

**The Canadian Strategic Advisory Team to Afghanistan: A
Possible Model for a Multinational Whole of Government
Approach to Defeating an Insurgency**

**A Monograph
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14. ABSTRACT Defeating an insurgency in today's contemporary operating environment is fraught with significant challenges. As counterinsurgency theorists have alluded there is a need to correctly identify the insurgency in as much detail as possible and apply as much of a nation's power to defeat it. The application of a nation's power needs to occur in a coherent and coordinated fashion which indicates the need for the adoption of a whole of government approach (WGA) that will be capable of delivering that effort. WGAs in the past have either lacked a coherency and continuity throughout from the strategic level to the tactical application on the ground. A WGA model that has been utilized with some significant success was the Canadian Strategic Advisory Team to Afghanistan (SAT). The author posits that the SAT model can be applied on a multinational level if certain cautions are understood and mitigation efforts are also applied. The success of the model is tied to cohesion at the strategic level with a direct focus on building the capacities and capabilities of the host government through the use of a WGA staff which responds directly to the host government. The military component to support such an effort will be large in the beginning but can be reduced over time as other government partners develop their respective deployable capabilities. A SAT-like effort, comprised of staff from a multitude of disciplines from a wide variety of countries, can be effective in meeting today's challenges of supporting a host government in efforts to defeat an insurgency.					
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ABSTRACT

The Canadian Strategic Advisory Team to Afghanistan: A Possible Model for a Multinational Whole of Government Approach to Defeating an Insurgency by MAJOR Ronald J. Fitzgerald, Canadian Armed Forces, 52 pages.

The purpose of this monograph is to explore the applicability of the model used by the Canadian Strategic Advisory Team to Afghanistan (SAT) as a potential model of a whole of government approach (WGA) applied in a multinational setting in order to defeat an insurgency. In order to do so, a review of counterinsurgency theory points to the commonality of the need for the political process to be fully engaged and that a better understanding of the insurgency will lead one to better identify the relevant tools from within the WGA that can be applied. While the SAT was a onetime effort, the evidence derived from personal interviews with the architects of the SAT, as well as, journal articles and reports from within the three active Canadian government departments with influence over the SAT begins to demonstrate just how the team functioned as a WGA. Specifically, interviews were conducted to gather the intent and purpose of the SAT, how it interacted with the Afghan government, how it assisted in COIN, if it achieved the assigned goals, how it was to transition over time, and whether the model was felt to be sufficiently robust enough to be adapted into a multinational effort.

Recent experience by many of the world's modern armies has re-taught us that an insurgent cannot be defeated by the bullet alone. In fact, whether an insurgency is involved or not in today's contemporary operating environment, there is an increasing need to harness the power of the entire government, often referred to as a WGA. It is leveraging capabilities of each sector of government that will become a true multiplier in today's conflicts.

This is true in Afghanistan today. Many Force Commanders have been heard to say that more must come from the interagency. In order to get the most out of the WGA it must focus its efforts on building a cohesive approach to developing the capacities of the host government from the tactical through to the strategic levels in order to gain and maintain an advantage over an insurgency. The author notes the importance of efforts at the tactical level, such as Provincial Reconstruction Teams but also notes that such efforts must be clearly nested within the host government's national strategy. The author concludes that while there are multiple examples of WGAs to choose from there are some over-riding principles that should be adhered to if the approach will help defeat an insurgency. The approach offered by the Canadian Strategic Advisory Team model has a greater likelihood of achieving success as it focused at building the capabilities of the host government at the strategic level.

The author lays out some of the cautions with the various WGAs in order to build a successful model based on SAT. While the monograph recommends the use of a SAT like model to should be applied on a multinational level in future conflicts, there are cautions to doing so. A SAT-like effort, comprised of staff from a multitude of disciplines from a wide variety of countries, can be effective in meeting today's challenges.

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INTRODUCTION

Once Canada became involved in combat operations in Afghanistan, it was evident that there was a need to break the conventional mindset of independent actions by branches of government while operating in a contemporary environment,¹ a problem that all countries involved in the Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) missions were facing. Canada, like many other countries, was slow in introducing a whole-of-government approach (WGA) in concert with the conduct of combat operