s film, *Gangs of New York*, presents an instructive analogy.<sup>40</sup>

Clarifying what the counterinsurgents need to do would make it easier for commanders to design campaigns that build winning coalitions. As important as this would seem, there are very few published models available. FM 3-24 offers ways to assess popular support for the insurgents, but nothing nearly as straightforward for the counterinsurgent.<sup>41</sup> A few scholars have researched violent internal conflict and divide FM 3-24’s neutral majority into three subcategories defined by an individual’s attitude towards the government.<sup>42</sup> The

stronger the person’s attachment is to the government, the higher the category of support.

However, other research shows that trying to understand popular support as the product of attitudes, beliefs, or policy preferences may not be a valid approach. Kalyvas argues that such beliefs may not even exist. U.S. political scientists have long argued that, even among the educated American voting population, “large portions of the electorate do not have meaningful beliefs.”<sup>43</sup> The political attitudes that do exist in the midst of a violent insurgency are vague, ambiguous, shifting, and nearly impossible to measure with any accuracy.<sup>44</sup> Kalyvas writes, “The complexities of preference formation suggest the need to shift the focus from attitudes to behavior.”<sup>45</sup>

Thus, it may not be useful to define popular support in terms of attitudes, perceptions, or confidence, as FM 3-24 does. What the people do, rather than what they say, think, or feel may be a more appropriate guide for operational commanders. Roger Petersen offers such a behavior-based approach. He proposes a seven-point spectrum of resistance in which the middle point, the zero position, represents neutrality between insurgent and counterinsurgent, i.e., “the individual does nothing for or against the regime and nothing for or against the resistance.”<sup>46</sup> The +1 level represents unarmed and unorganized resistance against the government through symbolic gestures like writing graffiti on a wall or attending a demonstration. The +2 level represents direct or “active” support of insurgent operations, but still not personal armed resistance. Active fighters engaged in armed resistance inhabit the +3 level of resistance (Figure 1).<sup>47</sup>

Like much of the literature, Petersen’s work focuses on the insurgents, not the government. However, one can easily extrapolate a similar scale for the counterinsurgents at the -1 to -3 levels. Still, the kind of support the counterinsurgent needs is fundamentally different. An influential RAND study on Vietnam argues that the insurgents “need

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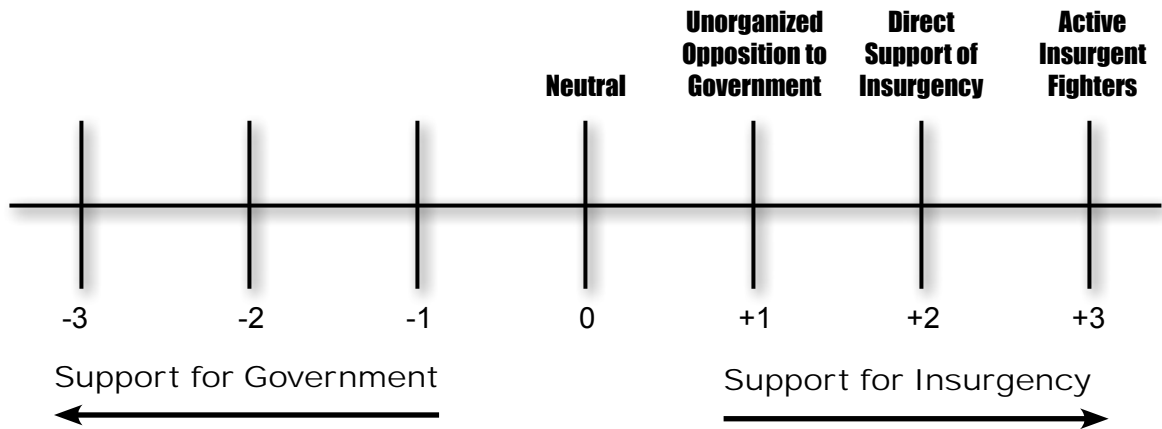


Figure 1. Petersen's spectrum of resistance.

not initially have the spontaneous support, sympathy, or loyalty of the people, not even of a significant minority of the people."<sup>48</sup> In fact, the insurgents can do very well with very small numbers of active +3 fighters, if they can at least achieve a "submissiveness" that results in "nondenunciation" from most of the people.<sup>49</sup>

In contrast, as FM 3-24 points out, the counterinsurgent needs much broader and more active support than the insurgent. Counterinsurgents' categories of support may be different from those of the insurgents. A crucial distinction Vasquez observed among Iraqi Sunni Arabs was the difference between "anonymous mobilization" and "individual mobilization." Anonymous mobilization is "characterized by support for the counterinsurgency force that does not single out the individual or place his household under individual threat."<sup>50</sup> The economic necessity of serving as one of thousands in local government security forces, for example, gives the individual a kind of social cover that is less dangerous and less likely to invite retaliation from insurgents. Individual mobilization, on the other hand, is "time-sensitive" decision making by individuals who "weigh the threat of retaliation versus the benefit of cooperation."<sup>51</sup> This is the level of personal commitment to the government's cause that produces leadership at the local level and the flow of intelligence that can marginalize and isolate the insurgent. The individual may have selfish motives for doing this, but the motive is much less important than its practical effect. Combining Petersen's spectrum of resistance with the anonymous/individual

distinction just discussed is a good starting point for a popular-support doctrinal framework for counterinsurgency.

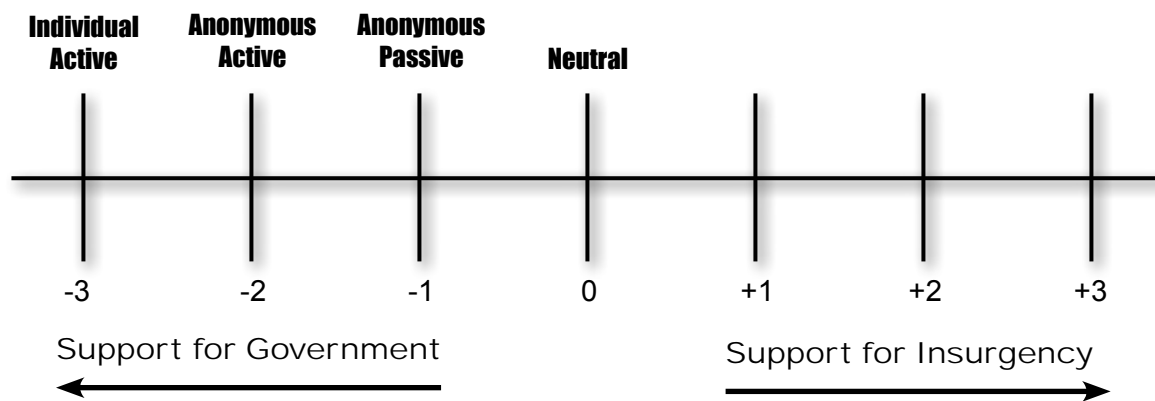
**Forms of popular support.** Popular support for the counterinsurgent can take four forms: true neutral; anonymous passive; anonymous active; and individual active—

- A *true neutral* does nothing for or against either side. That he will not aid the insurgents makes him a distinct subset of popular support.

- *Anonymous passives* are willing to acquiesce or submit to counterinsurgent rule, obey its dictates, honor its laws, and support operations against insurgents if the risk is minimal. However, they are just as likely to do the same for insurgents if their interests change.

- *Anonymous actives* are willing, for whatever reason, to collaborate officially by doing open business with counterinsurgent forces, taking government jobs, or serving in local or national security forces.

- *Individual actives* display a personal, public commitment to the government's claim to legitimacy and COIN operations against insurgents. Formal alignment with the government in the form of employment is not necessary and one should not assume the commitment is permanent or reflects some deeper ideological agreement (although often it does). Examples of individual actives might include a citizen who provides quality intelligence to counterinsurgents, an imam who makes pro-government or anti-insurgent pronouncements, or a businessman who openly defies insurgent calls for a general strike (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. A categorical framework for counterinsurgent popular support in COIN.**

As with any model, the fine distinctions between categories blur together at the street level. How public does a tipster have to be in order to qualify as an individual active? Is there a clear demarcation between anonymous passives and actives? In most situations, we can only answer these questions on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, as Petersen observed, the same individuals can move between categories several times throughout the conflict.<sup>52</sup>

### What We Are Really After

By categorizing popular support in this way, commanders can make clearer distinctions between the kinds of popular support their operations must generate. First, the history of modern COIN suggests that a population full of true neutrals and anonymous passives will more likely benefit the insurgents, so logical lines of operations aimed at achieving those effects will not ultimately support strategic success.<sup>53</sup> However, for a foreign power supporting a host-nation (HN) government in COIN, one thing that is absolutely necessary is the development of effective host-nation security forces to carry on the fight.<sup>54</sup> Unless the United States is willing to bear the direct burden of internal and external security indefinitely, As FM 3-24 correctly asserts, “HN elements must accept responsibilities to achieve real victory.”<sup>55</sup> This will require substantial *anonymous active* support. We can look to historical examples to take the guesswork out of how large such a force must be.

Historical data suggests that a ratio of at least 15 to 20 security force members to every 1,000 inhabitants is necessary to maintain basic order.<sup>56</sup> Additional forces for border and infrastructure secu-

rity, plus air and naval forces, will increase the total demand. Add to this the basic labor force necessary for national, provincial, and local governments to function, and one has a clear objective for the number of *anonymous actives* the counterinsurgent needs to recruit from the population.

At first, this might seem an insurmountable figure, but the history of modern COIN shows that this has rarely been the case. Few of even the most corrupt and inept governments besieged by popular insurgencies have collapsed because they literally could not hire employees while they had the money to pay them. This includes fielding local security forces. As Anthony J. Joes writes, “Loyalism has been a common, and often salient, feature of [insurgencies]. Yet it has rarely been a decisive one.”<sup>57</sup> Large indigenous counterinsurgent forces took the field in Vietnam, French Algeria, Indonesia, British India, Soviet Afghanistan, and Portuguese Africa.<sup>58</sup> So it is possible and fundamentally necessary, but at the same time, clearly not enough to produce victory on its own. As General Chiarelli writes of his experience in Iraq, combat operations and training local forces “will never contribute to a total solution.”<sup>59</sup>

If robust recruitment of anonymous actives, while necessary, is not sufficient, then the decisive operation for winning popular support must take place among *individual actives*. As argued above, many COIN practitioners tend to view the people as a monolithic block to win over more or less *en masse*, so that they will come to believe in the legitimacy and relative goodness of the government versus the insurgents. This is the rationale of the now clichéd phrase, “winning hearts and minds,” which one RAND study summarized as “sharing



U.S. Army, SSG Adam Mancini

**U.S. Army SSG Azhar Sher, right, and Pvt. Ryan Delashmit watch a group of Afghanis walk down a path while he and his team conduct a dismounted patrol mission, 17 March 2009.**

public services generously” in order to prove that “the government cares.”<sup>60</sup> If the government practices this policy broadly enough and long enough, the assumption is that mass opinion will eventually shift in favor of the counterinsurgents.

However, a broad range of intriguing new research suggests that a “network society” is emerging globally that makes certain key opinion leaders, not the masses, the high-value targets in the fight for popular support.<sup>61</sup> Although networks themselves are nothing new, in network society, social, cultural, economic, and political influence forms less around central state hierarchies or traditional authority structures, and more around dispersed networks of influence. A remarkable feature of these networks is the extraordinary effect that small cadres of key influencers have on others in the network. Author Malcolm Gladwell writes in *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* that all kinds of social phenomena, from fashion fads to political revolutions, often spread like viral epidemics.<sup>62</sup> They obey the “law of the few,” which states that social epidemics spread through the influence of a relatively few special people with certain skills and personalities.<sup>63</sup> These people act as nodes in the network and are the catalysts for change.

The above has interesting implications for a doctrinal framework of popular support. Of course, the idea that small numbers of elite opinion leaders

deeply influence the passive, distracted masses is as old as communications studies itself and is arguably the foundational theory of modern advertising and political campaigning.<sup>64</sup> However, the diffusion of digital communication technology has expanded the influence and power of networks—and the key opinion leaders acting as their nodes—in ways that have left hardly any corner of the globe unpenetrated, including the underdeveloped, traditional societies where insurgencies flourish. Even in an allegedly tribal society like Iraq or Afghanistan, the individual active support of perhaps a relatively few individuals may affect a tipping point of mass opinion, and would then be the real prize on both sides for moving the people for or against the insurgency.

Counterinsurgents have already embraced the network paradigm as the best way of understanding the insurgent forces, so applying it to subgroups that comprise the population as well, is no great leap. Military author Thomas Hammes writes, “Today, insurgent organizations are comprised of loose coalitions of the willing, human networks that range from local to global.”<sup>65</sup> Marc Sageman describes in *Understanding Terror Networks* how many parts of the insurgencies throughout the Muslim world are themselves part of a larger global terrorist network propelled by relatively few key ideological and operational leaders.<sup>66</sup> FM 3-24 also recognizes the networked nature of insurgent groups and provides

an application of social network analysis as a tool for grappling with this phenomenon.<sup>67</sup>

This dynamic raises the possibility that just as counterinsurgents must make a great effort to identify and target the nodes of the “dark networks”—the networks of insurgents, terrorists, and criminals—so must counterinsurgents seek out the “gray” networks in the uncommitted population and identify their key leaders in the same way.<sup>68</sup> These key leaders are the individuals that the counterinsurgents need to convert or co-opt into their coalition by eliciting their individual active support. Whether they are termed opinion elites, opinion leaders, or network nodes, these individuals have the skill or capacity to influence the true neutrals, anonymous passives, and anonymous actives to isolate the insurgents.

For commanders designing COIN campaigns, what is truly intriguing about research into the law of the few and its effect on networks is the suggestion that relatively small numbers of nodes in these gray networks need to be co-opted to have significant results in terms of mass opinion. Scholar Jonathan Farley uses mathematical simulations to test this dynamic in “Evolutionary Dynamics of the Insurgency in Iraq: A Mathematical Model of the Battle for Hearts and Minds.” Farley concludes, “How many men, women and children must you win over to your cause before victory is assured? ... Although intuition says that these numbers must be high, a certain model of public opinion based on ideas from statistical physics suggests that the answer may be smaller than one might at first think.”<sup>69</sup> His simulations confirm the tipping point idea that the key to mass opinion in network society is the viral influence of key opinion makers.<sup>70</sup> Although commanders in the field will justifiably remain skeptical of how well mathematical simulations will apply to the hard realities of war, the simulations represent yet another data point among many pointing to similar conclusions.

In many ways, current COIN practitioners are intuitively working towards this same approach, just without the doctrinal template to articulate it more clearly. In Iraq, for example, Colonel Baker recounts, “We realized we had to reach the most trusted, most influential community members: the societal and cultural leaders. We hoped to convince them to be our interlocutors with the silent majority.”<sup>71</sup> Baker’s list of targets includes religious leaders, sheiks, tribal leaders, government officials, and

educators. “To be effective, you must tailor themes and messages to specific audiences,” not to Iraqis as a “single, homogeneous” whole.<sup>72</sup> A more complete understanding of the networked but fractured nature of Iraqi society would show that there might also be many more less-obvious candidates than these; thus, there might be many more opportunities to find a decisive tipping point among the “silent majority.”

## Implications for Operational Functions

Unfortunately, a full examination of the mechanisms that produce the two necessary types of support, anonymous active and individual active, is beyond the scope of this paper. In addition, each insurgency will have its own unique characteristics and require different strategies. However, this approach does have some important doctrinal implications for the commander’s use of intelligence, information operations, and fires management in the COIN environment.

**Intelligence.** FM 3-24 states, “Counterinsurgency is an intelligence-driven endeavor.”<sup>73</sup> But while intelligence about the population itself plays a very prominent role in FM 3-24’s adaptation of intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) for COIN, the focus of intelligence quickly shifts to the insurgents themselves—their motives, organization, and courses of action. By Chapter 3, Section III, the FM states, “The purpose of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) operations during a COIN is to develop the intelligence needed to address the issues driving the insurgency.”<sup>74</sup>

Engaging the key opinion leaders in the population as a method for gaining popular support will require a significant shift in intelligence gathering and analysis effort away from insurgent targeting within the dark networks and onto the gray networks for other nonlethal engagement. As a RAND study states, not only is it sometimes difficult for commanders to believe that “isolating insurgents from the population is more efficacious than killing them,” but also it poses a daunting technical challenge.<sup>75</sup> How do you map a whole society? While the sheer scale of the problem is an issue, the tools exist to do it. One method is social network analysis, which receives its own appendix in FM 3-24. Using social network analysis, “decision makers can be offered better courses of action seeking to achieve

a target influence, perception, or outcome to one or more actors within the network through either direct or indirect means.”<sup>76</sup> Building expertise in these and other techniques and resourcing intelligence staffs for the challenge will make the commander’s efforts to elicit individual active support from the right people more efficient.

**Information operations.** If the problem for the counterinsurgent is not how to move mass opinion as a whole, but how to convince, convert, or co-opt key opinion elites into a contentious, but effective coalition of subpopulations, then tailored, local IO themes and messages appear more helpful than theater-level strategic communication programs in that process. Although IO at all levels of war has its place and we must synchronize it for a unified effort, Tip O’Neill’s famous maxim, “all politics is local,” is doubly appropriate for IO in COIN.<sup>77</sup> Pushing more authority and resources to tactical level units would better leverage organic IO capabilities. It would also give local commanders more flexibility, better response time, and more useful products.<sup>78</sup>

**SOF/Operational Fires.** One can easily oversimplify the operational environment into Galula’s triad at the theater level, where an artificial gap might seem to separate insurgents from the people. Therefore, it often appears entirely appropriate to use SOF or operational assets to target insurgents independently without working with the tactical units in the area. But, the bad guy that theater level assets are tracking might in fact be a key, wavering,

**...the bad guy that theater level assets are tracking might in fact be a key, wavering opinion leader close to making a deal with counterinsurgents.**

opinion leader close to making a deal with counterinsurgents. Even if he is not, his elimination may have far-reaching, gray-network effects that only tactical level commanders can predict. This doubt suggests that commanders must delegate most targeting assets and authority to lower levels, or at least coordinate with the relevant tactical units prior to taking action.<sup>79</sup>

The four-level framework for counterinsurgent popular support can help clarify how to gain support from a fractured, diverse population. Counterinsurgents need to piece together a coalition of factions that produces two specific kinds of support, each with its own effect on the campaign. Anonymous actives fill the government positions and security forces necessary to defeat the insurgents, but to move mass opinion in favor of the government, one needs to find the key nodes in the population’s gray networks and secure their individual active support. Such effort can have a viral effect throughout the society that helps marginalize and isolate the insurgents—an “isolation not enforced on the population but maintained by and with the population.”<sup>80</sup> **MR**

## NOTES

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10. Austin Long, *On “Other War”: Lessons from Five Decades of RAND Counterinsurgency Research* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND National Defense Research

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12. Michael Ball, *Defining Success in the War on Terrorism* (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 24 May 2004), <<http://stinet.dtic.mil/dticrev/PDFs/ADA426866.pdf>> (17 March 2008), and Mark P. Krieger Jr., “Why the People Are Not the Center of Gravity in an Insurgency,” *Military Review* (July-August 2007).

13. Galula actually offers two similar, but distinct, “First Laws.” The “First Law” in *Pacification in Algeria, 1956-1958* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006), 246, is “The Objective is the Population.” The “First Law” in *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: A. Praeger, 1964), 74, is “The Support

of the Population is as Necessary for the Counterinsurgent as for the Insurgent.”

14. By emphasizing legitimacy, FM 3-24 makes a sophisticated argument that ultimate victory in COIN only takes place when the government has succeeded in a genuine process of what one might call Weberian state consolidation, in which the state becomes a stable, orderly system “supported by means of legitimate (i.e. considered to be legitimate) violence” (Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, eds. Gerth and Mills (1946), <www2.selu.edu/Academics/Faculty/jpell/weber.pdf> (17 March 2007); see also McFate and Jackson, “The Object Beyond War: Counterinsurgency and the Four Tools of Political Competition,” 2007. FM 3-24 correctly highlights the role of legitimacy in achieving this final condition of peace as what one scholar called a “pattern of stability acceptable to those with the capacity to disturb the peace” (Charles Freeman, *Arts of Power: Statecraft and Diplomacy* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1997), 67. This perspective also supports the long-term transformation towards political liberalization and economic prosperity that are stated U.S. foreign policy goals for most societies plagued by disorder. But it must also be admitted that this ultimate consolidation will take a very long time. Few operational or theater-strategic level commanders will ever have the time or tenure to design and lead campaigns that will see it all the way through. Some have even argued that in many contexts of modern insurgency it is neither desirable nor possible for the U.S. to even strive for such lofty goals (see Metz, *Rethinking Insurgency*, 2007). One must ask, How does legitimacy serve as an operational objective for commanders? The term is so abstract and broad that it provides no better guide than, for example, “establish democracy” or “fix the societal problems that are motivating violence” as operational objectives. A careful reading of various passages implies that by legitimacy the authors mean that the people possess certain internal attitudes described in various ways. For example, I-113 through I-120 implies that when a government is legitimate, the people share a certain level of “confidence” in the government, acceptable “expectations” for societal outcomes, sufficient “perceptions” of government efficacy, and an acquiescent “vision” and “attitude” toward their government’s claim to power. This article proceeds on the assertion that on a practical level we can just as easily describe all of these cognitive processes as support of the people, thus making it the primary objective in FM 3-24 as well. While an argument can be made that popular support for the host government versus support for the counterinsurgent forces represents an important distinction, from the standpoint of COIN doctrine, the immediate problem for the commanders is how these “attitudes,” “perceptions,” and “confidences”—i.e. the support of the people—translate into success against an insurgency.

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16. Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, 75-76.
17. FM 3-24, I-108.
18. *Ibid.*, I-160.
19. *Ibid.*, I-139.
20. *Ibid.*, I-39.
21. Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Military Writings* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1966), 228.
22. Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2006), 10.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Roger Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 8.
25. Michael C. Vasquez, “Tribalism Under Fire: A Reexamination of Tribal Mobilization Patterns in a Counterinsurgency,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 92, no. 1 (January 2008): 63.
26. Peter W. Chiarelli and Patrick R. Michaelis, “Winning the Peace: The Requirement for Full-Spectrum Operations,” *Military Review* (July-August 2005): 6.
27. Ralph Baker, “The Decisive Weapon: A Brigade Combat Team Commander’s Perspective on Information Operations,” *Military Review* (May-June 2006): 117.
28. Petersen, 8.
29. For the insurgency as a “mosaic,” see FM 3-24, 1-37.
30. Matthew B. Stannard, “Montgomery McFate’s Mission: Can one anthropologist possibly steer the course in Iraq?” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 29 April 2007, <www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/04/29/CMGHQP19VD1.DTL>, (22 March 2008); Montgomery McFate, “Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The Strange Story of their Curious Relationship” *Military Review* (March-April 2005), <www.army.mil/professionalwriting/volumes/volume3/august\_2005/7\_05\_2.html>, (22 March 2008); Amatzia Baram, “Victory in Iraq, One Tribe at a Time,” *New York Times*, 28 October 2003.
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34. Vasquez, 62.
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# IRAN & VENEZUELA

## The “Axis of Annoyance”

Commander Kavon “Hak” Hakimzadeh, U.S. Navy

IN SEPTEMBER 2007, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad made a highly contentious visit to New York. In addition to addressing the General Assembly of the United Nations, Ahmadinejad’s agenda included Columbia University, where his invitation to give a speech caused a public uproar days just prior to his arrival. Bowing to public pressure, the university’s president, Lee Bollinger, made sure that Ahmadinejad’s reception at Columbia was a chilly one. Bollinger introduced Ahmadinejad, who has previously denied the Holocaust, as a man who appeared to lack “intellectual courage” and might be “astonishingly undereducated.” He went on to tell the Iranian leader that he exhibited “all the signs of a petty and cruel dictator.”<sup>1</sup> On his way home, Ahmadinejad made a stopover in Latin America. His first destination was Caracas, where his friend Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez greeted him like a long-lost brother. Chavez told Ahmadinejad that he had handled the personal criticism heaped upon him at Columbia University “with the greatness of a revolutionary.”<sup>2</sup>

Such is the nature of the relationship between Venezuela and Iran. The two countries’ self-styled “axis of unity” is more bombastic than substantive. However, the substance is enough to cause concern. Chavez and Ahmadinejad have clearly formed an alliance of convenience based on formulaic anti-Americanism. Their nations are so incompatible that most of their partnering efforts have resulted in unfulfilled promises and empty rhetoric. Unfortunately, their fiery verbal assaults against the “imperialism” of the United States cannot be dismissed so easily. Booming oil prices have left the two leaders quite capable of backing up their hostile words with actions. That is why Cynthia Arnson, of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, has wondered whether the relationship poses a threat to the United States or is merely an “Axis of Annoyance.”<sup>3</sup>

### What Ahmadinejad Wants

The attention that Iran gives Venezuela today is relatively new. While there are a few examples of Iran previously doing business in Latin America, particularly with Cuba and Brazil, the current levels of Iranian involvement are unprecedented. Serious attention started in 2005 with the election of Ahmadinejad, who came into the presidency intent on using a new aggressive foreign policy to counter the U.S. effort to isolate and tarnish Iran’s international reputation. Accordingly, he has been quick to engage the “new

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PHOTO: Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez (front) and his Iranian counterpart, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, embrace during a welcoming ceremony in Tehran, 19 November 2007. (AFP, Behrouz Mehri)

***Serious attention started  
in 2005 with the election of  
Ahmadinejad...***

leftist” leaders in Latin America as they have turned away from Washington.

Ahmadinejad answers to a regime that focuses on securing a dominant role for Iran in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf region. The United States has been the leading power in the Middle East since well before the birth of the Islamic Republic, a state of affairs that has always been unacceptable to the ruling mullahs. Currently, with the United States so heavily involved in countries on either side of Iran, Ahmadinejad sees it in Iran’s best interest to make Washington as nervous as possible about as many issues as possible. That is one reason why Iran meddles in Iraq and Afghanistan by backing Hezbollah, pursuing nuclear weapons, and forming a strong relationship with Venezuela and Latin America. The fact that Chavez hates the United States provides a geopolitical opportunity that Ahmadinejad is ideologically incapable of passing up.

### **What Chavez Wants**

Chavez wants Iran as a partner willing to share the burden of spreading his “Bolivarian” revolution in the region. Chavez has access to tremendous oil wealth, but even with oil at today’s prices, his resources are limited. His regional and global ambitions are becoming more and more expensive. Chavez began his relationship with Iran in 2001 primarily as a means of diversifying Venezuela’s export market. Once Ahmadinejad came to power, he found someone with interests that converged with his own.

Venezuela is too small a stage for Hugo Chavez. He is a megalomaniac who envisions himself to be the leader of a popular uprising against the “imperialism” of the United States. He has inspired a “lurch to the left” in much of Central and South America. Strong Chavez supporters have gained the presidencies of Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Bolivia.<sup>4</sup> During the Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 2005, Chavez gave a fiery speech to an audience of 25,000 people demonstrating against both the

U.S. Free Trade Area of the Americas proposal and the presence of George Bush.<sup>5</sup> Chavez whipped the crowd into such a frenzy that the demonstration turned into a violent riot that caused President Bush to cut short his visit to the region.

Chavez is a conniving enemy of those who oppose his anti-American stance. His relationship with Colombia is strained over that nation’s close ties with the United States. Until recently, Chavez was a valuable ally of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC), which has conducted an insurgency against the Colombian government for four decades. In the past, he has recognized the FARC as a legitimate belligerent force and may have provided it with financial and material support and safe haven. However, he has proven to be a fickle ally. Once some of his covert support to the FARC came to light and Venezuela started receiving some bad press, he was quick to withdraw it. He recently stated that the guerrilla movement was “out of place” in Latin America.<sup>6</sup>

### **Political Differences**

Chavez has likened the Iranian revolution to his Bolivarian revolution. However, other than both countries having overthrown a long established and corrupt order, these two revolutions could not be more dissimilar. The political systems that emerged from each revolution reveal the starkest differences.

Ahmadinejad, who is not a cleric, is not the lone voice in Iranian politics or the final authority on contentious issues. That role belongs to Ayatollah Khamenei, Iran’s supreme leader. The Iranian system of government requires Ahmadinejad to look “over his shoulder” to make sure he maintains the favor of the ruling mullahs. This political dynamic is the biggest difference between Ahmadinejad and Chavez, who seemingly answers to no one.

Chavez actively courts popular support through referenda to gain unprecedented power in Venezuela. The nation approved a new constitution in 1999 that created the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and allowed the president to run for two terms. Voters later bolstered Chavez’ power by approving two additional branches of government thereby adding to the classic executive, legislative, and judiciary. Chavez’ electoral branch and a “citizens” or “moral” branch afford him the opportunity to pack the government with cronies dedicated to keeping

him in control. Such is the extent of his popularity that all of this is legal because Venezuela's elections are almost universally acknowledged as fair.

Following this formula, Chavez has managed to achieve near autocratic powers in Venezuela. Opposition to him still exists: the electorate rejected his bid for absolute power in a 2007 referendum. However, for the near future the political dynamic in Venezuela will not be one in which Chavez will have to "look over his shoulder" very often for approval of his actions.

## **Ideological Differences**

No matter how close the two leaders say they are, there is a fundamental contradiction in the Iran-Venezuela relationship that one cannot ignore. The axis of unity is an alliance between a leftist, socialist government and a conservative, theocratic one. As far as political ideologies are concerned, these two are like oil and water. This contradiction was evident in September 2007, at a conference organized by Tehran University students attempting to show parallels between Iran's Islamic Revolution and the Latin American socialist movement. The story of the conference, as reported by Inter Press Service reporter Kimia Sanati, reads like a comedy of errors.

The planned four-day "Che like Chamran" conference became an embarrassment for its organizers just a few hours after it began. As its title implies, the conference intended to promote the similarities between Che Guevara and Mustafa Chamran as two revolutionaries who had fought alongside rebels in other countries.

Guevara, a leader in the Cuban revolution, spent much of the mid-1960s unsuccessfully attempting to incite socialist revolutions in Africa and Central America before being captured and executed in Bolivia in 1967.<sup>7</sup> His children, Aleida and Camilo, were invited guests at the conference.

Chamran, an American-educated engineer and Islamist, organized and fought alongside the Amal

guerrillas in southern Lebanon in the late 1970s. Early in the Iranian revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini appointed Chamran defense minister. He was killed in 1981 while leading Iranian paramilitary forces during the first phases of the Iran-Iraq war.<sup>8</sup>

The conference's problems started with the first speaker Haj Saeed Ghasemi, who is associated with one of Iran's many militia organizations. As he held up a translated Che Guevara book he said, "Che was religious and believed in God," "Fidel and Che were never socialist or communists," and "the people of Cuba hated the Soviets for all they had done." He went on to say that "today, communism has been thrown into the trash bin of history as predicted by Ayatollah Khomeini," and the only way to save the world was through "the religious, pro-justice movement."<sup>9</sup> This sort of language may be common in the Islamic republic where socialism is illegal and punishable by death, but including it in an address to an audience that included Che's children was indelicate to say the least.

Predictably, Aleida was quick to take umbrage. In her own address, she responded to Ghasemi indignantly, advising him to "always refer to original sources instead of translations to find out about Che Guevara's beliefs." She spoke "on behalf of the Cuban people . . . who were grateful to the Soviet Union" and stated that her father "never talked about God, never met God, and knew there was no absolute truth."<sup>10</sup>

The conference-turned-fiasco presented a microcosm of the structural flaws in the Iran-Venezuela relationship. The two countries are in an alliance of convenience based on only a few issues. Once either country feels it has gotten all it can out of the relationship, it is likely that political ideologies and wide cultural gaps will quickly overcome pragmatism, and the ostensibly close friendship will fade away.

## **Economic Cooperation**

So far, Venezuela and Iran have overlooked their political and ideological differences and worked hard to forge genuine economic and diplomatic ties. The two nations have signed an estimated 180 economic and political accords. At one point last year, the Iranian foreign minister estimated these agreements to be worth \$20 billion.<sup>11</sup> However, these agreements have proven to be largely symbolic thus

***As far as political ideologies are concerned, these two are like oil and water.***



AFP, Presidencia

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez points at the place where he and his Iranian counterpart Mahmoud Ahmadinejad inaugurated a joint petrochemical plant in the Asaluyeh industrial zone on Venezuela's Gulf coast, 2 July 2007.

far because the two nations have very little to offer each other economically. Both rely on oil exports as their primary means of economic growth with all other industries piling in comparison to oil production. Neither country has expertise in industries that would complement the other or is capable of competing in global markets without significant government subsidies.

For example, Chavez's first accord with Iran came *before* Ahmadinejad's election. He visited Tehran in 2001 and 2003 to establish a relationship with the Iranian government of Mohammad Khatami, whose election as a "moderate" in 1997 had opened up possibilities for several Latin American countries (including Brazil) to trade with Iran.<sup>12</sup> After an extended courtship, Khatami agreed to a joint venture to produce tractors in Ciudad Bolivar, Venezuela, with Iran owning a 31 percent stake in the "Veniran" factory.<sup>13</sup> Today, the factory produces 4,000 tractors a year, but the economic value of the

tractors to Venezuela is limited to being symbolic "agents of revolutionary change" because they are of such poor quality. The government gives or leases most of them to cooperatives working land that the socialists expropriated from ranchers and sugar plantations, although some have been sent to Bolivia and Nicaragua, in support of Chavez's allies.<sup>14</sup>

Since Ahmadinejad came to power in 2005, the two nations signed many more accords. These include a \$4 billion Iranian commitment to build platforms for exploration in the Orinoco Delta oil deposits, jointly owned car factories intended to produce two versions of "anti-imperialist" cars, and a host of agreements to cooperate on agricultural and dairy production.<sup>15</sup> Venezuela has reciprocated by providing Iran with refined petroleum products because Iran lacks the capacity to produce enough gasoline for itself.<sup>16</sup>

These efforts are primarily symbolic because they have not created significant economic growth. A recent interview with an Iranian manager at the Veniran plant reveals that the true value of the tractors lies in their message to Washington. When first asked about the purpose of the plant, the Iranian manager said, "The idea is to help our brothers develop the land," but when asked if the objective was also to "stick a finger in George Bush's eye," the manager smiled and nodded yes.<sup>17</sup> Investing in a joint auto plant may help the two leaders with their small circle of admirers, but it will have little or no impact on the United States. The production of poor-quality tractors or cars that cannot compete for a share of the world market is not an economic strategy. An economic plan created for its emblematic value may seem feasible as long as oil prices remain high, but the historic fluctuation of oil prices and failure to invest in its existing oil production infrastructure will certainly cause it to fail in the end.

### Diplomatic Cooperation

In keeping with both leaders' geopolitical desires, Chavez helped Ahmadinejad bolster relationships with his friends in the new governments of Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Ecuador. Ahmadinejad made well-publicized trips to Venezuela in July 2006; Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Ecuador in

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**...Chavez helped Ahmadinejad bolster relationships with his friends in the new governments of Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Ecuador.**

January 2007; and Venezuela and Bolivia in 2007. During the last trip, Bolivia and Iran established diplomatic relations and signed agreements for \$100 million in Iranian financing.<sup>18</sup> Iran set up an embassy in Managua and pledged \$350 million to Nicaragua to build a deepwater seaport and to plow a connecting dry canal corridor for pipelines, rails, and highways. Iran opened a trade office in Quito in January 2008.<sup>19</sup>

However, there has been little follow-through on this initial flurry of activity. Iranian financing in Bolivia has not yet materialized, and there are rumors that Daniel Ortega put a planned trip to Tehran on indefinite hold because Iran did not come through on the deepwater seaport pledge. Surprisingly, even when oil prices were at an all-time high in the summer of 2008, Iran refused to forgive Nicaragua's \$152 billion debt, despite Ortega's explicit public request to do so.

Iran and Venezuela have consistently supported each other in the United Nations. Iran continues

to suffer under UN sanctions because of its nuclear ambitions. In 2006, when the International Atomic Energy Agency put forth a resolution condemning Iran, the countries of Venezuela, Cuba, and Syria opposed it.<sup>20</sup> After Ahmadinejad's visit to Nicaragua in early 2007, Daniel Ortega joined this short list of Iran supporters. In turn, Iran supported Venezuela's unsuccessful attempt to gain a seat on the Security Council in 2006. This pattern continued in late 2008, when Iran made its own failed bid for the Asian seat on the Security Council. It is likely that Iran's Latin American friends cast a few of the 32 votes Iran received in the secret ballot.<sup>21</sup>

In keeping with Chavez's desire to find a partner for his ambitious regional projects, and Ahmadinejad's desire to buy friends, the two nations launched a joint bank to fund development activities with each country contributing half of the start-up funds to support projects in "anti-imperialist" countries.<sup>22</sup>

## Causes for Concern

In March 2007, the two countries inaugurated a weekly flight between Tehran and Caracas with a stop in Damascus, Syria. Rumors are that immigration and screening rules in Caracas are quite lax for the passengers disembarking from this flight. Perhaps as a result, there is growing evidence of a Hezbollah presence in Venezuela.

A wholly owned subsidiary of the Iranian revolution in the 1980s, Hezbollah has grown into a huge political force in Lebanon today. It operates at least semi-autonomously, but the organization still takes marching orders from Iran, a source of much of Hezbollah's financial and military support. The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control has targeted the assets of two Hezbollah supporters living in Venezuela, one of whom was a Venezuelan diplomat.<sup>23</sup>

The above information, when combined with Venezuelan actions and rhetoric, paints a disturbing picture of what could be going on covertly in the United States' own hemisphere. In the summer of 2006,



AFF. Miguel Alvarez

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega wave to supporters 14 January 2007 in Managua, Nicaragua. The Iranian president travelled to Nicaragua after visiting Venezuela, where he signed business agreements with President Hugo Chavez.

Venezuela bought 100,000 AK-47 assault and sniper rifles from Russia. At the same time, Chavez and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed an agreement that licensed the AK-47 for domestic production in Caracas.<sup>24</sup> At the time, much of the international concern about the agreement centered on Chavez's support for the FARC, but one can imagine an even more nefarious agenda behind the purchase as well. The rising numbers of Hezbollah Iranians, the increasing number of weapons in the region, and the porous borders in Central America cause some observers to worry about terrorist infiltration.

### Threat or Not?

Economic realities for Venezuela probably preclude the emergence of any serious security threats in the near term. Venezuela is heavily dependent on the United States economically, and Chavez has shown that he can be very pragmatic when it comes to protecting the Venezuelan economy. While Chavez has worked with China, Russia, and Iran to diversify his economy, the United States remains Venezuela's largest trading partner by far. The main destination for 53.9 percent of all of Venezuelan exports is the United States. The next highest destination, the Netherlands Antilles, receives only 8.8 percent of Venezuelan exports.<sup>25</sup> Venezuela still sells over half of its oil, or more than 1.5 million barrels of oil a day, to the United States. A significant portion of Venezuelan refining capacity is located in the United States, which gets less than 15 percent of its oil from Venezuela. This relationship is not likely to change in the near future. An oil embargo would hurt the U.S., but cripple Venezuela. Chavez's recent turnabout of support for the FARC in Colombia was likely a demonstration of his economic concerns.

There is no information currently available to justify concerns about terrorist activity due to Iran's growing presence in Venezuela. Given its Middle

East focus and many opportunities there to cause military trouble for the United States, it is unlikely that Iran would resort to terrorist action from Latin America. Iran's current activities in the region are likely more pragmatic than nefarious. In keeping with Ahmadinejad's aggressive foreign policy, Iran is attempting to modify power relationships, which is normal behavior in the international environment. Ahmadinejad may sound like he is out of control, but Iran's mullahs will most assuredly keep him on a tight rein.

Iran faces a tremendous asymmetry with the United States in virtually every instrument of national power. The Islamic Republic of Iran is attempting to erode some of that imbalance, and Chavez, always looking for the opportunity to annoy the United States, has been more than willing to aid this Iranian effort.

Still, many in the United States argue that when Chavez and Ahmadinejad call each other brother, they are bound to be "up to no good."<sup>26</sup> Iran's nuclear pursuits only add fuel to this argument. Chavez mentions nuclear cooperation with Iran often and has supported Iran's pursuit of nuclear power at every opportunity. Ahmadinejad does not often reciprocate this sentiment. Should Iran successfully develop a nuclear weapons capability, it is unclear whether the international community will react with engagement or further isolation. However, they will have to react. Iran will certainly have an increased international standing with nuclear weapons, even if it results in universal condemnation. This new status may not require the support of a socialist with whom the religious tenets of the Islamic Republic are at serious odds.

### An Undue Level of Attention

The relationship between Iran and Venezuela is the result of a convergence of unique geopolitical circumstances. Both countries are seeking out all of the allies they can find in order to avoid isolation. Chavez and Ahmadinejad have similar personalities and seem to like each other, have taken advantage of every opportunity to antagonize the United States, and have been successful in doing so primarily because they are unpredictable.

Unfortunately for the two leaders, the foundations of the relationship are flawed. These two nations are based on opposite principles. Venezuela is a leftist

***Venezuela is heavily dependent on the United States economically, and Chavez has shown that he can be very pragmatic...***

**...the foundations of the relationship are flawed. These two nations are based on opposite principles.**

nation moving further to the left. Iran is a theocracy and unapologetically conservative. The two countries do not complement each other economically because both nations rely primarily on oil exports for growth. In their enthusiasm to show the world how much they support each other, Chavez and Ahmadinejad have made promises that they simply

cannot keep, a fact that has become apparent with the recent downward turn in oil prices. Finally, Hugo Chavez and his Bolivarian revolution may be around for a long time, but Ahmadinejad will be gone in either one year or five. It is unlikely that the next Iranian President will see the wisdom of Ahmadinejad's Latin American focus.

However, until the relationship changes, the rhetoric and hostility toward the United States is sure to continue. Iran and Venezuela will remain a cause for concern for U.S. security policy makers, and they will continue to draw a level of attention not commensurate with their actual threat. They have indeed earned the moniker "the axis of annoyance." **MR**

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**It Ain't Over Till it's Over:**

# WHAT TO DO WHEN COMBAT ENDS

**Lieutenant Colonel  
E. Paul Flowers,  
U.S. Army**

**T**O EVERYTHING, THERE IS A SEASON. Even in war, there eventually comes a time when the violence ends. Conventional wisdom holds that the absence of so-called “kinetics” makes life less complicated. That facile conclusion may brief well, but in reality we have learned that things become much more complex. The rebuilding of another country’s governing landscape is a costly, comprehensive undertaking that can be a financial and political drain.<sup>1</sup> Preserving the peace to secure enduring success requires implementing four post-conflict reconstruction pillars: security, justice and reconciliation, social and economic well being, and governance and participation.<sup>2</sup> In addition to those four pillars, a victorious nation-state must develop and execute a post-combat operations plan that addresses Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and garners public support at home and abroad.

## Security

Security is of vital importance. Security is the creation of a safe and secure environment with legitimate, effective security institutions.<sup>3</sup> It is a tactical task, the backbone of a military operation, and can have immense strategic implications with good and bad consequences. Nonetheless, security is necessary for the effective coordination of reconstruction activities in a post-combat environment. Host nations, nongovernmental organizations, and even the U.S. State Department will not risk placing individuals in an unstable and nonsecure work environment in the current theater of operations in Southwest Asia. From this perspective, having enough security is crucial; in its absence few U.S. civilians are willing to do the complex tasks of nation building that the military cannot accomplish. The greatest risk associated with a lack of security is the prospect of needlessly sacrificing that which the armed forces have fought and suffered for by allowing the threat to reenter secure areas.

Once combat operations finally end in our current military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. forces in strategically placed outposts or “joint bases” will conduct joint border patrol and surveillance operations with host-nation forces to limit, if not eliminate, enemy infiltrations. American forces should assume a more advisory or technical support role, and not repeatedly lead tactical missions. Our technological advantage, coupled with our battlefield experience, will help the host nation provide sustainable security for its citizens. Once the nation is adept at doing so, the essential task of addressing

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the root causes of hostilities and disenfranchisement can and should occur.

## Justice and Reconciliation

This leads us to the next pillar of justice and reconciliation, the host-nation's attempts to redress past abuses through mechanisms to resolve grievances. As in the past, American resources and efforts will have to be used to help reconcile opposing factions. In these instances, the host nation must not confine its efforts to settling the superficial issues, but should commit, word and deed, to purposefully addressing the long-term issues at the heart of social discontent. America must use all its instruments of national power to help accomplish this.

The U.S. military can conduct impartial and professional commissions and tribunals to recommend viable courses of action to the host nation for bringing justice to aggrieved parties. Prominent figures from U.S. law schools and other institutions of higher learning should augment the military commissions and tribunals to help create a new, impartial legal system.<sup>4</sup> American colleges and universities that specialize in the social sciences might provide experts that could work with the military on reconciliation issues. The use of the military as the nucleus for these auxiliary bodies takes advantage of military planning techniques, which can add value to social development projects.

In any area of combat, some residents will flee and take refuge in another country. America, along with the host nation, can enhance the prospects of successful reconciliation by making an extraordinary effort to repatriate such refugees.<sup>5</sup> Their return home is similar to the rainy season's return to a parched earth. Those who have fled their native land but want to return home represent the promise of tomorrow. The use of military transport can facilitate and expedite their return. The prospects for enduring peace are threatened when displaced people have no viable prospects for returning home; their return is critical, not only to themselves, but to host-nation institutions, post-combat operations, and justice and reconciliation.

## Social and Economic Well-Being

Of equal importance is the third pillar, social and economic well-being achieved through providing

emergency relief and the restoration of essential services like health care and education, and U.S. private sector involvement that energizes trade.<sup>6</sup> Tax credits could help secure U.S. corporate participation in reconstruction activities that spur economic well-being in a post-conflict environment. The United States should actively seek the help of U.S. corporations in developing reconstruction capacities. The government should give private corporations the opportunity to accomplish tasks efficiently and reward their efforts, but it should ensure that host-nation contractors execute most reconstruction efforts, not Americans.

Another noteworthy effort may be to engage the "native sons and daughters" of the host nation.<sup>7</sup> The U.S. government should recruit and employ skilled workers in reconstruction activities, not just as "window dressing," but in prominent leadership positions with the autonomy and authority to lead and, once they are in position, help them give people long-term hope by establishing a jobs program.<sup>8</sup>

## Governance and Participation

The final pillar addresses governance and participation: the strengthening of public-sector management and administration by promoting participation in civil society.<sup>9</sup> Of course, any reconstruction effort that fails to take a tough stance against corruption is bound to fail. There is a need for transparency in all governmental transactions because governance and participation decrease when corruption rises. To safeguard either a new or reconstituted government from corruption, the United States should create a corruption task force composed of American and host-nation officials responsible for setting moral, ethical, and legal standards. Such a cell should stay in existence for at least seven years.<sup>10</sup> The new government must allow all leaders in society to participate on the task force. Both the host nation and the United States must establish safeguards to protect minorities, and mechanisms and institutions to enforce those safeguards.<sup>11</sup>

***There is a need for transparency in all governmental transactions...***

The post-conflict government must also have indigenous legitimacy.<sup>12</sup> Legitimacy cannot be propped up by American money, nor can the country be governed by U.S. surrogates. The government must reflect the culture and society of the population it seeks to manage. The host-nation's citizens must see the new government as being truly reflective of them in appearance, mannerisms, and thinking. Army civil affairs units need to work with existing institutions to create viable governing institutions.<sup>13</sup>

After conflict has ended, the United States should encourage nations in the neighboring regions to participate in nation-building efforts. America made a concerted effort to assemble a military coalition. It must put forth an equal effort to recruit a nation-building coalition. This participation should not be an avenue for nations to come in and meddle with the revitalization of the host nation, but a way to produce collaborative success stories.

Each of the pillars discussed previously are important considerations. Modern theorists have offered these prescriptions. We should use them in a consistent and coordinated manner moving from one opportunity to the next. There is room for variance, as no two situations are going to be the same. Recent events in Iraq and Afghanistan reveal to us that it takes time to implement these pillars: success does not and will not come overnight. Time is a requirement that we should not minimize or take for granted. Other requirements that, to date, have gotten little traction in current literature on the topic of post-conflict operations are the holistic needs of the individual and winning the war of ideas.

## Holistic Needs

We should not write off the notion of addressing the holistic needs of an individual as a “touchy-feely” approach to finishing off the (military) job. The impact of a military defeat on the mental disposition of a community or society that suffers such a trauma has a lasting effect on its victims. We must recognize that combat's impact on society can cause us to lose all the gains we achieved through operations. Our acknowledgment that combatants and noncombatants alike have to adjust to a different reality in a post-conflict environment helps ensure we have lasting success and cessation of hostilities. The four pillars we espouse are only as good as their

***The four pillars we espouse are only as good as their impact on other people's perception...***

impact on other people's perception that their basic needs are satisfied, along lines similar to Maslow's hierarchy of needs.<sup>14</sup> To the degree that we can, we should design and implement post-combat operations to allow all the elements of national power to help the host-nation's citizens achieve their true potential. Education must become a priority in a society that is benefitting from our reconstruction efforts. America could help institute or shore up educational programs within the country.<sup>15</sup>

## Winning the War of Ideas

Transitioning government oversight from U.S. agencies to an international body allows the host nation to implement culturally based strategies, programs, and activities without American influence.<sup>16</sup> Once combat operations have ceased, there should be minimal opportunities for one to conclude that America is suppressing the country's autonomy. The best way to accomplish this is to win the war of ideas.

Having nations with stable, democratic governments are extremely vital to international security.



U.S. Army, SPC Richard Dei Vecchio

**SGT Boomer Jones looks for his next checkpoint in Sadr Yusufiyah, Iraq, 13 July 2008.**

This condition existed in post-war Japan and Germany.<sup>17</sup> America must explicitly, and repeatedly, articulate why post-conflict activities are important not just in light of American interests, but international ones as well. America must use its soft power to consistently communicate what we are attempting to accomplish. This message, directed towards different audiences, must be consistent and we must communicate it in a manner that various target audiences can understand. Post-combat activities require a robust, comprehensive communications campaign that is ever-evolving and designed to deliberately shape public opinion.

Stories aired on the Armed Forces Network should be broadcast to other places, both stateside and abroad. People from all walks of life and in different parts of the world need to see consistent images of American armed forces doing good things for people and communities. The U.S. government should buy airtime in major media markets of the United States and in international markets to present some of the good news that comes out of the Armed Forces Network's production house. Failure to do this is a missed opportunity.

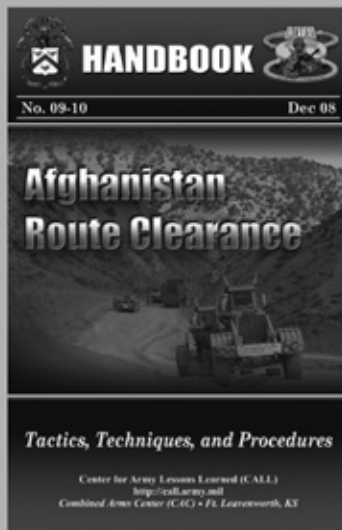
The admonition to heed from what we are currently facing in Iraq and Afghanistan is that post-combat preparation and planning is just as critical as pre-combat preparation and planning. **MR**

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# ARMING THE FORCE

## Future Class V Sustainment

Colonel Alan D. Braithwaite, U.S. Army Reserve

AS THE UNITED STATES fights the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, a workforce of dedicated professionals diligently plans and labors to supply and sustain our warfighters. Even as the U.S. military transforms, innovative weapons systems, equipment, supplies, arms, and munitions continue to be developed. Within the classes of supply, the one most taken for granted is Class V—ammunition.

This article describes the Army's programs to transform Class V logistics to better support readiness. Army Materiel Command (AMC) oversees supply and sustainment, providing all types of equipment and supplies to our forces. Subordinate to AMC are the life-cycle management commands, one of which is the Joint Munitions and Lethality Life-Cycle Management Command (JM&L LCMC). It is responsible for integrating the acquisition, logistics, and technology communities to create a strategic direction for supply, sustainment, and distribution of munitions. Its staff also develops strategies to attain a modern and balanced organic and commercial industrial base. Joint Munitions Command (JMC) is the major subordinate command under the JM&L LCMC that does most of the producing, storing, shipping, maintaining, surveillance, and demilitarizing of munitions. The command manages all munitions except strategic missiles and rockets; however, it does provide logistical support—storage, inventory control, transportation, and demilitarization—for tactical missiles.

The task is immense. Joint Munitions Command provides ready, reliable, and lethal munitions for the warfighter worldwide. Moreover, the command is the logistics integrator for life-cycle management of ammunition, providing on-site technical support to frontline units.<sup>1</sup>

### The Munitions Challenge

After Operation Desert Storm, readiness reports on munitions were inaccurate. Inadequate funding made it impossible to perform required maintenance and conduct surveillance inspections on the vast stockpile of munitions, and the long lead time necessary to upgrade the munitions prohibited a rapid response or quick issue in time of need. The terrorist attacks on 9/11 and the subsequent War on Terrorism confirmed that our munitions stockpile had to be ready at all times; nevertheless, the munitions situation continued to worsen after 9/11.



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PHOTO: SGT Joseph Sullivan uses a portable inductive fuse setter to activate rounds to be fired from an M-777 howitzer during a training exercise on Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan, 28 February 2008. Sullivan is an ammo team chief with the Army's 3d Battalion, 321st Field Artillery Regiment, 18th Field Artillery Brigade. (U.S. Army, SPC Micah E. Clare)

As a 2005 JMC report noted, “Immediately after 11 September 2001, DA [Department of the Army] decision makers had to contend with potential ammunition shortages. The true impact of condition codes E, F, K, and N was that ammunition DA leadership thought was available could not be used for combat without inspection and maintenance”<sup>22</sup> In May 2002, the immensity of the problem was expressed by Major General Wade H. McManus during an Operations Support Command briefing. He said, “Resources in the POM [Program Objective Memorandum] could buy about 45% of the shortfall items. However, due to the atrophying of the ammunition base [production and logistics] in the 1980s and 1990s, surge operations could affect only 10% of the go-to-war shortfalls.”<sup>23</sup> Planning for the War on Terrorism revealed that the ammunition community could not produce the necessary munitions in the time available—it would take several laid-away plants 18 to 24 months to activate. Moreover, available serviceable ammunition had competing demands.

According to McManus, “the stockpile was intended to support two major regional contingencies (MRCs). However, it was questionable if the inspected and maintained stockpile could support even one MRC plus multiple small-scale contingencies.”<sup>24</sup> The reports focused on availability of training ammunition rather than actual readiness of the ammunition for warfighting.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, requirements were not well defined, making it impossible to articulate current needs. Regardless, it was evident that there was a shortage of certain munitions. The readiness reporting system needed to be redesigned to provide senior leaders an accurate status of munitions. Moreover, the readiness report needed to include the status of the production capability of the industrial base and distribution system.

## **The Munitions Readiness Report**

Two days after 9/11, Army Chief of Staff General Eric K. Shinseki directed Operations Support

Command (now Joint Munitions Command) to develop “a system for munitions that will portray the Army’s ability to support contingency operations.”<sup>26</sup> Readiness status of munitions tracked by DA was predominantly based on available tonnage and its location. This method did not always show an accurate tally of serviceable munitions. Clearly the ammunition community needed a new readiness report for munitions based on condition and availability weighed against requirements.

**Assessing readiness.** Joint Munitions Command developed and implemented the Munitions Readiness Report (MRR) to assess munitions readiness so that DA would have the necessary information to prioritize funding and production effort.

The MRR Integrated Process Team, which includes representatives of the major commands, provides status reports and forecasts requirements for the report. By projecting future requirements and ascertaining on-hand quantity, quality, serviceability, and production capacity, the readiness report identifies when the manufacturing base needs to increase production. The report depicts the overall status of each ammunition item and family, projecting the readiness status for the following 6 to 24 months. The readiness report determines readiness ratings for two separate resource areas—availability of assets—the S rating—and reliability of assets—the R rating. The S ratings are determined for both war reserve and training requirements, separately and combined.

This analytical reporting tool identifies munitions with joint-service applications, taking into account both conventional munitions and missile data. It also evaluates global status of individual munitions categories, such as artillery, small arms, and bombs. A JMC publication states, “in each category each specific ammunition item is tracked. For example, in the small arms category the MRR tracks 5.56-mm, 7.62-mm, .50-caliber, etc. in every configuration. Newer items of munitions, not yet transitioned to the National Inventory Control Point, are included as well.”<sup>27</sup>

***...Immediately after 11 September 2001, DA...decision makers had to contend with potential ammunition shortages.***



USMC, John A. Lee

**A U.S. Marine assembles .50-caliber ammunition onto a link belt, 2002.**

In addition to forecasting ammunition requirements, the MRR is used to prioritize funding for essential ammunition components and other critical items. Such foresight permitted the munitions command to secure extra funds to service and repair on-hand stocks.

**Readiness updates.** Based on the MRR, the Army G-3/5/7 provides a monthly ammunition readiness update to Army senior leadership during the Army Operations Center balcony briefing every month. The status is based directly on the analysis conducted using the readiness report and, according to a JMC information paper, key participants include the secretary of the Army, undersecretary of the Army, chief of staff of the Army, and vice chief of staff of the Army.<sup>8</sup>

The Munitions and Logistics and Readiness Center, and the Program Executive Office—Ammunition (PEO-Ammo) and its program managers provide acquisition information via a dedicated chart in the readiness report that supports this briefing and is available worldwide to those having access. As the information paper notes, the DA G-3/5/7 munitions management office uses the information to build a condensed version referred to as the “one voice” chart. The chart is used as a quick reference guide to answer questions during the balcony briefing.<sup>9</sup>

**Supporting other services.** The MRR has great potential to expand and support other services. Joint Munitions Command’s strategic enterprise partner, PEO-Ammo, is the single manager for conventional ammunition (SMCA) executor, and JMC is the SMCA field operating activity. The SMCA manages the day-to-day operations of conventional ammunition. Joint Munitions Command is currently work-

ing to leverage MRR analysis capability to provide theater-specific views as well as a worldwide readiness assessment. In 2006, JMC began working with the U.S. Marine Corps to develop a distinct Marine readiness reporting system that integrates key characteristics of the Army reporting system.

The MRR is a vital tool to give Army leaders an instant view of ammunition readiness posture. The report could merge with those reports of the other military services and eventually become an all-inclusive U.S. system. The Department of Defense should consider expanding the MRR across the services to raise the standard of excellence for total munitions reporting.

## Integrated Logistics Strategy

Joint Munitions Command, with George Group contractor support, charted a new course with the employment of the Integrated Logistics Strategy (ILS). The strategy focuses on “now and into the future” strategic logistics to support Joint warfighter readiness. It will provide continuous assessment of the logistics operational base and will map out a dynamic course for situational changes and future requirements. The strategy seeks to attain operational symmetry among a warm-base (ready-to-use facilities and equipment) inventory and out-load (packaging, loading, and transport) capabilities. Using data-driven decision tools, the logistics strategy will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of future ammunition operations at installations and depots.

The ILS assessment document contains three parts:

- Issues and constraints.
- Integrated Logistics System framework—depot network, positioning, and transition strategies.
- Implementation and ongoing management (metrics and governance).

**Issues and constraints.** Key issues and constraints limit the speed or impact of ILS.<sup>10</sup> These key issues serve as the multiyear strategic agenda for improvement. Joint Munitions Command will resolve some

***Integrated Logistics Strategy... focuses on “now and into the future” strategic logistics to support Joint warfighter readiness.***

of the issues internally, while others may require assistance and funding from higher echelons.

**Integrated Logistics System framework.** The framework includes three distinct strategies that form the nucleus of the ILS:

- Depot network strategy.
- Positioning strategy.
- Transition strategy.

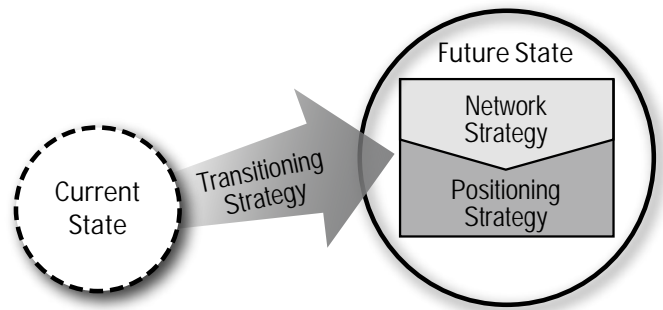
If we align and synchronize all three strategies correctly, the overall strategy will support war-reserve stock and out-load and training support requirements (Figure 1).

*Depot network strategy.* This strategy is designed to determine the optimum number of installations and capabilities and realign stocks accordingly. It has three components—regional optimization, out-load capacity, and storage capacity—and takes into account the logistics capabilities needed to support conventional ammunition and missile operations at a national level.

For JMC, planning a strategic realignment of the national stockpile to achieve the optimal number of installations and capabilities is a significant undertaking. The United States is divided into distribution regions based on the correlation between fixed costs and transportation costs. On a few installations, fixed costs are low but transportation costs are high; however, most installations are located close to customers, so transportation costs are low but fixed costs are high in some cases. Joint Munitions Command is looking for the optimum number of regional distribution centers with the lowest combined costs (Figure 2).

A sufficient out-load capacity satisfies a component commander’s 16-week time-phased ammunition requirement. The goal is to have the optimum number of installations, nationwide, with the current infrastructure and staff available to support the requirement.<sup>11</sup>

Efficient storage capacity has the most advantageous number of facilities needed to store war reserve, training, and other ammunition for the services. Logisticians code ammunition for various functions, such as training, war, transfer, maintenance, and demilitarization; Class V must be stored until its life cycle is complete. Storage capacity is critical—if facilities fill to capacity or overcapacity, a decrease in efficiency and velocity of ammunition management can occur.

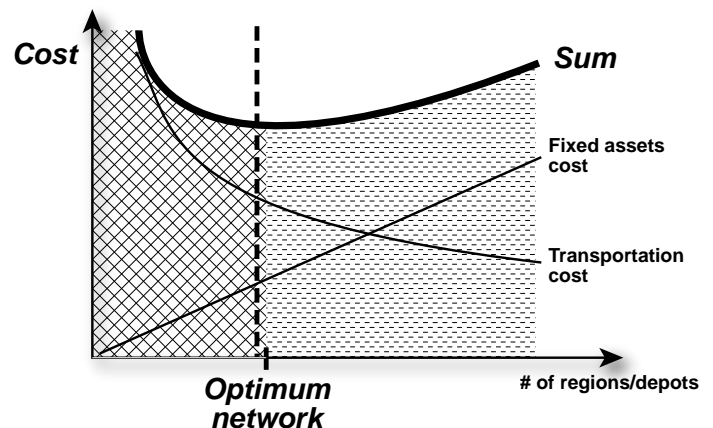


**Figure 1. ILS strategies.**

*Positioning strategy.* An efficient positioning strategy balances the workload at the various facilities. In times of crisis, it helps determine requirements for accelerated munitions production.

Positioning strategy focuses on types of munitions and configurations. Specific decisions on how much to position in which location depend on expected demand patterns. Ammunition stocks are further segmented based on “training-unique,” “training-standard,” and “war reserve.” As an example, with knowledge of ammunition demand patterns, training-unique ammunition can be optimally stored closest to the recurring demand. This minimizes second-destination transportation costs. Within the regional concept, munitions are positioned in proportion to demand by region.<sup>12</sup>

Under the Centralized Ammunition Management concept, which is covered in more detail below, munitions are positioned at the depot that regionally best supports life-cycle capabilities and is in proximity to demand-concentration sites.



**Figure 2. Regional optimization cost factors.**

Additional considerations for placement include the type and purpose of munitions, amount of excess, and demilitarization.

As a JMC executive summary explained, “training standard ammunition takes on the characteristics of both training unique and war reserve. A certain amount should be stored to support the recurring demand; however, an additional amount could be centrally stored to support contingency outload.”<sup>13</sup> It further explained, “War reserve ammunition can optimally be stored at more centralized locations. This ammunition normally ships via containers in support of contingency operations. It does not have a recurring demand.”<sup>14</sup>

War-reserve positioning necessitates efficient out-load capabilities, storage capacity, maintenance and demilitarization capability, a ramp-up capability, and an east/west (U.S.) split of stocks. The regional concept for war-reserve stocks calls for facilities that mirror training stocks within the constraints of storage and out-load capacity.

Demilitarization and deep storage of munitions is also considered for all Department of Defense Identification Codes.

*Transition strategy.* The transition strategy facilitates changing from the current situation to the best network positioning by eliminating imbalances through programming, budgeting, and execution decisions. Imbalances include demand misalignment—when available ammunition in an installation cannot support the region’s training requirement. This results in second-destination transportation costs.<sup>15</sup> Another imbalance is storage misalignments, when there is insufficient space to store the ammunition needed to support recurring-training demands or contingency operations. Finally, capability mismatch happens when stocks are incorrectly positioned within the facility, thus hindering maintenance, surveillance, testing, and demilitarization.

**Implementation and ongoing management—metrics and governance.** Integrated Logistics System implementation rests with two entities—the ILS cell and the ILS execution committee—both essential for managing ILS. To ensure continuity and integration, the cell drives the day-to-day ILS management and execution. The execution committee bridges execution between the cell, installations, and the other military services.



Jerry Mabray

An ammunition igloo storing 2,000 pound bombs at McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, McAlester, OK, 2005.

Joint Munitions Command is committed to optimizing solutions in implementing ILS. The solutions are only as good as the information in the analyses. However, personnel at JMC understand the support necessary for supplying munitions to sustain training and contingency out-loading requirements. The command’s goal is to provide the best possible integrated munitions and logistics answers and to help its customers understand ILS and its implications. We are likely to achieve optimum results with additional funding allocated to modernize the industrial base.

## Centralized Ammunition Management

As Allen Marshall has noted in his article “JMC Managing the Munitions Stockpile through CAM Initiatives,” “Managing the munitions stockpile became a concern after the 1990s because of the drawdown. At the end of fiscal year 2002, an initiative was instituted to address those concerns. That initiative is Centralized Ammunition Management.”<sup>16</sup>

In 2002, U.S. Army Forces Command challenged JMC to take on Centralized Ammunition Management as a transformation task. Army leaders realized they had to have visibility of stocks down to the individual ammunition supply point should the need arise to use those stocks for operational requirements.

Joint Munitions Command currently supports 78 ammunition supply points in the continental



United States in support of units from all major Army commands, Special Operations Command, the Army National Guard Bureau, Multinational Force and Observers-Sinai, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, and Navy training at Army installations. The management process begins and ends with the warfighter. It focuses on training and contingency out-load support and ensures delivery of ammunition from the traditional wholesale sites to posts, camps, stations, and supply points across the United States.

Centralized Ammunition Management is a revolutionary concept that anticipates the needs of each training region. It automatically replenishes supply points with training and mobilization requirements every 90 days via a process in which logisticians assess training authorizations and basic load necessities against on-hand stocks and authorized stockage levels. Other functions of Centralized Ammunition Management include cross-leveling inventory, prioritizing stock levels, and assigning stock locations. This is transparent to users because the ammunition is ready to use. The process provides total asset visibility by tracking each document from the time it enters the system until the customer receives the order. All levels within the supply chain have this visibility.

Centralized Ammunition Management ensures stock rotation, reduces transportation time and costs, and improves management. Shipments are consolidated, there are more dedicated routes, and there are fewer trucks on the road, which reduces public exposure to explosives.<sup>17</sup> As the Munitions and Logistics Readiness Center 2006 Annual Historical Summary notes, "With visibility and control of assets at the Ammunition Supply Points and at our wholesale activities, the stockpile management and transportation for training requirements has been streamlined to become more effective and efficient."<sup>18</sup>

## **Logistics Modernization Program**

The Logistics Modernization Program is another initiative instituted by Army Materiel Command to improve ammunition management. The program replaces the obsolete 30-plus year-old logistics management systems. All classes of supply and the logistics required to support the commodities are converting to the modernization program. When

complete, it will provide the Army Materiel Command a single, integrated, commercial off-the-shelf enterprise resource planning solution to manage its logistic missions.<sup>19</sup> The program's integration allows the use of a single set of master data for each item owned and used by the enterprise, eliminating redundant data entry, thus reducing data errors and providing for seamless integration with other enterprise resources. The aim is to increase efficiency and reduce cost by eliminating unnecessary interfaces and systems. Joint Munitions Command has sought to modernize its logistics supply chain and create an integrated system from factory to foxhole.<sup>20</sup> Business process re-engineering, continual improvements, and innovative answers are transforming legacy systems into a modernized program. This transformation has made it possible for the munitions command to identify the primary ammunition business processes necessary for enhanced operation of the ammunition industrial base and reform legacy-system business processes into the best commercial business processes.

## **The Future of Joint Munitions Command**

Joint Munitions Command transformation is staying on track with the Army's plans for the future and with Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps equipment. It has charted a course to keep pace with modernized firearms, weapons systems, and other equipment that fire or drop munitions. The command will continue to support the warfighter with munitions for the new weapons of tomorrow.

Ammunition is produced through commercial producers as well as government-owned, contractor-operated; and government-owned, government-operated facilities. Each sector is critical in meeting warfighter demands. Objectives identified for the industrial base include establishing a right-sized munitions base, maximizing effectiveness and efficiency, and focusing the industrial base to support the future-year defense program and surge, while relying on the commercial sector to the maximum extent practicable. To sustain requirements, we must maintain government capabilities and core competencies to mitigate risk, provide capabilities that the commercial sector does not have, and establish a flexible, modern supplier base with a high degree of production process control.

Joint Munitions Command is modernizing and consolidating its government-owned munitions plants and evolving into a leaner, more efficient organization. As an AMC publication notes, “Upgrades in the JMC industrial base are done for a number of reasons: to sustain an existing capability, to increase productivity, to save money, to increase reliability, to increase capacity, to increase quality, or to establish—per the terms of Army Transformation policy—a totally new production capability.”<sup>21</sup>

Production of ammunition and explosives requires exceptional care; producers must exercise great restraint in making devices designed to explode. Modernization will make ammunition plants safer and allow the industrial base to keep pace with requirements. Brigadier General James E. Rogers has set JMC on a course to do just that. In coordination with Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center (ARDEC), the munitions command is working multiple projects, mapping a strategic direction, and finding top-quality solutions to strengthen the ammunition

community through renovation of infrastructure, new equipment, enhanced technologies, and precise and safe methodologies. However, the primary reason for installation modernization is to maintain the production capabilities and capacities needed to increase production when called upon.<sup>22</sup>

## The Future of Class V

Ammunition production and operational enhancements have significantly progressed since September 2001. Joint Munitions Command and its manufacturing plants and depots have increased production and enhanced delivery capability while consolidating several facilities under the ongoing base realignment and closure. The command is on track for keeping U.S. forces supplied with munitions during transformation.

New munitions—such as the Excalibur extended range 155-mm projectile; the Intelligent Munitions System with its sensors-communications system; and smart munitions, using infrared, global positioning system, and seeker technology—give the



U.S. Army. SGT Nicholas Williams

**U.S. Army Soldiers of 321st Field Artillery, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82d Airborne Division, test fire an Excalibur artillery round on Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan, 28 February 2008. The Excalibur round is a precision-guided global positioning system round.**

**...the primary reason for installation modernization is to maintain the production capabilities and capacities needed to increase production when called upon.**

warfighter precision-strike and other capabilities. Fire-and-forget munitions are the premier munitions of the future with advanced, shaped-charge warheads suitable for the challenges of tomorrow.

The future force will have new weapons and munitions that provide innovative capabilities to defeat the enemy. Munitions project managers are pioneering new ammunition designs and futuristic devices to defeat enemy armor and equipment. Developing, producing, and fielding “smart” precision munitions is a collective Army priority.

New developments in munitions emerge as advances in enemy armor technology and capabilities challenge us. This trend will continue into the foreseeable future. Joint Munitions Command maintains situational awareness of new enemy

upgrades in technology and stays informed of ARDEC improvements to use enhanced technologies to produce, store, and deliver new munitions wherever they are needed. However, armor is not the only target on the modern battlefield. Personnel, trucks, and structures are also targets, and destruction is not necessarily the only option in each engagement. Nonlethal responses are an increasingly important component in the developing arsenal. Changes in strategy and tactics will always require alternate means to defeat the enemy.

Joint Munitions Command has initiated changes to its organization to continue to supply and sustain the force with required logistics and lethality, while never losing sight of our customers, the warfighters. **MR**

## NOTES

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supply”; a green rating is based on 150 days of supply, an amber rating is determined as from 120 to 149 days of supply, and a red rating is assigned for items with serviceable assets of less than 120 days of supply on hand. These ratings are also adjusted downward one notch if depot levels of the assets are less than 90 days. For items with both war-reserve and training requirements, the worse of the two ratings is the overall rating.

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# Counterinsurgency Operations in Baghdad: The Actions of 1-4 Cavalry in the East Rashid Security District

Major Thomas J. Sills, North Carolina Army National Guard

COUNTERINSURGENCY (COIN) is defined as those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency. It includes strategic and operational planning; intelligence development and analysis; training; materiel, technical, and organizational assistance; advice; infrastructure development; tactical-level operations; and many elements of psychological operations. Generally, the preferred methods of support are through assistance and development programs. Leaders must consider the roles of military, intelligence, diplomatic, law enforcement, information, finance, and economic elements in counterinsurgency.

Arriving in November 2006, Headquarters, 1st Cavalry Division, serving as the headquarters for Multi-National Division-Baghdad (MND-B), assessed the situation in the area of East Rashid as one that was primarily sectarian strife between Sunni and Shi'a extremists. To achieve the primary goal of restoring security, MND-B developed a strategy that focused on the protection of the Iraqi populace.<sup>1</sup> The Division's focus shifted from transitioning operations to Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to protecting Iraqis. However, it took more than a new division strategy to bring security to this particular Baghdad neighborhood. It took a partnership that empowered the residents to work together for their families and neighbors.

One of the key elements of the MND-B plan was to use Soldiers from "surge brigades," including those yet to arrive in theater. Other key components of the strategy included placing large numbers of barrier walls throughout the city, hiring local citizens to protect their own communities, and increasing the Soldier presence in Baghdad neighborhoods.<sup>2</sup> By June of 2007, attacks against the city's population decreased by 58 percent. However, attacks against coalition forces within Baghdad increased by 59 percent during the same timeframe. The new strategy required a more aggressive posture to minimize attacks on Iraqi and coalition forces as well as bring stability to the community.<sup>3</sup>

Arriving in January 2007 as part of the "surge," the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, assumed the responsibility for West and East Rashid Security Districts of Baghdad. In mid May, the 1st Light

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PHOTO: SPC Kevin Hail, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, watches a herd of goats surround him while on patrol in southern Baghdad's Rashid District, 25 September 2007. (U.S. Army, PFC Nathaniel Smith)

Reconnaissance Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment (1-4 Cavalry) “Raiders,” assumed responsibility for the northeast part of the East Rashid Security District. This article chronicles how 1-4 Cavalry successfully implemented the concepts found in Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, in order to protect residents of East Rashid and defeat Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI).

In February 2006, AQI terrorists destroyed the golden dome of the Al-Askari Mosque in Samarra, one of the holiest Shi’a mosques in Iraq.<sup>4</sup> This single act of violence led to a wave of sectarian strife and widespread destruction that pitted Sunni against Shi’a. The demographics of Baghdad shifted. Armed groups began to “cleanse” their communities of anyone with differing religious beliefs. AQI and other extremist groups arose from this instability to establish a strong foothold inside many Baghdad neighborhoods. In time, the security situation in the capital grew unstable, and fear spread in the neighborhoods.

The conflict in Iraq has been referred to as a counterinsurgency. However, the classic COIN model does not completely fit. In actuality, the situation was—and still is—more dramatic and complex. The

major and obvious difference was the sectarian nature of the conflict. AQI terrorized the Shi’a population with vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, suicide bombers, and other forms of violence and intimidation. In retaliation, Shi’a death squads kidnapped, tortured, and expelled Sunni residents. Shi’a extremists kidnapped and killed many of the former Sunni military officers living in the Saydiyah neighborhood of West Rashid.<sup>5</sup> In the Doura community in East Rashid, AQI and other Sunni extremists groups killed or expelled Shi’a residents.

In May of 2007, Doura consisted almost entirely of a Sunni population, and the community became an AQI strongpoint. Strategically vital to AQI, Doura provided AQI terrorists with a gateway from which they brought munitions and fighters into Baghdad. Al-Qaeda in Iraq maintained a robust presence in the neighborhoods and ruled with intimidation. To control the population, AQI beheaded its rivals, killed entire families, and brutalized the community.<sup>6</sup> It planned on establishing an Islamic caliphate in Doura that would provide a safe haven and allow it to develop forces.<sup>7</sup> To protect this valuable territory, AQI used various types of improvised explosive devices, sniper fire, rocket-

propelled grenades, hand-held grenades, rockets, and mortars. The “deep-buried improvised explosive device” was one of AQI’s more powerful attack methods. To prepare deep-buried improvised explosive device attacks, AQI buried hundreds of pounds of explosives under a roadway. Because it controlled the community, AQI constructed its roadway and roadside bombs with little interference. Coalition forces found that locating an explosive device before its detonation was extremely difficult and sometimes had fatal results. On 28 June 2007, 4/1 ID lost five Soldiers from a deep-buried improvised explosive device blast in the eastern part of Doura.<sup>8</sup> Upon arrival, the squadron did not have a robust intelligence picture of the AQI network.<sup>9</sup> The



COL Ricky Gibbs points out key spots in the Doura Market to MG Jeffrey W. Hammond, commander of the 4th Infantry Division, during a visit to the Rashid district of Baghdad, Iraq, 26 April 2007.

enemy's greatest strength seemed to be the ability to blend into the community without being recognized as part of the insurgency by coalition forces.<sup>10</sup>

The Sunnis within Doura felt completely disenfranchised from their government. Many believed the Government of Iraq was an extension of the Iranian government and under Persian influence. To counter AQI and the community's lack of faith in the ISF, 1-4 Cavalry worked to reconnect the local population with government institutions. Insurgent groups had become strong organizations because Sunnis did not connect to the Iraqi government. The only Iraqi security force in the area, the 3d Battalion of 7th National Police Brigade, had little constructive interaction with the community. The Shi'a-dominated National Police harassed residents at checkpoints and randomly placed small arms fire down main roadways.<sup>11</sup> The Sunnis referred to the policemen as Shi'a militia members. The residents could not forget the early days of 2006 when 30 dead bodies a day appeared in Doura. Fear of kidnapping or sectarian violence kept many residents within their neighborhoods. Residents often described kidnappers as police or wearing police uniforms, and tensions between the police and residents had a tremendously negative impact on daily living. To illustrate this, many residents chose to buy their cooking fuel at the black market rate within their community rather than buying it at regular retail establishments for fear of having to pass through the National Police checkpoints.

Residents also lacked essential services such as electricity, clean drinking water, working sewage systems, and trash removal. Government service workers were reluctant to conduct any public works projects because security was nonexistent in the community. Without a functioning collection system, large trash piles filled the streets. Insurgents used this to their advantage to hide their improvised explosive device systems. Watery, green-colored raw sewage flowed down streets and into homes. Electricity was only available in small quantities for short periods each day. Whether real or perceived, many residents within Doura believed Shi'a neighborhoods received more government services than the Sunni neighborhoods. Sunni residents became resentful toward the government. Al-Qaeda in Iraq quickly took advantage of the lack of local law enforcement and government failures to establish a base of operations.

## ***The Sunnis within Doura felt completely disenfranchised from their government.***

### **Clear, Hold, Build**

Field Manual 3-24 acknowledges the existence of many successful methods for implementing counterinsurgency operations.<sup>12</sup> For a "specific, high priority area experiencing overt insurgent operations," the manual recommends the implementation of the "clear-hold-build" approach.<sup>13</sup>

**Clear.** During 2006, coalition forces transferred the security responsibility of each neighborhood to ISF on completion of a deliberate cordon-and-search or clearing operation. However, 4/1 ID enhanced this approach by expecting longer-term results. Describing previous clearing methods, the 4th ID commander said, "They (insurgents) would wait two or three days after we left. Then, they come right back in behind you."<sup>14</sup> The squadron needed to clear AQI from the neighborhoods and then implement measures to ensure AQI did not filter back into the community.

In mid-May 2007, 1-4 Cavalry assumed the eastern half of the 2-12 Infantry's territory. The area consisted of three neighborhoods, large palm grove areas, the Doura Oil refinery, and several major road networks. The Iraqi government maintained robust security for the Doura refinery and nearby bridges, which allowed the squadron to focus on the three neighborhoods.

Within the first 30 days (18 May–18 June) of arrival, the enemy mounted 52 attacks on coalition forces.<sup>15</sup> "During the first 30 days, we had no freedom of maneuver," 1-4 Cavalry commander Lieutenant Colonel James R. Crider explained. "We went where we wanted to go, but it was a deliberate move with guys on rooftops, trucks in overwatch, and moving one block at a time. It was an extremely contested area."<sup>16</sup> The situation called for a "clear-hold-build" approach that could separate the insurgents from the local population and set conditions for the government to reconnect to the community. Having served in the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) between 2003 and 2004 as the brigade S3 operations officer, Crider understood the importance of COIN principles. In his first major tactical decision, Crider chose to have

his unit maintain a presence on the streets 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Beginning 15 June, the 24/7 presence physically demonstrated to the community that 1-4 Cavalry would not simply clear an area and move to the next objective, but was there to stay. Within a short period, the squadron significantly deterred AQI operations and their freedom of movement, slowly eliminating the threat of deep-buried improvised explosive devices. The 24/7 presence restricted the insurgent's opportunity to dig and plant bombs in the roads.

Shortly after 1-4 Cavalry established the 24/7 presence, residents conducted business later than normal hours to shop or to visit their neighbors.<sup>17</sup> No less significant than the 24/7 presence, the unit began operations to build trust within the community and to locate human intelligence sources. Upon arrival, the squadron's greatest problems were a lack of informants and the enemy's ability to hide in plain sight. Effective application of the COIN principles soon enabled 1-4 Cavalry to produce visible results.

Before 1-4 Cavalry arrived, 2-12 Infantry had begun Operation Close Encounters. Battalion commander Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Michael credited this operation with allowing him to target AQI.<sup>18</sup> After assuming the area from 2-12 Infantry, 1-4 Cavalry continued Operation Close Encounters but improved the execution of this operation by conducting a more deliberate engagement with community residents. Overwhelmed by a large and significant kinetic environment, Soldiers from 2-12 Infantry often engaged with locals.<sup>19</sup> However, 1-4 Cavalry had the opportunity to execute this operation more deliberately. "We took it [Operation Close Encounters] as a census operation in the United States," explained Captain Nicholas Cook. "We sat down with them in the kitchen and just talked with them . . . As soon as we did that, we started building trust, and we inundated the community with tip cards."<sup>20</sup> Because they had a relatively small area, 1-4 Cavalry could move from one home to the next until they visited every home on the block. Once inside each home, the unit sat down with the residents and worked to make

a connection. Often troops would drink hot tea and initiate a conversation.

Lieutenant Colonel Crider acknowledged that this "getting out into the community" approach entailed risk. To mitigate risks to troop safety concerns, Crider placed Soldiers on rooftops to keep a lookout for trouble and instituted other risk reduction measures. Soldiers took photos of the residents and gathered information about the household. The squadron used the Handheld Interagency Identity Detection Equipment system to put residential information into a software database. This program allowed the squadron to document who resided in each home and to record key information regarding the residents.

Operation Close Encounters helped to implement population control measures and to create a neighborhood watch program. It followed the principles outlined in FM 3-24, which states: "Counterinsurgency (COIN) is an intelligence-driven endeavor. The function of intelligence in COIN is to facilitate understanding of the operational environment, with emphasis on the populace, host nation, and insurgents. Commanders require accurate intelligence about these three areas to best address the issues driving the insurgency. Both insurgents and counterinsurgents require an effective intelligence capability to be successful. Both attempt to create



U.S. Army, SFC Robert Timmons

**SSG Michael Nash, 2d Infantry Division, scans an Iraqi man's retina using the Handheld Interagency Identity Detection Equipment system in southern Baghdad's Rashid District, 8 June 2007.**

and maintain intelligence networks while trying to neutralize their opponent's."<sup>21</sup>

During Operation Close Encounter interviews, the squadron discovered individuals who were willing to support the removal of AQI from their neighborhoods. Many were reluctant to do so openly because it was an invitation for a death sentence. Al-Qaeda in Iraq had demonstrated its brutality on a number of occasions. Its intimidation tactics included killing entire families and removing the heads of their victims.<sup>22</sup> To counter this tactic, the unit visited all of the residents for an entire city block, a useful engagement strategy that hindered the insurgent's ability to detect and target coalition informants.

Impromptu group photographs of community members—with all males of military age—paid substantial dividends. Whether it was on the street or in a park, the troop asked local men to participate in a group photograph. The approach more closely resembled a tourist taking a photo on a vacation rather than an occupying force implementing a population control measure or searching for wanted criminals. The unit amassed thousands of pictures. As the information from the Soldiers in the neighborhoods began to filter into the squadron headquarters, the intelligence section developed a library of suspects to show the local sources and to help identify suspects. Within a short period of time, Operation Close Encounters proved to be a huge success. At the end of May 2007, the squadron developed approximately one dozen sources. By the beginning of June, these sources led to the removal of a five-man improvised explosive devices cell. Although AQI reseeded this cell within a month, the cell's capture provided the squadron with breathing space to rapidly acquire additional sources and fully conduct Operation Close Encounters.

In July, the unit developed a unique relationship with a name-protected asset.<sup>23</sup> By combining the strengths of this name-protected asset with information from the increasingly expanding 1-4 Cavalry covert human network, coalition forces captured several members of the vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices network. This terrorist cell had been responsible for about three-fourths of the vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices in Baghdad. The detention of these terrorists provided the coalition a victory with strategic implica-

tions: it led to the decline of AQI in East Rashid. The squadron intelligence officer, First Lieutenant Travis Lee, credits these detentions with "enabling multi local-national resistance movements to stand up in the East Rashid area and the areas to our south."<sup>24</sup> By early August, with support from their robust source network, 1-4 Cavalry detained AQI insurgents on an almost daily basis, and the number of enemy attacks dropped significantly.

Before 2007, coalition units had developed a negative reputation because of harshly conducted raids or searches. With occasional support from the ISF, they would surround an area and prevent anyone from leaving, gather and transport military age males to a holding facility, then decide whether to release or process them for further detention. This tactic heightened the fears of Sunni residents because they felt coalition forces categorized all Sunnis into one group without regard to fair treatment. As they already felt targeted by Shi'a militias and the Shi'a-dominated National Police, many Sunnis believed coalition forces were overwhelmingly targeting Sunnis. This belief exacerbated the idea found in Sunni communities that the legal system targeted the Sunni population. The COIN manual recommends "minimizing the impact of combat operations on the local populace."<sup>25</sup> To help establish its credibility, 1-4 Cavalry conducted raids focused on capturing specific, known individuals. The unit positively identified detainees *before* placing them into a detention center. Within a couple of days of the detention, 1-4 Cavalry visited the detainee's family to explain the detention and charges. "They weren't happy about it," explained Lieutenant Colonel Crider, "but they understood and they knew that their son had been doing bad stuff."<sup>26</sup> By continuing this policy throughout the deployment and keeping their word on other matters, the squadron gained the confidence and the respect of the local population. Trust had been established.

***Before 2007, coalition units had developed a negative reputation because of harshly conducted raids or searches.***



**Hold.** Doura was valuable key terrain for AQI. The terrorist organization chose to reseed this area to develop a new AQI network. In early August, large numbers of AQI operatives from Arab Jabour, located immediately south of the East Rashid Security District, moved north into the area.<sup>27</sup> To provide cover for their activities, these operatives brought their entire families. Widespread migration was occurring at this time throughout Iraq, so movement of families into the community did not immediately raise concerns about possible AQI infiltration. Initially, the tactic worked. However, the squadron soon began exchanging intelligence with the battalion to their south in the Abar Jabour area. Within a few weeks, the number of detentions skyrocketed—through 24/7 presence and the robust source network, 1-4 Cavalry halted this emerging AQI network.

After implementation of the 24/7 presence in mid-June, the number of enemy initiated events fell by half after two months (see Figure 1). The last effective attack against 1-4 Cavalry occurred on 9 September 2007. On 27 September, insurgents conducted their final attack against 1-4 Cavalry in the sector.<sup>28</sup> During the month of October 2007, there were only two or three attacks in the Raider area of operations. Over time, the improvised explosive devices became much smaller than those the unit had observed during the summer of 2007. The squadron identified these devices as small, bottle-sized bombs designed to intimidate the local Shi'a populace from returning to their homes. Shortly

after 1-4 Cavalry began the 24/7 presence, the number of AQI detentions steadily rose and the number of attacks declined.

In addition to Operation Close Encounters and a 24/7 presence, the squadron implemented and continued the following population control measures:

- Emplace concrete barriers to limit and channel movements of individuals.
- Examine documents to verify residential status.<sup>29</sup>
- Ensure neighbors approved who moved into their community.

The barriers became a crucial tool in controlling the population. Forcing insurgents through established checkpoints increased their vulnerability. In time, the squadron augmented the checkpoints with local sources to help identify insurgents.

One population control method FM 3-24 espouses is introducing identification cards. However, we did not do this because to protect the local population residents needed false ID cards without Sunni-sounding names to avoid being harmed at National Police checkpoints or being targeted for kidnapping by Shi'a extremists. Also, residents could easily obtain these false identification cards, thus employing mandatory credentials for population control proved unfeasible.

FM 3-24 also notes, “another part of analyzing a COIN mission involves assuming responsibility for everyone in the area of operations. This means that leaders feel the pulse of the local populace, understand their motivations, and care

about what they want and need. Genuine compassion and empathy for the populace provide an effective weapon against insurgents.”<sup>30</sup> On 5 June 2007, the squadron occupied coalition outpost Banchee. Located in the center of the squadron's territory, outpost Banchee raised the coalition presence and decreased response times for emergencies. In addition to establishing Banchee and a 24/7 presence, Lieutenant Colonel Crider spent his time in

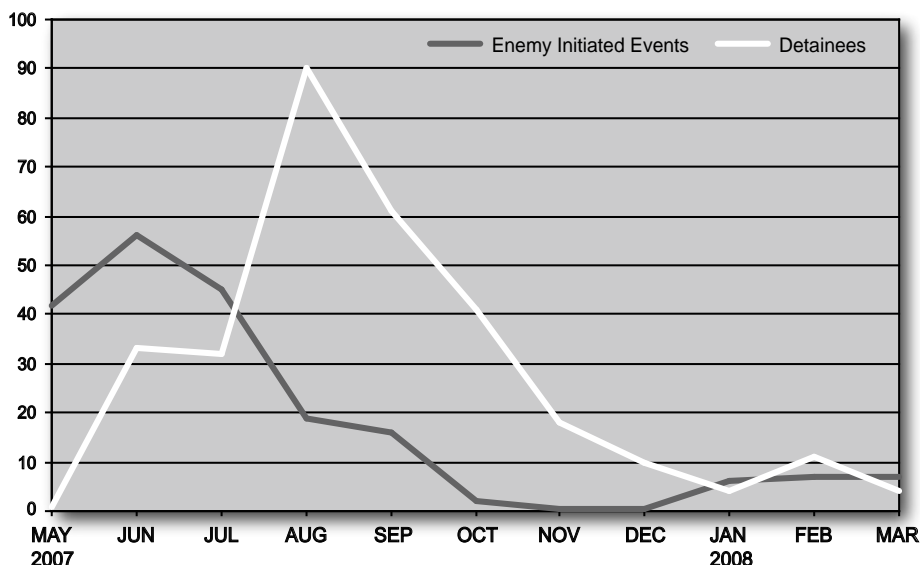


Figure 1. Attacks and AQI detentions by month in the 1-4 CAV AO.

the neighborhoods to have firsthand knowledge of the community atmospherics. In describing the best location for the commander, Lieutenant Lee commented, "Lieutenant Colonel Crider being out in the community was key for us."<sup>31</sup> After time, most if not all of the local residents recognized Crider.

Additionally, troop commanders spent a large portion of their time in the neighborhoods instead of their company command posts. As the security situation stabilized and the residents started trusting U.S. Soldiers, the squadron shifted their focus toward improving the economic situation by providing quality of life projects and key essential services within the community.

**Build.** Field Manual 3-24 states, "Essential services address the life support needs of the [Host Nation (HN)] population. The U.S. military's primary task is normally to provide a safe and secure environment. HN or interagency organizations can then develop the services or infrastructure needed. In an unstable environment, the military may initially have the leading role. Other agencies may not be present or might not have enough capability or capacity to meet HN needs. Therefore, COIN military planning includes preparing to perform these tasks for an extended period."<sup>32</sup>

In May 2007, the Iraqi infrastructure in the Raider's territory was in a dilapidated condition.<sup>33</sup> The AQI bombs had destroyed a number of power, water, and sewer lines, and trash piles littered neighborhoods. Under normal conditions, repairs of essential services were the purview of the Doura Beladiyah, but due to security issues, employees of the Beladiyah refused to go into the neighborhoods and streets.<sup>34</sup> In one of the first actions to help bring relief to the community, Crider persuaded the Doura Beladiyah to become involved in the establishment and repair of essential services. Within a short time, his unit began to provide security escorts for sewage pumping trucks. By removing sewage from streets and overloaded septic systems, the government provided valuable relief and some hope to the community.

The emplacement of small neighborhood generators (known as micro-generators) provided the

community with improved electricity. In their news media presentation, 1-4 Cavalry wrote, "Bureaucrats who claimed that micro-generation would create too large a demand for fuel and exacerbate the problem did not understand that this was about the people who could not keep medicine cool or offer a cold drink to their kids when it was 130 degrees."<sup>35</sup> Introduced by MND-B, the micro-generator program in Baghdad provided residents with a reliable source for low-cost electrical power. These generators became a vital part of the Baghdad revitalization plan because the Baghdad grid only provided a small amount of electricity at erratic times. Initially, the residents expected coalition forces to pay for the fuel. However, the program required residents to fund these fuel costs. After three months with the generators still not in use, the residents developed a resource system where if they contributed to the cost of the fuel, and the generators began running.

The squadron developed a variety of projects designed to improve the neighborhood quality of life or infrastructure, by upgrading the soccer fields, renovating the gyms, removing the trash, and promoting community artwork. Commanders at various levels throughout MND-B used these simple quality of life projects to install hope in the community and bring about normalcy. Other infrastructure projects were upgrading the local medical clinic and repairing electrical, water, road, and sewer networks. Upon completion, the long-term projects helped solidify a positive relationship with the local community and showed that 1-4 Cavalry kept its promises. Colorful murals, clean sidewalks, newly planted trees, and restored streetlights transformed the appearance of the community.

The squadron also began to address the economic situation, which had collapsed after the Sunni-dominated Iraqi government fell in 2003. Large numbers of unemployed, military-aged Sunni males provided the insurgency with a pool of recruits to fill their ranks, but 1-4 Cavalry understood that winning a counterinsurgency conflict meant defeating the insurgents by stopping the flow of recruits and supplies. Doura had left many Sunni males unemployed

***...1-4 Cavalry understood that winning a counterinsurgency conflict meant defeating the insurgents by stopping the flow of recruits and supplies.***



U.S. Army, SFC Robert Timmons

**Pvt. David Palasek, 1st Infantry Division, watches as Iraqi citizens mix concrete while they renovate the road median in southern Baghdad's Doura neighborhood, 28 October 2007.**

by the war with little means to support their families. Except for the Doura Oil Refinery, the area contained no employment opportunities. Finding ways to gainfully employ the local population became a critical component for success. The squadron used a combination of grants, contracts, and projects to spur local improvements and employment.

Entrepreneurs looked at ways to open small businesses and neighborhood stores. The micro-grant program established by Multi-National Corps-Iraq allowed Doura residents to apply for up to \$2,500 in grant money to start up a small business. The 1-4 Cavalry helped locals with the paperwork and sent the applications to the brigade for further processing. By March 2008, the squadron had distributed a total of \$460,000 within a 10 month period.<sup>36</sup> The number of opened shops along the main streets increased from 10 stores in May of 2007 to 117 stores in March of 2008.<sup>37</sup> The economic situation improved when the income stream from the Sons of Iraq entered the community. According to the command report, "There was an economic revival in Doura, sparked by the efforts of 1-4 Cavalry... Thanks to the Raiders' hard work, there were hundreds of stores open and a thriving economy."<sup>38</sup>

By March 2008, the security situation was remarkably improved. During deployment, the squadron hosted a number of distinguished visitors, including

General David Petraeus, Commander of Multi-National Force-Iraq, high-ranking Iraqi officials, and numerous reporters. Despite the security improvements, the National Police still did not venture into the neighborhoods without coalition forces present. Although reduced, the animosity between the police and the Sunni residents remained. The fallout from a potential situation in which the police angered or dishonored local residents could challenge recent security gains. When disputes between the police and residents developed, 1-4 Cavalry intervened as an honest broker between the two parties. All parties generally respected its resolutions because the squadron kept all of its promises and remained impartial.

In describing COIN practices, FM 3-24 recommends "placing host-nation police in the lead with military support as soon as security situation permits."<sup>39</sup> Yet, the distrust within the community toward the National Police remained consistently high during 1-4 Cavalry's deployment. In November 2007, 4/1 ID began hiring local citizens in East Rashid to protect their community.<sup>40</sup> Copied from other programs used throughout Baghdad and within other Sunni areas in Iraq, these individuals were known as Concerned Local Citizens and later as Sons of Iraq. This group consisted of adult males aged 18–30 years from the local community who were authorized to provide static security.

Crider utilized the Sons of Iraq to protect the power generators and other key infrastructure. In time, the squadron integrated them into operations and security meetings that involved the National Police and coalition forces. Transitioning these volunteers to a stable Iraqi police force remains a key element to long-term stability because the contracts are short-term solutions. To address this issue, the squadron worked to convert their Concerned Local Citizens groups into Iraqi police officers as part of the MNC-I Operation Blue Shield. This program called for an additional 12,641 Iraqi police officers in Baghdad Province.<sup>41</sup>

## In the Final Analysis

The 1-4 Cavalry achieved a number of noteworthy accomplishments by utilizing COIN principles:

- The successful capture of over 250 AQI targets, removing a significant number of insurgents from the community.
- Their comprehensive detention packets resulted in an 81 percent acceptance rate into Camp Cropper.<sup>42</sup> This high percentage rate is especially important because Camp Cropper detentions removed an insurgent for a significant amount of time.

- The Cavalry unit established a partnership with the local community to prevent AQI from regaining momentum in the community. While stating 1-4 Cavalry's contributions, Colonel Gibbs described the squadron's area of operations thusly: "The entire neighborhood is a model for the rest of the district."<sup>43</sup>

By adhering to the COIN principles of "clear-hold-build" and by treating Iraqis with dignity, 1-4 Cavalry successfully gained the support of the local population and brought security to a former AQI-dominated area. The squadron successfully implemented more Iraqi solutions to solve local problems. Some of the changes included locally operated kerosene distribution, development of local government representation, and improved cooperation between the ISF and the Sons of Iraq. Because long-term stability requires political reconciliation and compromise between the Iraqi populace and the government, coalition forces can only provide a temporary resolution in the security situation. Yet, without this squadron's intervention, the Iraqi Government would probably not have this developing window of opportunity to connect with the Sunni populace in East Rashid. **MR**

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## NOTES

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3. Attack trends (U), MND-B Fardh al Qanoon Weekly Assessment, 7 July 2007 (S).

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5. Iraqi Ground Force Assessment of Baghdad Districts (U), Assessment paper, 2007.

6. LTC James R. Crider, Commander 1-4 Cavalry, interview by MAJ Tom Sills, 22 October 2007, 130th Military History Detachment oral history collection of 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Fort McNair, Washington, DC.

7. COL Ricky D. Gibbs, Commander 4th Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, interview by Sills, 25 January 2008, 130th Military History Detachment oral history collection of 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Fort McNair, Washington, DC.

8. Gibbs interview.

9. 1LT Travis Lee, 1-4 Cavalry Intelligence Officer, interview by Sills, 22 October 2007, 130th Military History Detachment, oral history collection of 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Fort McNair, Washington, DC.

10. 1-4 Cavalry OIF V Counterinsurgency Operations Baghdad presentation, Iraq (U), 21 March 2008.

11. Crider interview, October 2007.

12. U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, December 2006), 5-18.

13. MNC-I modified these principles in 2007 and introduced the terms "Clear-Control-Retain-Transition" with an emphasis on control and retain. However, this essay utilizes the Clear-Hold-Build terminology and ties these principles from this FM to practices implemented by 1-4 Cavalry.

14. Crider interview, October 2007.

15. 1-4 Cavalry OIF V Counterinsurgency Operations Baghdad presentation, Iraq (U), 21 March 2008.

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17. Crider and staff interview, 2008.

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U.S. Army Center of Military History, Fort McNair, Washington, DC.

19. SFC Gandon Edgy, Platoon Sergeant, 1SG Richard Strong, CPT Nicholas Cook, leaders from A Troop 1-4 Cavalry, interview by Sills, 23 October 2007, 130th Military History Detachment, oral history collection of 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Fort McNair, Washington, DC.

20. Ibid.

21. FM 3-24, 3.1.

22. Crider interview, October 2007.

23. In order to keep this information at the unclassified level, the nature of this relationship cannot be described.

24. Lee interview, October 2007.

25. FM 3-24, 5-19.

26. Crider interview, October 2007.

27. Lee interview, October 2007.

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29. Ibid.

30. FM 3-24, 7-2.

31. Lee interview, October 2007.

32. FM 3-24, 5-15.

33. 1-4 Cavalry OIF Counterinsurgency Brief, (U) 21 March 2008.

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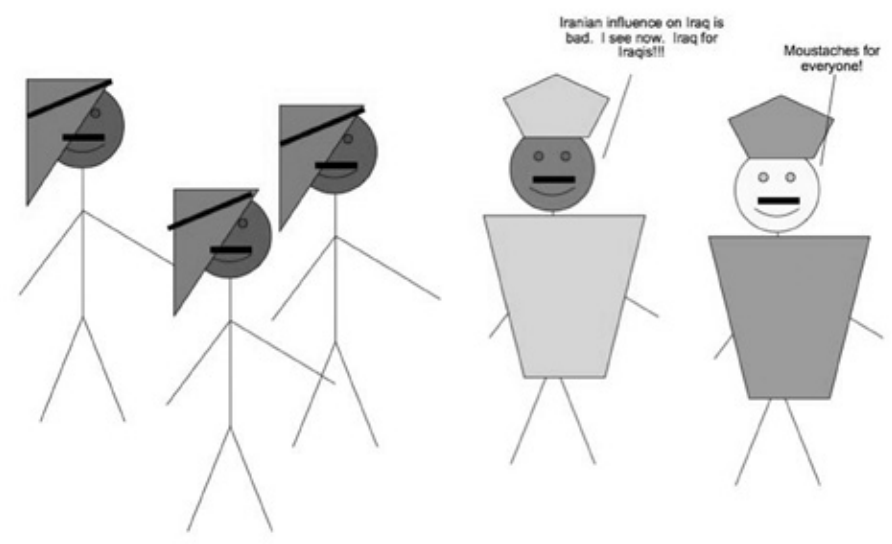
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41. Conversation with MAJ Paul Caldwell, 1-4 Cavalry S3, notes by Sills, 130th Military History Detachment, 22 February 2008.

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# The INFLUENTIAL LEADER



**Major Enrique Silvela,  
Spanish Army**

*The sheik brings more sheiks; more sheiks bring more men. Joe realizes that if he'd done this three years ago, maybe his wife would be happier, and he'd have been home more. Mohammed gets to meet the Sheiks. They realize he's not such a bad guy, which is good for Iraq. Joe grows a moustache, because he realizes that Iraqis like people with moustaches and have a hard time trusting people without one.*

—Captain Travis Patriquin, "How to win in Al-Anbar."<sup>1</sup>

**A** COALITION BRIGADE COMMANDER grows increasingly frustrated at his inability to make progress. He thinks he is a competent military leader. He knows his job, his weaponry, his tactics, and his Soldiers. Nevertheless, he is frustrated over his inability to make progress. Things he is not in charge of are spinning out of control. He is in a "three-block" war.<sup>2</sup> He must consider rebuilding infrastructure, schools, and hospitals in a "clear-hold-build" mission.<sup>3</sup> He studies cultural awareness to pursue his mission. He asks for, and receives, the necessary interpreters. His staff is augmented with a civil affairs specialist, and he understands the full array of international organizations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) active in his area of operations. Yet in spite of such assets and knowledge, all measures of effectiveness indicate that things are getting worse.

He has to accept the support of a host-country brigade whose dubious commander bears all the qualities of an opportunist, a known bully who uses a heavy hand with his own population. He has to work around this local sheik to get things done. The officer at the head of the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team has "gone native," making things even worse.<sup>4</sup> He is supporting the indigenous commander even when it is evident that the thug is favoring his own tribe at the expense of the most elementary principles of good governance.<sup>5</sup>

The coalition brigade commander must devote extraordinary time and attention to analyzing and prioritizing projects: a new school for girls tops the list, followed by a new hospital, and then a few new wells. There are disagreements with the reconstruction team commander over these priorities. In connection with the school, the local authorities contend they are unable to staff it when it is completed. (They want him to build a new office for them instead).<sup>6</sup>

Fortunately, the enemy in the area is tactically clumsy, allowing the commander to make incremental gains. The brigade produces a number of

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successes. It catches a local insurgent commander trying to extort a local telecommunications company by using his cell phone.<sup>7</sup> It solves the kidnapping of three international hostages because of the amateurish way the insurgents conducted the negotiations.<sup>8</sup> However, the insurgency is still active, waiting for better weather to launch their spring offensive. The coalition brigade commander wants to cope with this coming situation, but he does not command the NGOs, the local authorities, or the local military and police units. Worse, he does not direct the operational management liaison team or the American provincial reconstruction team.<sup>9</sup> All seem at cross-purposes with him. None follows a common line of effort, and each has a different understanding of the situation. The coalition brigade commander thinks they all are wrong and that he is right.

The above hypothetical situation all-too-commonly plays itself out in the current operating environment (COE). This is a fictitious scenario, but it is true to many situations that happened in Iraq and are happening in Afghanistan. It could happen again elsewhere in the world. The story illustrates a new characteristic of the COE, the presence of multiple agents in the same area, all with a similar purpose but each with different mandates and approaches to what they consider the best solution. In this kind of environment, a commander cannot impose his vision and solution to the problem.

The new COE places extraordinary demands on leaders to exert influence that goes beyond the traditional limits of military command authority in the leaders' areas of responsibility. Today's military professionals have to understand how to influence without authority and how to achieve desired results within the constraints of a cooperative environment.

## Exploring Influence

Influence is an essential component of leadership, which Field Manual 6-22, *Leadership*, defines as

***The new COE places extraordinary demands on leaders to exert influence that go beyond the traditional limits...***

“the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization.”<sup>10</sup> This definition implies leading by influencing others who share a common purpose and direction within an organization. The word “influence” in this definition has limited scope, referring only to those in one’s immediate proximity. However, FM 3-0, *Operations*, affirms, “Leaders influence not only Soldiers, but other people as well.”<sup>11</sup>

Field Manual 3-0 presents the concept of influence, as one of four stability mechanisms: compel, control, influence, and support. These are the alternatives when there is no enemy opposition to defeat.<sup>12</sup> Influence “means to alter the opinions and attitudes of a civilian population through information engagement, presence, and conduct.”<sup>13</sup> Field Manual 6-22 also extends leadership influence beyond the chain of command.<sup>14</sup> In contrast with FM 3-0, it considers not only the civilian population but also every agent affecting or interested in the environment. Field Manual 3-24 simply states that “commanders must influence directly and indirectly the behavior of others outside their chain of command.”<sup>15</sup> This is where influence receives its full significance. People affected by our leadership will share part of our purpose, but will have their own ambitions. They will not follow our direction but will take our decisions into account. Our mission as leaders includes influencing the decisions of those very different agents within our environment.

*Stability mechanisms* work across full spectrum operations in every operational theme. They range from coercion to support. The question is how to select the best choice of legitimate military actions, which range from the measured use of violence to cooperation, with a special emphasis on influence.

The working definition for *influence* may be “the ability to persuade or stimulate other individual or collective agents in our environment to act in accordance with our purpose.” Field Manual 6-22 offers good guidance on how to understand and exert this influence. The principal context for this approach will be operations other than major combat.<sup>16</sup> We can analyze this from the perspective of a military unit performing an operation as well as from the

point of view of those present within or affected by our area of operations.

From a military unit's perspective, the first consideration is that our organization is only one of multiple stakeholders in a crisis environment; but it is *our* organization. We want to influence the environment for our own purpose. As a military unit, our purpose will normally be to accomplish our mission; from the leadership point of view, we add the purpose of improving our organization. This point of view is, and ought to be, selfish. Our purpose is not to improve the environment within our area of operations, but to accomplish our mission. We will try to influence the environment only in order to better accomplish our mission. We assume our mission is legitimate, effective, and has a purpose. We will interpret it within the latitude we are allowed. We must be aware that our unit may not be the only one present in the area. Indeed, we may find other units from our own forces with different tasks, outside of our immediate chain of command. The issue is to choose the best point along the continuum. This may vary from simple coercion to military actions, ranging from a measured use of violence to any level of cooperation.

The second consideration points to the full spectrum of operations. Major combat operations require a broad application of directed violence. In this context, the use of force will be the military commander's main tool, reducing the importance of influence and increasing the effectiveness of coercion. In other types of operations, influence will have a very important place. The operational environment in peacetime military engagements, limited interventions, peace operations, and irregular warfare may contain neutral noncombatants such as NGOs, or impartial observers that will not respond well to coercion.<sup>17</sup> It may be necessary to influence the environment rather than coerce it during such missions. The use of coercion to influence an agent depends on the situation.

From the leadership perspective, the operational environment contains many agents, each with different qualities within a continuum from conflict to cooperation. Those agents can be local or international.

On the local side, we find—

- Political representatives at various levels.

- Local informal power structures.
  - Local security forces.
  - Irregular activists from criminals to insurgents.
- On the international side we can point out—
- Nongovernmental organizations.
  - International organizations.
  - International military forces in coalition with ours.
  - Other security forces.
  - International police or private companies.
  - Private contractors.
  - The media.
  - Other national governmental agencies: economic, political or cultural.

As soon as any group is designated as an enemy, actions affecting this group will rely on violence much more than on influence. For all those not considered the enemy, a group which may even include criminals, a commander must convey ways to influence their behavior without necessarily resorting to coercion.

Those agents have a great variety of features:

- Many will have different ends, purposes, and interests.

- *Some will not share our culture and values.*

- Others will have distinct skills and habits.

These features are applicable through different strategies. Of all those who are not considered the enemy, some share common ground because of their purpose and our own unit's mission. The search for peace and prosperity through security, freedom, and justice will define this common ground. However, the interpretations of peace or justice will likely be different among the various players. Some agents will have a mandate, and others will have broad autonomy. In any case, our military unit will not be in a position to force a mission on these players, nor will it have the power to "coordinate" their actions. Despite these limitations, a military commander must influence the actions of all those organizations to best accomplish his assigned mission.

***As soon as any group is designated as an enemy, actions affecting this group will rely upon violence much more than on influence.***



U.S. Army, SSG Bronco Suzuki

American Army officers and Iraqi National Police talk after observing an insurgent observation post being destroyed by 2,000-pound guided bombs dropped from an F-15 Eagle in the Salman Pak, Iraq, 14 January 2007.

## Why Influence?

The working definition of influence implies that our military unit will not use coercion to control every action of the agents in our environment. As military leaders, we will have a defined mission, whose fulfillment, in most cases, will be affected by the agents' behavior. What are the possible courses of action that we—as military leaders—have when interacting with these other agents? We can simply ignore them; we can just do our job without considering them and just follow our orders. We may perform within our standards; apply our tactics, techniques, and procedures; and treat them with military courtesy. Will this attitude benefit our mission? By acting alone, we will not receive any help from the other actors and may even perhaps alienate them. On the other hand, if their cooperation would enhance our effectiveness, why not seek this cooperation?

Another possibility is for us to assume the non-cooperative agent tasks that we deem necessary for the success of our mission. That is, do what should be done by others. That attitude may lead to conflict with these agents, but it may be the better

course of action. If the locals are not able to provide essential services, if the NGOs reject contact with the military, we can perform local administration and humanitarian assistance on our own. Beyond the risk of drawing the anger of the agents on ourselves, we may cause their disengagement in the future, making them dependent on our extended presence in their country.

We can simply persuade the agents to do our will through sheer force. The local population and authorities can be forced to do our will. International organizations and NGOs do not have our resources of labor and equipment. We can coerce them when they need our support.

The opposite is possible as well; we can try to make everyone happy by doing exactly what the agents expect from us. The interpretation of our mission may be “re-engineered” to satisfy all agents. In the short term, in front of the media, our unit may receive big applause. But is it what we are looking for? Is there another way? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this course of action? Is it feasible? At what price?



The use of noncoercive influence is another option. The main advantage to this, the third and best course of action, is that it will confer legitimacy to our mission within the realities of our capabilities.<sup>18</sup> First, it will establish a common ground for cooperation with outside agents: if they do not feel threatened or ignored by our actions, then they will be more prone to look for common ground. Second, it will enhance mutual trust. Exerting positive noncoercive influence requires contact and engagement; if this engagement remains sincere, without each party renouncing its position, it will build confidence and the possibility of concerted action. Third, the effects of cooperative agreements last longer than those of coercive actions. This is significant because, even if other agents perform less efficiently than our force, they will learn, improve, and take full responsibility over time. Finally, as history proves repeatedly, military decision-making has not always been correct.<sup>19</sup> A cooperative approach allows each agent to take responsibility for its own mistakes; there is less likelihood of mistakes when each agent is performing its own responsibilities.

Of course there is a price. Efficiency and effectiveness may suffer in the short term. Military capabilities and resources are often much more effective than those of other agents in short-term actions. But taking on other agents' tasks may reduce their legitimacy and that of our own mission as well.<sup>20</sup> Second, things may take more time to accomplish. Again, in the short term, military resources may get immediate results, but in isolation, this does not help build confidence with other stakeholders. The worst case is that influence simply may not work. The different agents may pursue their own interests and objectives in a manner that may prove incompatible with our mission. In these circumstances, if the alternatives are coercion or substitution, the result may be a different kind of the same evil. However, if we consider not only our own unit, but also the

***...even if other agents perform less efficiently than our force, they will learn, improve, and take full responsibility over time.***

whole operation, with different units like ours, some of those units may actually attain their objectives. In general, looking for influence may not work 100 percent of the time, but it promises to be better than simply relying on brute force. Looking at the big picture from a strategic point of view, in the mid- to long-term, influence may be superior to coercion in situations other than major combat operations.

Finally, there are other legitimate questions. Will an orientation to exert influence on the commander's part affect combat capabilities of our unit? Will it affect our own will to fight? If so, would it be better to prepare ourselves for major combat operations? The old argument that there is no need to train for nation building because excellent combat skills will translate into excellence in stability operations has been proven wrong. We have to train for all tasks. A Soldier always has competing demands on his time, and training for stability operations will not erode combat skills. Accepting new demands for competency will not necessarily erode former capabilities. Our Soldiers have the ability to train for full spectrum operations, so we must conduct the necessary preparations for any contingency.

## **How to influence**

Influence is a quality of leadership. Field Manual 6-22 provides the best guidance on how a leader may extend his influence beyond his chain of command. Good leaders will be able to influence events in their environment by the simple rule of Be-Know-Do.<sup>21</sup> The current operational environment is very complex. It is more demanding than operations in the past. Leadership requirements certainly deserve a closer look.

An influential leader needs the quality of restraint. Arrogance is the worst enemy of influence and therefore an obstacle. Aggressive thinking leads to anticipation. However, restraint must control aggressiveness.

Patience is another basic quality. An energetic command is either followed immediately or disobeyed; there is little room for foot dragging, but influence leaves plenty of time to analyze options, check trustworthiness, and assess alternatives. The influential leader assumes that implementing his measures will take time. Time and perseverance build trust.



U.S. Army, SSG Curt Cashour

**U.S. Army LTG Ray Odierno addresses Soldiers at Patrol Base Hawkes in Arab Jabour, Iraq, 21 October 2007.**

That is why coherence is an additional requirement. Maintaining coherence over time is not easy when a leader has competing demands. Coherence will require sacrifices in short-term goals to benefit long-term purposes not yet defined, but it will prove its value. Arbitrariness is the opposite of coherence; it will undermine trust in order to achieve short-term gains. An influential leader is adaptable and agile, too.<sup>22</sup> His or her adaptability does not go against coherence, it builds on it. Adaptability means being able to change one's approach to meet the requirements of every situation while remaining loyal to one's principles and commitments. In order to be adaptable, the leader needs to make decisions by following a battle command decision-making process based on a situational understanding of his own analysis, not a checklist. The basis for these decisions is knowledge and professional judgment developed from experience.

An influential leader requires a special orientation to knowledge. First are his professional responsibilities: the tactics, techniques, and procedures of his unit, which are common to any situation. After one gains professional expertise, the next essential step

is to gain knowledge of oneself. By simply being present in a theater, a military force has a tremendous influence on events. This influence will range from the local environment to international public opinion. Self-knowledge springs from a thorough awareness of one's own capabilities, physical and moral, as well as a clear understanding of our civilization and the legitimacy of our mission. One should measure moral capabilities in terms of trust, credibility, and will; physical capabilities depend on our equipment and the graduated violence we can exert. Any leader has to be aware of his place; he is never behind the scenes, but always in the public eye.

The need to influence people of varied backgrounds places an extraordinary demand on the leader. The influential leader must be familiar with a quite complex environment and the different agents that populate it, their characteristics, names, purposes, mandates, interests, and structure. On the one hand, to be trusted, the leader must appear knowledgeable to the leaders of other organizations; on the other hand, he needs to consider all aspects of the situation in regard to his own decisions. His knowledge base about the agents contains more than facts an

intelligence cell might provide. It implies a thorough understanding. Those agents are formed and led by persons. The influential leader must understand these people and their basic needs, ambitions, and habits. This kind of knowledge relies heavily on education.

The demands of technology have made our education highly specialized, increasing the depth of our thinking in a narrow field at the price of losing perspective and breadth of understanding. In operations other than major combat, success is not just the precise application of technical knowledge, be it flying aircraft or conducting planning. It depends on interpersonal relations with a broad variety of people. A good leader has to know human nature, instincts, and motivation. He has to do more than just respect a religion; he must demonstrate knowledge of its basic principles. Collective decision-making involves ideological and religious considerations. A leader who aspires to exert influential leadership in a complex environment must have a basic understanding of philosophy and political science. Cultural awareness is not enough. A leader knows that other people have cultures; to be effective, he must be familiar with the culture.

***Cultural awareness is not enough....  
to be effective, [the commander]  
must be familiar with the culture.***

The study of the physical environment is also a useful factor in interpersonal relations because the interaction of people with their physical environment shapes their behavior. A leader must know about agriculture in a rural environment, be able to value production in an industrial area, and understand changing social relations in an urban setting. The influential leader must know how to react in any situation, whether meeting with traditional peasants or having a working lunch in a downtown hotel with politicians and international officials. He must use skills and natural abilities to communicate his intellectual resources and environmental awareness, but he must also improve his communication capabilities through study and preparation.

Influence is all about communication. The influential leader must be able to reach out to other agents,

establish a climate of dialogue when possible, and engage them with honesty and sincerity and without arrogance. Cooperation is easier once a communication channel is established.

Of course, the question arises: what to communicate? First, the leader has to clarify his position, his mandate, and his mission to all agents.<sup>23</sup> An influential leader is not a negotiator, although sometimes he may need to negotiate. His point of departure is his mission. He needs to open a field for cooperation with imagination and generosity. He should employ his capabilities and resources as leverage. His actions affect other agents, and they may improve the situation or make it worse. In order to remain coherent and trustworthy, the influential leader balances each agent's demands and interests.

The first steps in influential communications should build trust between the leader and his counterparts. The leader should be involved personally, preferring to communicate primarily with leaders who are at an equivalent level to use his prestige and authority as leverage. Morality is paramount: the influential leader's actions and words must be beyond reproach, serving as a "moral compass" to the environment.<sup>24</sup> The beginning of a relationship needs patience; taking small steps helps to establish trust before addressing greater projects. There will be time to take calculated risks later. Sometimes those risks will materialize. If risks have been properly calculated and likely results anticipated, the one who will suffer from failure will be the unreliable counterpart, not the military unit. Future successes will compensate for some errors. The influential leader seeks good fortune, but luck is not a question of chance. As Major David Cummings has written, good luck is a combination of preparation, control, and confidence with opportunity.<sup>25</sup> A good influential leader "jumps on" an opportunity with confidence because of his knowledge and preparation.

Engaging with other agents means that the leader may need to revise some efficient military procedures. Military planning capabilities tend to be far better than interagency or NGO capabilities. Their agility allows NGOs to respond quickly, but not always following established procedures. Flexibility in military procedures may allow short-term successes, which in turn help to establish

trust. Furthermore, many procedures are designed to improve efficiency. Outside of the military system, this efficiency is often in doubt. In order to provide the other agents a sense of ownership and responsibility, sometimes a leader should discard efficiency in order to allow other agents to execute actions even if they do not do so in the most effective manner. Leading through influence is costly, but effective. There is a need to trade efficiency for effectiveness. Being flexible in procedures will enable the stakeholders to reach a consensus.

On the other hand, the military leader commands a lethal force, not a group of Boy Scouts. He needs to be aware of the capability of his force and use it with moderation according to the circumstances. Military force is a powerful tool; its coercive power is the essence of military action. When an armed military unit has been deployed, except in peacetime military operations, it is because force is needed in some way. Influence is reinforced and directed with dialogue, but it is based in force. Prudence and determination are the key attributes for the successful use of force. Prudence is needed to decide the moment and intensity required in the application of force. Determination is needed to carry out the decision.

A proportionate use of force reinforces one's prestige, authority, and trust. Employing too little force may not accomplish the desired results, but an excessive use of force will break the trust of friends. The need for prudence and sound judgment in the use of violence is imperative. Once excessive violence is unleashed, there will be no way back. However, once the commander has decided to use force, it has to be successful. Decisive action has to be carried out with determination and positive control.<sup>26</sup>

## Future Leader Development

Military leaders at all levels, except when engaged in major combat operations, will find themselves surrounded by a very complex human environment. The actors in this environment are intelligent and willing human beings who make their own decisions. They are not enemies, nor are they strictly neutral. They have an interest in the solution of the crisis that brought them there.

The chances to compel those agents to play by our rules are weak, and trying to do so may even be counterproductive. We must find common ground on which to operate for a common purpose. Military power and capabilities mean that any military unit deployed to an area will have a robust influence on the environment. The role of a military leader is to make the best use of this influence to accomplish the mission.

The COE places an extraordinary demand on future leader development. Leaders will conduct their tasks heavily constrained by their operational environment. In order to be successful, leaders should be able to influence this environment to fulfill the mission. This is not an easy task.

Influential leaders should be adaptable. They must be able to restrain their energy and be patient and coherent. They must be aware of their own capabilities and possibilities. They need basic general knowledge to improvise adaptive and practical solutions to unforeseen problems. The book for success in this environment is not yet written. Influential leaders must have much more than cultural awareness; they must have cultural familiarity. Knowing what they know and knowing who they are, influential leaders will engage and communicate personally within their environment. This communication should build trust and credibility among all parties, make cooperation possible, and create common ground to find practical solutions. Influential leaders will assume risks, taking advantage of opportunities and demonstrating flexibility with their procedures. They will use force with prudence, but with determination, once committed. Influential leaders are adaptable and can operate anywhere in the world when there is a requirement for stability operations. They are active participants in the desert during the blinding sunlight of day and in the cool moonlight throughout the night.

*As the stars gradually fade into the light of day, the brigade commander finally begins to understand the foundations of his frustration. He was trying to solve everything by himself, putting an inordinate amount of pressure on his unit, and creating mistrust within the environment. Yet, it is not too late, he has learned from his past mistakes. It is going to take more time, but patience is now on his side. **MR***

## NOTES

1. Captain Travis Patriquin, "How to Win in Al-Anbar," 2006 Microsoft PowerPoint slides, <[www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=CAPT+Travis+Patriquin&btnG=>](http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=CAPT+Travis+Patriquin&btnG=>), (19 March 2009).

2. The term "Three Block War" was coined by former Chief of the Marine Corps, GEN Charles Krulak. Charles C. Krulak, "The Three Block War: Fighting in Urban Areas" presented at National Press Club, Washington, DC, 10 October 1997. Vital Speeches of the Day, 15 December 1997, 139, cited by Major Phillip W. Boggs. *Joint Task Force Commanders and the "Three Block War,"* SAMS Monograph, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 15 May 2000. [Three Block War—a concept to describe the complex spectrum of challenges likely to be faced by Soldiers on the modern battlefield. In three contiguous city blocks Soldiers may be required to conduct full-scale military action, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian relief.]

3. Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], December 2006), 5-18.

4. Ideas extracted from Greg Jaffe, "A Camp Divided," *Wall Street Journal*, 18 June 2006.

5. Patriquin. His famous PowerPoint presentation is a good example of an honest approach to tribalism.

6. International Security and Assistance Force Civil Military Cooperation in 2004 moved from humanitarian assistance to direct support of governance during my deployment to the International Security and Assistance Force Headquarters in Kabul.

7. An idea extracted from Barnett Rubin, "Rubin: Taliban and Telecoms --" Secret Negotiations Just Got Easier and at a Price You Can Afford!" *Informed Comment: Global Affairs: Group Blog on Current Events*, entry posted 31 March 2008, <http://icga.blogspot.com/2008/03/rubin-taliban-and-telecoms-secret.html>, (18 March 2009).

8. An idea extracted from the kidnapping incident of three international workers on 28 October 2004, during my duty deployment to International Security Assistance Force Headquarters.

9. Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT): An interim interagency organization designed to improve stability in a given area by helping build the legitimacy and effectiveness of a host nation local or provincial government in providing security to its citizens and delivering essential government services.

10. FM 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: GPO, October 2006), 1-2.

11. FM 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, February 2008), 4-2.

12. A stability mechanism is the primary method through which friendly forces affect civilians in order to attain conditions that support establishing a lasting, stable peace. FM 3-0, 6-10.

13. *Ibid.*

14. FM 6-22, 7-11.

15. FM 3-24, 7-9.

16. FM 3-0, 2-3.

17. *Peacetime military engagement*: all military activities that involve other nations and are intended to shape the security environment in peacetime. *Limited interventions*: executed to achieve an end state that is clearly defined and limited in scope. *Corresponding limitations*: imposed on the supporting operations and size of the forces involved. These operations may be phased but are not intended to become campaigns. *Peace operations*: A broad term that encompasses peacekeeping operations and peace enforcement operations conducted in support of diplomatic efforts to establish and maintain peace. *Irregular warfare*: a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations.

18. FM 3-0 clearly asserts that influence requires legitimacy, acknowledging the risk of a misuse of force to this legitimacy. FM 3-0: 6-10.

19. The entire intervention of the United States in support of UNOSOM II in Somalia deserves a close look. As an example, the Abdi House raid in Mogadiscio, 12 July 1993. Robert F. Baumann, Lawrence A. Yates, and Versalle F. Washington, "My Clan Against the World" (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004), 116.

20. The Afghan government has asked repeatedly of the International Community to let the Afghans be in the "driver's seat" of their own reconstruction, <[www.embassyofafghanistan.org/04.06embnewsscrrp.html](http://www.embassyofafghanistan.org/04.06embnewsscrrp.html)>, (3 April 2008).

21. FM 6-22, v.

22. Harold Wiffen, "Becoming an Adaptive Leader," *Military Review* (November-December 2007): 108-14.

23. A United Nations official explained to me that Afghan local authorities do not recognize that civil authorities maintain supremacy over the military. When touring the recently established northern International Security and Assistance Force PRTs, in 2004, local authorities always first saluted the military commander. This gesture holds great significance for Afghans.

24. FM 3-24, 7-2.

25. David Cummings, "On Luck and Leadership," *Military Review* (January-February 2008): 104-7.

26. At the same time, when using force over irregular agents who are not the main enemy, it is good practice to keep an honorable escape route in order to "save face." A group defeated with honesty and clarity but without arrogance may become an ally in the future, whether the fight is over words or with weapons.

# Combined Arms Center 2009 Information Operations Writing Competition ★ RESULTS ★

The Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth is pleased to announce the winners of the 2009 IO Writing Competition. Several manuscripts were received and judged by a distinguished panel of invited experts.

1st Place "Attack or Defend? Leveraging Information and Balancing Risk in Cyberspace," by Dennis M. Murphy, \$1000

2nd Place "Information Operations as a Deterrent to Armed Conflict," by Colonel Blane R. Clark, \$500

3rd Place "Learning While Fighting: Operational KM That Makes a Difference," by Steven Mains, \$250

4th Place "The Wiki and the Warfighter: Harnessing Massively Distributed Collaboration" by James E. Shircliffe Jr., \$250

The winning manuscripts will be published in upcoming editions of *Military Review*, the Professional Journal of the U.S. Army.



# Disunity of Command: THE DECISIVE ELEMENT!

Lieutenant Colonel Carl Grunow, U.S. Army, Retired

*Unity of Command: For every objective, ensure unity of effort under one responsible commander.*

—Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*

**I**N THE MINDS OF MANY, unity of command, one of the nine principles of war, is an unassailable way of conducting military operations. The need for “unity of effort under one responsible commander” is not simply desirable; it is imperative. When viewed in this context, the ongoing operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan have a serious and perhaps fatal flaw. In Iraq, U.S. commanders must tolerate the inefficiency of sharing command with Iraqi Security Forces. In Afghanistan disunity of command so hopelessly hamstring NATO that it raises serious questions of whether success is even possible.

However, it is a mistake to treat any principle of war, including unity of command, as an end in itself. The true end of any military operation is to achieve victory, however that may be defined. The true measure of a principle of war’s value is its contribution towards that end. The Army’s Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, cautions that the principles of war are “not a checklist,” but rather “powerful tools of analysis” for military professionals. Thus, it is not enough for a critic to simply point out that a principle of war is not being applied; he must go further to show how this contributes to or detracts from achieving victory.

The problem is even clearer when considering how two supposedly “sacred” guidelines can actually work in opposition. In FM 3-0, an appendix highlighting the nine principles of war adds an additional three guidelines from joint doctrine called “joint principles of operations.” One of these is legitimacy. The extract below indicates how this principle can conflict with the unity of command.

## Legitimacy

*Develop and maintain the will necessary to attain the national strategic end state. . . . The campaign or operation should develop or reinforce the authority and acceptance for the host-nation government by both the*

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PHOTO: Colonel Jemal, Commander, 2/9 Armor Brigade (IA), with his partner unit commander, LTC Dave Thompson, 7-10 Cavalry Squadron. (courtesy of author)

*governed and the international community. This last factor is frequently the decisive element.*

—FM 3-0, Operations

To gain legitimacy, the host-nation government must have real authority and shoulder substantive responsibilities. Thus, a military commander who hoards authority and responsibility under the guise of preserving unity of command will certainly undermine the decisive element of legitimacy.

This conflict of principles becomes most clear in the context of stability operations. Field Manual 3-0 states that one of the doctrinal purposes of stability operations is to “gain support for the host government.” This includes finding ways to strengthen the credibility of local security forces. Indigenous commanders regarded as their American masters’ lackeys or puppets do not advance this purpose. Deployed commanders from the strategic to the tactical level must keep this in mind when making choices about how to share authority with host-nation partners. Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) illustrates the approach of *advancing legitimacy by dividing command*. More specifically, as stability operations increasingly dominate OIF, efforts to bolster the legitimacy of Iraqi security forces through power-sharing arrangements increase in importance.

When historians tell the story of OIF, it is quite possible they will judge it as one of very few successful counterinsurgencies orchestrated by an external power. However, it is already clear that this apparent victory has required several fundamental shifts in thinking by those in charge.

The decisive shift occurred in early 2005 when General George Casey, the then-commander of Multi-National Force Iraq, recognized that a focus on U.S.-led operations was not working. U.S. military success and even American progress in rebuilding infrastructure and the economy did not seem to have inhibited the enemy. In his briefing to new transition team members in the summer

***...a...commander who hoards authority and responsibility under the guise of preserving unity of command will certainly undermine the decisive element of legitimacy.***

of 2005, General Casey assured his audience that Americans would not win this war. The Iraqis themselves would have to do that, he said, and probably long after the U.S. presence was over. He emphasized that the adviser mission was essential to the main effort of placing Iraqis in the lead. Casey was not able to implement this vision immediately; resistance to this fundamental change was too great. However, once he made the course correction, perseverance was required to ensure victory.

In the Multi-National Division Baghdad area of operations, the actual turning point toward success occurred in January 2006 with the transfer of authority from Operation Iraqi Freedom III to IV. This is when the main effort of placing Iraqis in the lead became a reality in both word and deed. At Camp Taji, this change was evident in the stark difference between the vision and actions of the incoming and outgoing brigade and battalion level leaders.

The outgoing brigade commander had directed and supervised a U.S. operation that treated Iraqi forces as another subordinate unit. He preserved unity of command by directing and approving Iraqi operations in his area of responsibility, all the while emphasizing his role as the singly responsible commander. When a new Iraqi infantry battalion requested permission to begin operations, he emphasized that “if we want Iraqi units to play in our battlespace, they had better be ready.” An Iraqi major general arrived at Taji to take command of the new mechanized division, but this had no effect on the U.S. brigade commander’s steadfast claim to unified command. Even in relatively minor matters, he chose to make his supreme authority clear. In one instance, the Iraqi general asked to use an uncommitted company to participate in a ceremony celebrating a large NATO donation. The brigade commander refused. After this, the Iraqi division commander had difficulty issuing any kind of directive to his units, because they always had to “check with the Americans” for a final decision. Throughout this period, it was abundantly clear that an American was in charge at Taji Camp.

This approach to the mission is understandable and even laudable when we place a high value on unity of command. The fact that this was counterproductive to a higher purpose was not necessarily obvious at the tactical level. The brigade commander was applying the principles of war

with vigor, and his battalions conducted military operations with great efficiency. He did not expect much from his Iraqi brothers in arms, and they performed to his expectations, making it even less attractive to spend time and resources developing an Iraqi capability. When the new Iraqi armored brigade required more American advisers, the U.S. commander refused to provide them. This resulted in slower growth for the Iraqi unit. However, it kept U.S. Soldiers under U.S. commanders where they worked most efficiently.

The transfer of authority to a new brigade commander in January 2006 changed this situation dramatically. A new mind-set appeared at all leadership levels, one that focused on strengthening the Iraqi chain of command and reinforcing its command authority. The first clue of this change came when the incoming cavalry squadron commander arrived at Taji to consult with the advisers to the new Iraqi armored brigade. His message was one of robust and effective support for the adviser team. This was not a halting offer restrained by second thoughts about how it would affect U.S. operations. This squadron commander was ready to provide 80 qualified troopers to triple the size of the adviser teams. With the infusion of this new and precious resource, the Iraqi brigade entered into a phase of rapid growth.

However, more important than manpower was the new brigade commander's explicit and meaningful deference to the Iraqi leaders. When the brigade commander visited the Iraqi side of the base, he came as a U.S. officer consulting with the Iraqi division commander, not as an American colonel giving orders to an Iraqi general. His meetings with the Iraqi general were frequent and were an exchange of useful information designed to enhance cooperation between coequal commanders. It became clear that there were two credible centers of power in Taji Camp.

One of the first great tests of the new culture of placing Iraqis in the lead came in February 2006 when terrorists bombed the Golden Mosque in Samarra. The citizens of Iraq had just elected a new parliament in December, and the new government had not yet formed. The only armored brigade in Iraq had less than 50 percent of its officers and was in the process of completing a limited gunnery training exercise, but the fledgling government wanted to deploy this incomplete brigade to Baghdad to quell

***He did not expect much from his Iraqi brothers in arms, and they performed to his expectations...***

violence spinning out of control there. The American commanders and advisers initially balked at the idea of the deployment, preferring instead to send a more experienced unit. However, when the Iraqi division commander joined his new government in choosing the armored brigade for the mission, the American chain of command accepted this decision. The brigade performed admirably, Iraqi tanks emblazoned with Iraqi flags soon became symbols of hope for those in the capital city, and the Iraqi leaders were justifiably proud to have taken a leading role in dealing with the crisis.

The experience at Taji Camp contains important lessons about how to achieve victory when the legitimacy of the host nation and its security forces is important. In such situations, who gets the job done is often more important than actually doing it. The Army's mission is to cede authority and responsibility to the local security forces receiving its support. Effective power sharing allows indigenous forces to grow as it shields them from catastrophic failure. In contrast, an external force that intervenes but insists on supreme authority undermines legitimacy. For this reason, mission success in stability operations necessitates a devaluation of unity of command.

Wise commanders have long recognized the need to adapt their means to the ends. Operation Iraqi Freedom is succeeding largely because our strategic thinkers made a critical course correction to *enhance legitimacy at the expense of efficiency*. This was not an easy choice. It required the compromise of a time-honored principle of war.

The high-intensity combat of the 20th century required a special emphasis on the efficiency that comes from unity of effort under one responsible commander. Future conflicts will not be so well served by an uncritical emphasis on unity of command. Instead, commanders must be open minded enough to accept the messiness that comes with disunity of command because our ultimate mission is to win our Nation's wars. **MR**



# MR Classics Revisited



**JOSEPHUS: THE JEWISH WAR**, trans. by H. St. J. Thackeray, Harvard, 1927 repr. ed. 2006, 368 pages, \$24.00; **THE JEWISH WAR**, Josephus, trans. by Betty Radice with notes by E. Mary Smallwood, London, 1984, 510 pages, \$16.00; **JERUSALEM'S TRAITOR: Josephus, Masada and the Fall of Judea**, Desmond Seward, Philadelphia, 2009, 300 pages, \$28.00.

Asymmetric war against an occupying superpower; two major religious groups vying for political dominance;

a fanatical religious sect ready to use violence and accept martyrdom to advance its vision of a theocratic state; governmental corruption; torture; assassination; opportunist criminals; propaganda and “information operations”; profiteering “contractors”; “nationalists” against “imperialists”; puppet regimes; refusal to negotiate with “infidels”; clash of civilizations? Is this a description of the contemporary Middle East? Yes. It is also an accurate description of the situation in prevailing Judea during the mid-first century, a situation described in great detail by an observer of an erstwhile participant in the tragic events that led to the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple and the dispersal of the Jews throughout the world—an event that continues to have enormous resonance in today’s geopolitics.

A healthy dose of historical reading is perhaps the greatest antidote to the idea that the present operational environment is new or unprecedented. The significance of culture, the continuum of violence now known as “full spectrum operations,” the importance of

information, informal leadership, and the primacy of political goals, all featured prominently in the Jewish revolt against Roman domination of 66-73 A.D. Fortunately for us we have a treasure-trove of information on one of the most tumultuous periods in Middle Eastern history stowed in the works of Josephus—especially the book known variously as *The Jewish War*, *The Wars of the Jews*, or *History of the Jewish War*.

The author known to us as Josephus was, in his own words “Joseph, the son of Matthias, by birth a Hebrew, a priest also, and one who at first fought against the Romans myself, and was forced to be present at what was done afterwards.” Smart, well-connected, politically ambitious, and intellectually restless, Josephus tried to steer a middle course between faithfulness to his aristocratic Jewish heritage and self-serving accommodation with the Roman hegemon. He has been considered in turn a traitor, a spineless opportunist, and an apologist for Jewish culture and religion. He certainly played all these roles; but, most importantly, he was a good writer. Josephus was a complex personality who lived in trying times and, whatever one might think of his personal morality, he succeeded in penning substantial historical narratives that shed light on what became a watershed in world history.

Despite the inevitable biases, intentional or unintentional, Josephus took his responsibilities as a historian seriously as he set out to explain to his contemporaries the “wars of the Jews.” Most modern scholars agree that, as a whole, the *Jewish War* is factually sound, except for some self-serving passages. Josephus wrote his work initially for his fellow Jews living in Mesopotamia and then reworked it in Greek for the educated readers of the Roman world—who preferred their books in Greek. Like all good

narrative history, Josephus’ story unfolds with a sense of inevitability that culminates in the great tragedy of the destruction of the Jewish nation and its temple.

There are many situations mentioned by Josephus that have had their parallels through the centuries. However, one of the crucial hard lessons learned from Josephus is that those who are not bound by modern Western humanistic values or modern Judeo-Christian morality can and have crushed insurgencies successfully. The lack of moral qualms is what made the Roman gladius more deadly and decisive than the atomic bomb. This may be one of the most fundamental differences between the Roman Empire and the new “American Empire.”

Far from advocating a “Roman approach” to the problems of the present day this reviewer advocates that the full impact of self-imposed limits on the use of military power be thoroughly considered by policy makers before establishing strategic goals and committing U.S. forces overseas.

*The Jewish War* should certainly be required reading for all those who seek a deeper understanding of Ancient history, the Middle East, and human nature in peace and war. The Loeb Classical Library edition with texts in both the original Greek and English remains the standard scholarly reference today. Another, more accessible, slightly abridged version is the Penguin edition translated by Betty Radice. *The Jewish War* is also available online in English and Greek at <http://classics.mit.edu/Josephus/jbj.html>; and in the 1732 English translation by William Whiston at [www.gutenberg.org/etext/2850](http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/2850).

Most readers who are not specialists in the ancient Jewish and Roman worlds need a good interpreter to guide them through this alien landscape. With *Jerusalem's Traitor*, Desmond Seward meets this need by providing a guidebook that offers

a balanced critical appreciation of Josephus and his work. Despite the condemning title, Seward does not judge Josephus especially harshly; rather, his eye-catching title reflects the views of the Jews who belonged to the zealot party.

Seward places the author in the context of his time and place as an upper class Jew who does what he believes is best to avert total personal and national disaster. After failing in his attempt to navigate a middle road between the uncompromising patriotism of the zealots and the abuses of the Romans, Josephus serves as a Jewish general

and governor of the “Two Galilees.” Then, cornered with a few companions inside a cave he makes a suicide pact, but after most of his companions have taken their lives, he reneges and surrenders to the Romans. From this point forward Josephus begins to collaborate openly with the Romans, justifying his actions to himself and others as the reasonable course of action when faced by an “invincible” superpower. After successfully “prophesying” that his captor Vespasian would become emperor, he is granted freedom in exchange for his continued services as guide and

propagandist. Later, after witnessing the destruction of Judea, Josephus wrote his history from a comfortable exile in Rome and became an apologist for his culture and his religion to the Roman world.

While not groundbreaking scholarship, Seward’s book provides a nuanced view of Josephus’ work and his complex and elusive character. It succeeds in furnishing the modern non-specialist reader a solid, balanced critical commentary as well as a good bibliography for those seeking further study.

**LTC Prisco R. Hernández, Ph.D.**  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

## MR Book Reviews



**THE AMERICAN WAY OF WAR: Guided Missiles, Misguided Men, and a Republic in Peril**, Eugene Jarecki, Free Press, Glencoe, IL, 336 pages, \$26.00.

The U.S. is under attack argues Eugene Jarecki in *The American Way of War*, the print

version, more or less, of his award-winning 2008 documentary *Why We Fight*. According to Jarecki, “the republic” is being attacked not by terrorists, People’s Liberation Army cyber-warriors, or South American Marxists but, ironically, from within, by the military-industrial juggernaut erected to protect it and the venal politicians elected to lead it.

This argument is hardly new; in fact, Jarecki spends considerable time tracing its genealogy, from the founding fathers forward to such critics as Chalmers Johnson, whom he cites liberally from *Sorrows of Empire* (2003). A.J. Bacevich (not mentioned here, oddly) made a similar case convincingly in *The New American Militarism* (2005); and very recently, President Bush’s former ambassador for counter-narcotics to Afghanistan, Thomas Schweich, decried the overweening

influence of DOD in all aspects of government. “We no longer have a civilian government,” Schweich wrote in the *Washington Post*: “Our Constitution is at risk.”

Unfortunately, Jarecki’s predecessors have been received like Cassandras. Even supposed liberals have allowed a reflexive militarism to color their worldview, as the congressional rubberstamping of Iraq II demonstrated. *The American Way of War* is a well-meaning attempt at intervention. However, applauding an attempt is one thing; being persuaded by it another. In general, I found myself “persuaded, but.” Jarecki’s description of America’s seduction into militarism is credible, and his description of “front-loading” and “political engineering,” tactics deployed by defense contractors to subvert political stewardship, is as enlightening as it is depressing. A long look at Eisenhower, unlikely coiner of the pejorative “military-industrial complex,” gives more than pause, and two other veteran voices, retired colonel Lawrence Wilkerson and Pentagon watchdog Chuck Spinney, add color and ballast to Jarecki’s claim that it is working a slow coup d’état.

What I found most compelling, though, were the simple numbers.

DOD employs five million people. Those people work in 164 countries. The department owns several hundred thousand buildings. It controls over 30 million acres of land. Its budget (nearly \$700 billion for 2009) eclipses Russia’s GDP. No matter how you view it—even as a percentage of U.S. GDP—these are astonishing figures. To borrow from Ike, how many schools and hospitals, how many miles of highway and bushels of wheat might just half that bounty buy?

Despite the undeniable extravagance of our military spending, those looking to dismiss Jarecki have been given some fodder. His move from bemoaning militarism to belaboring Bush et al. seems, at this late date, superfluous. The book relies too much on Wilkerson and Spinney. A section on John Boyd overplays the role of culture in Boyd’s OODA Loop theory. And then there’s the language, which lapses occasionally into naïve indignation and exaggeration (bad though it was, Abu Ghraib was not an “atrocious”).

These blemishes notwithstanding, *The American Way of War* does a fine and useful, even necessary, job of exposing our national fondness for force over diplomacy, for the missile over the example.

Military professionals need to read more books like this. As a group, we exhibit a high degree of moral certitude. We take it for granted that we fight for truth, justice, and the American way. The reality could well be that the “way” is anathema to our pursuit of the first two ideals, and to the realization of a truly healthy society.

**LTC Arthur Bilodeau, USA,  
Retired, Louisville, Kentucky**

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**The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008,** Thomas E. Ricks, The Penguin Press, New York, New York, 2009, \$27.95.

Thomas E. Ricks’ latest book—*The Gamble* is a follow-up to his best-selling and critically acclaimed 2006 book *Fiasco*. Its title refers to the strategic gamble taken by President Bush to send approximately 30,000 additional troops to Iraq in the spring of 2007 in what is commonly referred to as “the surge.” Ricks’ thesis is that the surge succeeded militarily, but failed politically. It succeeded militarily because it accomplished the operational objectives laid out by senior U.S. military commanders on the ground. Ricks believes the surge failed politically in both the United States and in Iraq because nearly every key political issue remains unresolved.

In Iraq, he cites the strained relationship between Shi’as, Sunnis, and Kurds; continued influence of former Saddam Hussein regime officials and Baath Party members; Iran’s influence and the influence of other Middle Eastern nations in Iraq’s affairs; the uncertain future role of Moqtada al-Sadr; and conflict between Arabs and Kurds over oil revenue sharing and the status of Kirkuk. Ricks also discusses how difficult it will be for the Government of Iraq to assimilate the primarily Sunni neighborhood watch groups, commonly referred to as the “Sons of Iraq” and how potential future actions by those groups could derail the relative calm that has existed in Iraq for the past 18 months.

Ricks believes the surge also

failed politically from an American perspective, because the core problems in Iraq have regional and potentially global implications which, if not addressed properly, could reverse the progress seen in Iraq. He believes the U.S. military will have to have a presence in Iraq for many years and uses simple logic to make his case. If the challenges facing Iraq are daunting with a large American military presence, they will be no less so without such presence.

The book highlights the pivotal roles played by General David H. Petraeus and General Ray T. Odierno, and how they both challenged conventional wisdom as well as many members of their chain of command—directly and indirectly—to push for the additional troops and major changes in tactics. It also emphasizes the prominent role played by retired General Jack Keane, former vice chief of staff of the Army. Odierno and Petraeus rolled the dice with other huge gambles. Both agreed the surge of additional troops would only be successful if accompanied by a comprehensive change in tactics. These involved changing the priority from building up the capabilities of the Iraq Security Forces and attacking Al-Qaeda elements and insurgents to protecting the Iraqi people.

That first change necessitated another paradigm shift—instead of staging primarily from large forward operating bases fairly isolated from the Iraqi populace, units would be repositioned on smaller and dispersed combat outposts and Joint security stations positioned throughout Baghdad and other municipalities. It placed Soldiers in the midst of the chaos, exposing service members to even greater risk. Those tactics required yet another fundamental change: from a heavy reliance on mounted/mobile patrols to dismounted/foot patrols.

In the middle of the sectarian violence and bloodshed that was prevalent in Iraq during 2006 and much of 2007, and considering the heavy volume of attacks against coalition forces at that time, many people thought all these changes in tactics

represented last-ditch acts of desperation. But Ricks reminds us that “surge” tactics had been used before in other successful counter-insurgencies and had even worked previously in Iraq, when the 3rd Armored Cavalry regiment used them successfully in Tal Afar in 2004–2005.

Throughout *The Gamble*, Ricks discusses the influential role played by what he refers to as the “Petraeus Brain Trust,” a group of current and former military officers of varying ranks—nearly all possessing a PhD. This inner circle served on Petraeus’ personal staff in Baghdad, advised him on everything, and kept him sharp.

Over time, the arrival of the 30,000 additional troops and equipment, coupled with fundamental changes in tactics, significantly reduced the level of violence in Iraq—especially in and around Baghdad. After an initial spike in April and May 2007, a period Petraeus refers to in *The Gamble* as “excruciating,” attacks against American and coalition forces dropped precipitously.

Ricks capitalized on his extensive contacts in writing *The Gamble*—a book derived from thousands of interviews with hundreds of people in the United States, in Iraq, and other locations over several years. The book focuses on what Ricks feels went right in Iraq during this period. However, it tends to be Baghdad and Al Anbar province-centric and does not include the great work by U.S. and coalition forces in other areas of Iraq. So effusive is Rick’s praise of Petraeus, Odierno, and Keane, it casts a shadow over many of their peers and makes some appear irrelevant at best and inept at worst. Not everyone will agree with Ricks’ assessments. Despite these shortfalls, *The Gamble* is an excellent book and should be read by military professionals.

**COL Mike Galloucis, USA,  
Washington, DC**

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**AMERICA’S ARMY: A Model for Interagency Effectiveness,** Zeb B. Bradford and Frederic J. Brown, Praeger Security International,

Westport, CT, 2008, 250 pages, \$49.95.

The fundamental thesis of *America's Army* is that the national defense of the United States is more than a military challenge; it is a challenge for the nation's entire apparatus of government. The title of this timely and relevant book gets right to the point: the Army provides an excellent example of the practices needed for what's now known as the "comprehensive approach"—a term coined in Field Manual (FM) 3-07, *Stability Operations* to address the need to bring together multiple partners comprised of diplomats, the military, nongovernmental organizations, multinational players, and the private sector.

Zeb B. Bradford and Frederic J. Brown provide an excellent complement to the principles of this emerging doctrine. Their long-term insights reflect their backgrounds as former general officers. They provide numerous practical examples of how the Army's model is useful for the inter-agency. One key solution is embodied in the concept called "Teams of Leaders." Members of these teams have a shared vision, trust, competence, and confidence. They rely on information technology that enables social networking, podcasting, and blogging. The Army set the foundation for these teaming behaviors in the post 9/11 period. Now, the authors argue, is the time to create teams of leaders across the government.

True to their Army roots, Bradford and Brown pay tribute to the Army's ability to adapt and produce quality leaders. They articulate the need to revitalize the Army, stressed by years of deployments, and voice concern about two decades of an "impoverished" generating force. Despite these challenges, they praise the Army's ability to align decentralized operations with strategic objectives—using information and knowledge management to empower "teams of leaders"—and see this approach as the key ingredient for interagency effectiveness.

Like many other works published during the second half of the Bush administration, the book says

ineptness and ineffectiveness at the highest levels of civilian governance substantially constrained the military. The authors emphasize that the Army cannot operate independently or assume the responsibilities of other organizations, as it often has had to do. Thus, *America's Army* is an important contribution to the intellectual framework for U.S. national security and the operations of any large organization today. Those involved in defense, management, and leadership will gain immensely from the book's holistic perspective and insightful examples.

**COL James J. Galvin Jr., USA, Ph.D., Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

**WAR HORSE: A History of the Military Horse and Rider**, Louis DiMarco, Westholme Publishing, Yardley, PA, 432 pages, \$29.95.

Louis DiMarco's *War Horse: A History of the Military Horse and Rider* is a fascinating one-of-a-kind book that looks at military history through the evolving science of horse riding, training, and breeding. Its unique approach offers a fresh interpretation of classic military history from the ancients through operations in World War II.

*War Horse* is a remarkable book on many levels, beginning with the ancient Egyptians' use of the chariot. DiMarco describes how the desire for increased mobility and economy drove the creation of the warrior on horseback and traces the evolution of horse breeds, horsemanship, tack, the evolution of cavalry warfare, and the contributions of cavalry to warfare: its tactics, operational art, and even grand strategies through the centuries. These developments produced operational and tactical mobility, shock, and firepower. DiMarco illustrates through battle and campaign narratives how the great captains skillfully translated an understanding of mounted forces into battlefield success. He also describes how a lack of appreciation for horses and mounted forces could lead to failure.

The book's ability to penetrate to a level of significant detail, overturn

repeated myths, summarize succinctly, and back up its judgments and conclusions is significant. When I began teaching at SAMS I wanted a book like *War Horse* to educate the officer corps on the constant and turbulent evolution of operational art. The book demonstrates how ideas about doctrine, weapons, branches of service, and organizational designs evolve in a messy but inexorable way.

DiMarco is uniquely qualified to write about horse cavalry. He is a retired Army officer and has served in positions from cavalry troop through joint staff. He served as a doctrine writer at the Armor School, specialized in reconnaissance doctrine and urban and counterinsurgency warfare at the Combined Arms Command, and is currently teaching military history at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. Most importantly, DiMarco is an accomplished horseman who has actively owned and trained horses for more than 20 years.

As a horse book and horse cavalry book *War Horse* is in a class of its own. The natural sentiment toward the horse and horse cavalry doesn't get in the way of solid and deeply researched history. The book provides many detailed facts about horse types and breeds not often found in books on horse cavalry and delves deeply into the details of riding "tack" and cavalry weapons. I find the battle reconstructions more credible due to DiMarco's research and knowledge of horsemanship, tack, and weapons.

This is my kind of history reading: interesting and intellectually stimulating. It's the kind of book I like to move through slowly, mulling over the content, fitting the pieces into the messy filing system of my mind. In short, the book is a fascinating and detailed account of an important contributor to human history—the war horse.

**BG Huba Wass de Czege, USA, Retired, Easton, Kansas**

**THE MODERNIZATION OF ISLAM and the Creation of a Multipolar World Order**, Dr. Susmit

Kumar, Booksurge, Charleston, SC, 2008, 363 pages, \$20.99.

The *Modernization of Islam* is a detailed and highly engaging study into global Islamic militancy and the diverse challenges of the Middle East. Based on sound analysis and historical descriptions, Dr. Susmit Kumar's central argument is that what we are witnessing today is not a clash of civilizations, as prophesied by Samuel Huntington and many others, but the transformation of Islam. The author notes that "in order to give birth to a beautiful child, a woman has to go through the pains of labor," and asserts that the violence in Iraq and the growth of Islamic fundamentalism are simply manifestations of a difficult birthing process.

Kumar says that contemporary Islamic civilization is going through a *crisis* similar to the kind Europe experienced in the early 1900s. When World War I and II acted as catalysts to positively change the global-economic and political environment of those times. The long-term prognosis is encouraging, and the tide of fundamentalism will wane; but, it will take time, and the path will be rocky. Kumar notes: "At the end of the current crisis in the Middle East, Islam will come to be the guiding force where it now leads, and the majority of Islamic nations will become secular and democratic, like Turkey." The author suggests that we are again moving toward the promise of a new world order.

However, in suggesting a positive trend in the Middle East, Kumar also highlights the decline in the U.S. economy and makes a strong case for the socioeconomic premise called the "Progressive Utilization Theory" ("Prout"), devised by Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar, a renowned Indian theorist and economist, to try and stem the tide of the current financial downturn. "Prout" promotes economic democracy and economic decentralization (i.e., increasing the purchasing power of the individual) and contrasts starkly with the authoritarianism and centralization of capitalism and modern-day communism. Kumar posits that such a strategy will become increasingly

necessary as the United States "heads down the [current] path of economic self-destruction."

Kumar is not afraid of tackling a number of controversial issues head-on, which some readers will find slightly unnerving. For example, he notes: "Incompetent persons like Ronald Regan and George W. Bush won elections as presidents of the world's superpower because of massive media propaganda using hundreds of millions of dollars donated by big corporations and the ultra-wealthy. Were these same people to try and get work as CEOs, however, they would fail. . ." In other areas, Kumar is more even-handed. His dexterous differentiation between those nations trying to promote Islamic fundamentalism and secular democratic states is useful for the lay reader.

In sum, the *Modernization of Islam* is an immersing, challenging, and probing study. Kumar's textbook-like approach, clear prose, and coherent historical analysis make for a particularly rewarding read.

**MAJ Andrew M. Roe,  
British Army, United Kingdom**

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**THE GODS OF DIYALA: Transfer of Command in Iraq**, Caleb S. Gage and Gregory M. Tomlin, Texas A&M University Press, College Station, 2008, 297 pages, \$29.96.

*The Gods of Diyala* is a platoon leaders' view of the Iraqi insurgency and as such is a much-needed complement to the "bigger picture" of narratives by senior officers, correspondents, and political analysts. This is the story of two artillery lieutenants who find themselves fighting as infantrymen in the heart of the Sunni Triangle against a growing and evolving insurgency.

Although the book was written as a memoir, it reads like an objective report chronicling the authors' transition from an army before 9/11 to subsequent combat in Baquba, Iraq, and inconclusively to their eventual rotation out of Iraq. Readers looking for entertainment, excitement, and vivid descriptions of modern combat will be disappointed. On the other hand, those looking for a junior

officer's tip-of-the-spear perspective on counterinsurgency warfare will find this an invaluable addition to the growing volumes of Iraq War literature. *The Gods of Diyala* isn't so much about events or how things happened; it is more about the perspectives, leadership, and the adaptability of young officers and their ability to accept increasing responsibilities in difficult and complex situations.

Authors Caleb Gage and Greg Tomlin share their thoughts on a variety of subjects including the successes and failures of leadership. They also discuss the role of the media and the tensions between objectivity, morality, and the responsibilities of war correspondents and photo journalists.

Tomlin describes a personal "clash of cultures" transition that occurred when his American positive "can-do" and "hope is not a method" attitude clashed with the Iraqi's *Ensha Allah* [God willing] passive attitude. Initially the clash contributed to his feelings of frustration and hopelessness, but eventually it evolved into understanding, accommodation, and respect. It wasn't the knowledge of customs and taboos that led to his cultural epiphany, rather it was the realization that he had a date to leave Iraq (the Iraqis he worked with did not) and from this realization came a new perspective on what constitutes progress and courage in this troubled land.

*The Gods of Diyala* is a well-organized narrative that is easy to read and a much-needed small-unit perspective that will round out any collection on the war in Iraq.

**Colonel Dale C. Eikmeier,  
USA, Retired,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**MEDICAL ASPECTS OF BIOLOGICAL WARFARE**, Zygmunt Dembek Sr., ed., Office of the Surgeon General, Borden Institute—Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, DC, 2007, 675 pages, \$72.00. Also available on CD-ROM and printable PDF, see [www.bordeninstitute.army.mil](http://www.bordeninstitute.army.mil) for details.

*Medical Aspects of Biological Warfare* is an authoritative and current version of *Medical Aspects of Chemical and Biological Warfare: Textbook of Military Medicine, Part I: Warfare, Weaponry, and the Casualty* (Office of the Surgeon General Department of the Army, 1997). The new edition is a single-source compendium focused primarily on important biological agents that have significant potential to be used in war or by terrorists. The book contains chapters on characteristics of critical biological agents to include their induced illnesses, diagnosis, treatments, and vaccine status. It also contains chapters dedicated to doctrine and policy.

All DOD medical personnel should have a working knowledge of biological warfare and many would argue that all service members should also have some familiarity. Since the original version was published, this mission has become critically important as evidenced by the upsurge of bioterrorism incidents, significantly increased federal funding, and expansion of the research program into non-DOD laboratories. One need only consider the impact of the 2001 anthrax letters to reinforce this.

The book is organized in a similar format to the original version but with greatly expanded information that captures recent advances in biomedical knowledge. There are now new chapters dedicated to food, waterborne, and agricultural diseases; epidemiology of biowarfare and bioterrorism; glanders; melioidosis; laboratory identification of biological threats; consequence management: the national and local response; medical countermeasures; biosafety; biosurety; ethical and legal dilemmas in biodefense research; and emerging infectious diseases/future threats. Other chapters brought up-to-date by subject matter experts include the history of biological weapons, anthrax, plague, tularemia, brucellosis, Q fever, smallpox, alphavirus encephalitis, viral hemorrhagic fevers, staphylococcal enterotoxin B, ricin, botulinum, and additional toxins.

Overall the book is well organized, meticulously documented, and comprehensive in nature. To maximize understanding, the authors often present case studies to integrate previous lessons learned with current principles and practices of military medicine. The authors' also focus on current research on successful management practices, treatments, and antidotes. The book contains an array of quality figures and illustrations that increase the readers understanding.

I recommend the book for its comprehensive overview of biological defense information. It contains useful information for DOD medical personnel and will, for many years, serve as a valuable contribution to military medicine.

**MAJ Peter L. Platteborze, Ph.D., USA, Fort Sam Houston, Texas**

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**BLUE & GOLD AND BLACK: Racial Integration of the US Naval Academy**, Robert J. Schneller Jr., Texas A&M University Press, College Station, 2008, 437 pages, \$45.00.

Although the United States Naval Academy has been fully racially integrated for almost 50 years, Robert J. Schneller Jr.'s *Blue & Gold and Black* provides the first comprehensive history of African-Americans breaking the color barrier and then surviving what had been a traditionally racist institution. Schneller traces Annapolis' integration process through three stages. The first stage, the policy of "neglect" before 1965, examines the long history of resistance to enrolling blacks and the confrontational attitude inherent in both white midshipmen and the administration.

In the years following 1965, Schneller uses the second section to analyze how the Academy pressed forward with its policy of integration over the next decade to reach the point of transitioning from institutional persecution of black midshipmen to a policy of empowerment. The final section explores the unique experience of African-American women at Annapolis during their integration process after

1976. These brave midshipmen bore the double-edged stigma of both race and gender. Ironically, many often found the abuse from sexual harassment more damaging than the attacks of bigotry.

While this book demonstrates painstaking archival research drawing from numerous institutional records, Schneller allows the former midshipmen to tell the story through what he labels a "biographical" approach to his methodology. Utilizing hundreds of interviews, memoirs, and questionnaires, the personal recollections of those directly involved in the integration process drive the narrative, adding an engaging human element to the institutional history.

Some of the more compelling anecdotes come from the often-graphic depictions of the physical abuse inflicted upon the Academy's earliest matriculates. Schneller also weaves the narrative of the Academy's integration into the larger context of the civil rights movement while addressing the broader philosophical issues regarding military service, citizenship, and social equality. His analysis, however, fails to give ample mention to the experiences of the other federal service academies, which could have provided a comparative context with their respective integration experiences occurring at the same time.

In spite of the long, difficult road endured by African-Americans at Annapolis over the last half century, Schneller's analysis does leave readers with overwhelming hope by reinforcing the progress of both the individual midshipmen and the institution to advance an environment of achievement, harmony, and understanding.

**Bradford A. Wineman, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**SORRY STATES: Apologies in International Politics**, Jennifer Lind, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, and London, 2008, 242 pages, \$39.95.

Don't be fooled by the catchy title and slim silhouette of this intel-

lectually weighty little book: *Sorry States* is a serious piece of heavily documented, exhaustively footnoted scholarship, using case studies to examine the multi-faceted role contrition plays on the international stage.

Belying initial book jacket and table of contents impressions (one of its four chapters is impertinently titled “Not Your Father’s Fatherland,” referring to Germany). Author Jennifer Lind’s real intent is to focus the global analyst’s lens on international reaction to war crimes committed by Japan and Germany—and how and why merely saying “I’m sorry” for genocide, rape, pillage, and other crimes against humanity is not enough to facilitate post-conflict reconciliation. Contrition, Lind says, can indeed sometimes lead to other complications, such as backlash from a not-sorry citizenry that may not share their leaders’ sorry sentiments.

Lind posits that the intimate apology process between transgressor/aggressor and victim states to reestablish social, economic, and diplomatic normalcy is almost impossibly complex, influenced as it is by matters such as culture, geographic proximity, and pressures from regional military threats or aggressive political ideologies.

Her analyses try to make sense of why Germany and France enjoy warm relations as close allies today, while Japan and the countries it colonized and occupied before and during the World War II—chief among them Korea and China—do not.

For instance, American military members currently serving on the Korean peninsula have long believed their reason for being there is to help close allies deter North Korean aggression. They may be startled to learn from Lind’s research that recent opinion surveys show South Koreans dislike Japan more than Kim Jong-Il’s capricious regime, bristling with wannabe nukes and genuine hostile intent right on the ROK’s doorstep. And, although Lind admits South Koreans do put North Korea at the top of their “most likely to be invaded by” list, Japan still lurks in the background as a perceived threat.

One explanation for the Chinese and Koreans to harbor a grudge—if so simple a term can be used to describe Lind’s complex characterizations—is Lind’s finding that the Japanese long viewed themselves as the real war victims, for years dismissing claims that they had not been responsible for the Nanking massacre, colonizing Korea, or even for attacking Pearl Harbor. At one point after the war, conservative Tokyo politicians, denying that Korean females had been forced into prostitution as “comfort women” for the Emperor’s army and males dragooned into slave labor in Japanese war-material factories, even attempted to make a case that Korea should pay war reparations to Japan.

Lind’s key hypothesis is that “unapologetic remembrance (i.e., forgetting, denying, or glorifying past atrocities) elevates threat perception and inhibits reconciliation. Conversely, apologetic remembrance (or contrition) reduces threat perception and promotes reconciliation.”

Readers hoping for an easy correlation between Lind’s “remembrances of things past” and current events may be disappointed. The author’s gaze seems firmly fixed on history, even though the 21st century situation in the Balkans, where there are few “I’m sorrys” to go around, begs for analysis using her theories. It is unclear, if hypotheses developed so carefully to analyze situations from events so far removed from today’s realities have relevance to new crises plaguing the world community.

Although some argue that human nature remains unchanged as an empirical and genetic given, generational values and the world Geopolitik do mutate over time, and both are vastly different now than 60 years ago, owing in large measure to the globalization that modern technology has created.

Lind also spends a lot of ink (nearly 40 pages of the book are consumed by footnotes) either justifying or defending her hypotheses and conclusions, making *Sorry State* neither a quick nor easy diversion for the recreational reader.

In tackling the job of intellectually ingesting *Sorry States*, only serious, voracious scholars with an appetite for convoluted theories need apply.

**Carol A. Saynisch, M.A.,  
Steilacoom, Washington**

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**SECURING JAPAN: Tokyo’s Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia**, Richard J. Samuels, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 2007, 277 pages, \$49.95.

Both within the country and without, Japan is often portrayed as a country bereft of grand strategy; considered, indeed, by some, to possess a “strategic allergy” that borders on the irrational. Others who concede Japan does do strategy claim that strategy is unduly idealistic and pacifistic. To the contrary, in his book *Securing Japan: Tokyo’s Grand Strategy and the Future of Asia*, author Richard J. Samuels convincingly argues that over the past 150 years, Japan has been both realist and rational in creating three grand strategies, and is in the midst of building a consensus for a fourth. In cogent detail, he outlines the rationales and the constraints, both domestic and international, of these grand strategies, tracing and describing historical antecedents, key players, and key components down to the present.

Samuels says the key to understanding the drive to build consensus, then create and maintain these national security strategies since 1868 has been the interplay of domestic and international factors tied to Japan’s pervasive sense of vulnerability, and her desire for “autonomy and prestige” on the world stage, motivations Thucydides certainly would have understood. Samuels discusses in learned detail the rise and fall of various currents of thought and actors in the “Rich Nation, Strong Army” strategy of the Meiji revolutionaries, the Co-Prosperity Sphere strategy of the 1930s and 1940s militarists, and the Yoshida Doctrine strategy (building and maintaining an economically prosperous Japan with a

“cheap ride” on defense) of Japan’s cold warriors.

The author also outlines an emerging Japanese strategic consensus in the post-Cold War, post 9/11 era, which he describes as a “Goldilocks consensus, neither too hard nor too soft, too autonomous nor too dependent, too Western-oriented, nor too Asian-oriented.” Japan, over the last several years, has debated vigorously how it should respond to security threats from China and North Korea, the economic threat of a loss of industrial competitiveness, and the fear of abandonment by its one ally, the United States. In what Samuels regards as typical strategic mindedness, Japan has responded by refashioning its industrial strategy to maintain a lead in high-value added, high-technology manufacturing; whittling away at defense constraints and building up a more capable, globally deployable force; and hewing closely to U.S. policy positions, especially with regard to Iraq.

There are some minor errors in the book. He refers to the U.S. Army First Corps as the “First U.S. Army Command,” for instance. Some predictions, such as Japan being “likely” to abandon its cheap ride on defense, are not currently persuasive, and after three years and three prime ministers, each seemingly trying to outdo his predecessor in terms of unpopularity, “Japan’s Goldilocks [as] the pragmatic leader who will get [a new grand strategy] ‘just right,’” seems more distant than ever. But these are minor cavils. Anyone with an interest in national strategy formation, Japan’s historical and current position in the international security system or the likely direction of America’s most important ally in the Pacific will benefit from this well-researched, cogently argued, and entertainingly written book.

**COL David Hunter-Chester,  
USA, Retired,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**AMERICA ALONE: The End  
of the World as We Know It,**

Mark Steyn, Regnery Publishing, Washington, DC, 2006, 224 pages, \$27.95.

Plans are underway for a new and controversial structure adjacent to London’s 2012 Summer Olympic venue: the London *Markaz*, known to most locals simply as the “mega-mosque.” As currently envisioned, this 18-acre Islamic cultural center and mosque will hold approximately 12,000 worshippers; the original design called for a far more imposing structure, however, one capable of holding 70,000, which would make it the largest religious structure in England with a capacity approaching that of the Olympic stadium itself. Critics claim an edifice of this size would profoundly and permanently alter the physical and cultural landscape of the area. Adding to the controversy, *Tablighi Jamaat*—the Islamic missionary group spearheading the project—has been accused by the FBI as being a front for terrorist recruiting.

In *America Alone: The End of the World as We Know It*, author Mark Steyn sees the London *Markaz* as a sobering manifestation of a larger phenomenon that threatens our society today: the rapid disintegration of Western culture against a rising tide of global Islamism. In his self-described “doomsday book with a twist,” Steyn warns his readers that “much of what we loosely call the Western world will not survive the 21st century, and much of it will effectively disappear within our lifetimes, including many if not most European countries.” Clearly not above hyperbole, Steyn predicts a new Islamic caliphate blossoming in European soil, a “Eurabia” populated by self-segregating and increasingly radicalized young Muslims.

As the text’s subtitle suggests, Steyn characterizes Western Europe as suffering its final death throes due to bloated social welfare programs and a “nanny state” mentality, a paralyzing climate of political correctness and misguided multiculturalism, and, worst of all, drastically declining birthrates, which fall far below the self-sustaining rate of 2.1 births per woman (Spain is at

1.1; Italy hovers at 1.2). These elements, he argues, create the perfect storm for societal suicide—gone with a whimper, not a bang. Unlike in the year 732 at the Battle of Tours, where Charles “the Hammer” Martel rallied his Frankish forces for a final stand against the Moorish thrust into the continent’s heartland, Steyn claims the enemy already resides within the European gates and is rapidly out-populating Martel’s progeny.

All’s not lost though, for Steyn argues that despite its flaws, the United States remains the last bastion of Western civilization. He calls upon Americans to heed the example of their neighbors across the pond: “We have been shirking too long, and that’s unworthy of a great civilization. To see off the new Dark Ages will be tough and demanding. The alternative will be worse.” And Steyn obligingly portrays for his reader a bleak alternative.

Whether you agree with his message or not, Steyn sounds his clarion call with quick wit and rhetorical aplomb. His book is no scholarly tome, for while the author provides ample evidence to support his claims, one is left questioning the source of many of his most shocking statistics. Rather, *America Alone* is a lively and controversial polemic, a strident warning cry, and an unabashed paean to American exceptionalism. It also spotlights one of the most pressing existential questions of our time: how far should we go to preserve our way of life? As he warns, “By the time that Olympic mega-mosque is open for business in the London of 2012, you’ll be surprised how well it fits in.” In the end, though, Steyn leaves the reader wondering, “If you build it, will they really come?”

**LTC John Nelson, Ph.D.,  
Flagstaff, Arizona**

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**DEFEAT AND TRIUMPH: The  
Story of a Controversial Allied  
Invasion and French Rebirth,**  
Stephen Sussna, Xlibris Corpora-  
tion, Philadelphia, PA, 2008, 737  
pages, \$28.99.



There are histories and there are memoirs. Often, they are not interchangeable. *Defeat and Triumph* works as both a history and a memoir. The author, Professor Emeritus Stephen Sussna is a Professor of Law at Baruch College, City University of New York, and is a respected urban planner. During World War II, he was the helmsman on LST 1012, a U.S. Navy amphibious landing craft that participated in Operation Dragoon—the invasion of Southern France. Unlike most World War II veterans who write books based on their experiences, Professor Sussna has taken his time to examine the events surrounding his war, his operation, and his role in all of it.

The invasion of Northern France through Normandy is known by the most casual students of history. Operation Dragoon, the equally successful and less-costly invasion of Southern France through the French Riviera, is less known, only because it followed two months later. It was successful, but it was also controversial. Winston Churchill opposed it because it took assets that could have been used in a thrust through the Balkans—the “soft underbelly of Europe”—to prevent future Soviet influence in the region. Lieutenant General Mark Clark, whose Fifth Army was struggling up the Italian Peninsula, also opposed it. General Dwight D. Eisenhower, however, pushed it through. Operation Dragoon captured some 80,000 prisoners, destroyed the German XIX Army, and drove 500 miles to link up with Patton’s Third Army. It liberated Southern France, obtaining the ports of Toulon and Marseilles for Allied logistical efforts. It also reintroduced the French as a force on the European continent and assured Charles de Gaulle’s prominent place in post-war politics.

Dr. Sussna’s rigorous research puts the operation into the context of the war and its times. He provides new material and reinterprets existing material. He first sets the big picture and then draws together the Army, aviation, naval, and allied perspectives to portray the complex-

ity of the operation. The days when the burden of fighting two wars is borne by less than one percent of the U.S. population, it is instructive to reflect on a time when the burden of combat was borne by over 10 percent of the population and the civilian sector was far more involved in its support and successes. Dr. Sussna has provided a window into that time.

What is not present enough in this memoir is the story about the sailor who wrote it. Over a million young Americans served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, but there are few accessible records of their individual experiences. It would have been nice to have a bit more of young Steve Sussna and his time at sea. But, this modest sailor really wrote this book to honor his shipmates and to provide a record of an operation, his operation, that should not be forgotten. He, like so many of the other veterans, went back to civilian life to build our nation into what it is today. I am glad he has now taken the time to tell us about the war. *Defeat and Triumph* is recommended for students of history and professionals working in joint and combined headquarters.

**Lester W. Grau,**  
**Foreign Military Studies Office,**  
**Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**A MAGNIFICENT DISASTER: The Failure of Market Garden, The Arnhem Operation, September 1944,** David Bennett, Drexel Hill, PA, 2008, 352 pages, \$32.95.

Upon its completion, there was a search for rationalization and scapegoats for Operation Market Garden. In search of the first, Field Marshal Bernhard Law Montgomery made the astounding statement that his hastily planned airborne assault through the Netherlands was 90 percent successful, and in pursuit of the second, elements of the British army blamed defeat on the valiant commander of the Polish airborne brigade, Stanislaw Sosabowski.

Canadian writer David Bennett effectively cuts through the wealth of post-defeat excuses. He provides

an excellent narrative of the campaign, both incisive and well written from a stylistic perspective. Along the way, he sheds fresh light on heretofore relatively neglected aspects of Market Garden, including the role of Canadian engineers in reinforcing the Red Devils’ bridgehead across the Rhine and then withdrawing survivors to safety.

In addition, *A Magnificent Disaster* puts special emphasis on the personalities of the men involved. Bennett goes beyond Monty, and examines subordinates with an eye that can lead to brutal indictments. For example, of Major General Ivor Thomas, commander of the British 43d Division, he writes that he “was thoroughly detested by all those who came in contact with him. Even the great-hearted and generous commander of the 1st Airborne, Major General Roy Urquhart, could hardly restrain himself when writing of Thomas’s boorish arrogance . . . Known affectionately to the troops as ‘Butcher Thomas,’ he was a poor tactician.”

Others come off much better, especially the American divisional commanders, James Gavin and Maxwell Taylor, and Sosabowski. Even the “SS” Nazi organization enjoys better verdicts than some of the British leaders, in part due to their most un-SS propensity for decent behavior.

Ultimately, Bennett rejects Montgomery’s breezy assurance that Arnhem was anything close to a victory, and the scapegoating of the usual suspects. Instead of blaming individuals, *A Magnificent Disaster* skewers the doctrine and structure of the British Army, concluding that its conventional forces were fundamentally incapable of the mechanized drive needed to achieve victory.

Some of Bennett’s most important work is contained in the book’s six appendices. Besides the standard explanations of terminology and acronyms, he analyzes the logistical elements, Allied airlift capabilities and options, and unwarranted censure of a Polish brigadier for the failures of an entire army.

The book’s greatest shortcoming is a shortage of maps, though there

are also typographical errors. Yet *A Magnificent Disaster* is a valuable addition to the literature about Operation Market Garden.

**Jim Werbaneth,**  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

**DYNAMIC OF DESTRUCTION: Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War,** Alan Kramer, Oxford University Press, UK, 2007, 434 pages, \$33.95.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Europeans saw themselves as the leaders of a great march of progress that had made their continent the center of civilization. Their empires covered most of the globe and their cultural hegemony was perhaps even more dominant than their political and military power. Yet, two decades later, much of Europe's confidence and optimism had been replaced by cynicism and despair. The shift, writes historian Alan Kramer, was a product of the Great War, which saw the mobilization of radical nationalism that supported a European military outlook that demanded the methods of total war to achieve absolute victory.

From these phenomena emerged something unprecedented, a continent-wide "culture of destruction." It was culture previewed in the imperial abuses of Germany and Italy in Africa and the ethnic cleansing in the Balkan Wars. During the First World War it expanded to include the German atrocities in Belgium in 1914, the industrialized slaughter at Verdun and the Somme, and the mistreatment of prisoners by all combatants on the Eastern Front. However, it went beyond barbarities inflicted on external opponents. Kramer finds that the culture of destruction also inspired terrible persecution of those perceived as internal enemies. Thus, the culture of destruction encouraged the Armenian genocide, the "take-no-prisoners" policy of the *Freikorps* in post-war Germany, and the massacres of the Russian Civil War.

As the first half of the 20th century fades deeper into the past, some historians have started to look on the two world wars as a single event. In such an interpretation, the passions and unresolved issues of the "Great War" led directly to the even more terrible Second World War. Kramer, a professor at Trinity University in

Dublin, rejects this view. He concedes that the fascism that launched World War II was a product of the first war's culture of destruction. He also understands that horrific events like the Holocaust, the mass death on the Eastern Front, and the bombing of Hiroshima have led us to seek an explanation by looking at the events that preceded the Second World War. Yet, while emphasizing the most awful aspects of the First World War, the brutal exploitation of enemy civilians, the awful experience of common Soldiers, and the genocidal repression of internal enemies, Kramer challenges the idea that these events set the necessary precedent for the greater tragedy that began in 1939. For all its unprecedented horror, the Great War did not make Auschwitz and Dresden inevitable.

Kramer's argument is a complex and compelling one. The reader willing to follow him through his presentation of evidence will be rewarded with an experience that is both harrowing and thought-provoking.

**LTC Scott Stephenson, USA,**  
Retired, Ph.D.,  
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## MR Letters

### Counterinsurgency Lessons from Iraq

Bill Thayer, *San Diego, CA*—Bing West's "Counterinsurgency Lessons from Iraq" (March-April 2009, *Military Review*) is another terrific article about our successes in Iraq. I think the article ranks up there with General Petraeus's "Multi-National Force-Iraq Commander's Counterinsurgency Guidance" (September-October 2008, *Military Review*), as well as with many other "real world" lesson articles in *MR* on Iraq.

Field Manual 3-24 is a good guide for our troops, but it is basically theory (with some nice real-world vignettes thrown in). Mr. West's,

General Petraeus's, and other *MR* articles (e.g., Colonel MacFarland) have captured invaluable real-world lessons about counterinsurgency in one setting—Iraq.

I would just like to make one other observation. One reason for our success\* in Iraq was great leadership by Petraeus, Odierno, MacFarland, and many others. Let me cite one example: The U.S. plan was to establish a democracy in Iraq and not have it revert to a tribal structure. Yet our military leaders had the sense to violate this guidance to empower the Sons of Iraq in Al Anbar (essentially a tribal structure). This led to the Anbar Awakening and the weakening of the insurgency,

which in turn helped to make the surge successful. I don't think it says anywhere in FM 3-24 to violate the plan for governance. But that was clearly the right decision. You can write all the rules you want, but there is absolutely no substitute for good leadership and good judgment (fortunately, we had great leadership and great judgment).

\*As Petraeus brilliantly put it: "Success" is not victory and is "fragile and reversible progress."

### Unifying Physical and Psychological Impact

Dennis M. Murphy, *Carlisle, PA*—I read with great interest Huba Wass de Czege's article "Unifying

Physical and Psychological Impact During Operations” (March-April 2009, *Military Review*). I find two areas of the article worthy of amplification. The first involves General Wass de Czege’s discussion of deception; the second, his emphasis on the psychological implications of actions.

Regarding deception, the warning that “people among whom military operations take place” should not be the messengers for the deceit goes well beyond the realm of grand deception. Today’s tactical commanders are faced with a dilemma created by the empowerment of non-combatants in the operational environment with new media means. Contractors, nongovernmental organizations, and the local indigenous population (among others) with cell phones can report on military operations in real-time immediately to any number of sources. Consequently, the tactical commander cannot completely control operations security (OPSEC) as in the past. Savvy commanders, aware of the challenges posed by the information environment may choose to mitigate the OPSEC risk through the use of tactical deception, but this comes with the potentially significant second- and third-order effects that Wass de Czege rightly points out. While deception can certainly aid in the security of an operation, it can also negate the credibility of any future messages the command wishes to send in an effort to persuade or influence the indigenous population. The strategic communication effort is about trust and credibility and is critical to making a “fence sitting” population a friendly presence, especially in a counterinsurgency.

Wass de Czege’s discussion of the psychological impact of actions and a consideration of such in military planning cannot be overemphasized. In fact, the Department of Defense’s “Principles of Strategic Communication,” published in August 2008 describes strategic communication as the orchestration

of words, images, and actions where actions send the loudest message and words and images provide the context to that message. Consequently, selection of the appropriate military course of action with the desired message in mind in support of achieving the military objective is critical.

Wass de Czege implies that military leaders have not culturally embraced this philosophy. I agree, based on anecdotal evidence established by discussions with many students at the U.S. Army War College. What he fails to provide, however, is the necessary forcing function to drive the required cultural change. The answer lies in the commander’s intent. Specifically, the military end state must include a cognitive (or psychological, if you will) information end state. A properly articulated information end state will drive both planning and execution of the military operation with sensitivity toward the new media environment. Military courses of action will be analyzed against this vision and subordinate military units will carry out the operation in order to meet the end state described within the intent. Sensitized to the commander’s intent, planners then will “wargame” the courses of action with that end-state in mind. Consequently, the planners will consider an enemy’s expected reaction to a friendly action in terms of the desired information end state.

The synergistic impact of combined physical and psychological operations is not new. But the military has moved away from a focus on their integrated value. This article does a good job of reminding leaders of that and charging them to fix the problem.

### **Telling the Afghan Military Story...Their Way!**

MAJ Mark S. Leslie, *Fort McPherson, GA*—While scanning previous issues for Afghanistan information I came across Lieutenant Colonel Charles W. Ricks’ article “Telling the Afghan Military Story....Their Way!” (March-April

2006, *Military Review*). The article contains many lessons that apply to U.S. forces operating in Afghanistan in areas other than public affairs. While this article focuses on how U.S. forces can operate within the cultural dynamics of the Afghan society, it provides some valuable insight that can be used in other dimensions of our operations. The same techniques that lead to successful operations in public affairs are applicable to combat operations. We need to learn to operate within the cultural and social norms of the Afghan society as much as possible to avoid possible friction points.

Our way, as the author points out, is not necessarily the best way or the only way. What works for us is not necessarily the best for the Afghans. While we are a technologically based society with systems in place, and we recognize that we maximize our potential with these systems, the Afghans cannot replicate those systems, not because they don’t want to or are intellectually incapable, but because it is simply a matter of society. Our society is different than theirs and what works for us may or not be worthy of replicating for them.

The idea of face-to-face coordination, distribution, meetings, and socializing is still the preferred method for many of our leaders, and we often disdain so-called email leadership. The Afghans respect face-to-face communication. The success of their IO efforts and effects on their Afghan society compared to ours reflect superior understanding of indigenous norms and values. I think it wise to consider and remember this when developing IO campaigns and efforts as well as conducting tactical operations and consequence management operations.

All in all, I think this is an excellent article for any student of counterinsurgency. Ricks indirectly defines the goal of the counterinsurgent—to operate amongst the population as transparently as possible whether for IO purposes or combat operations. **MR**



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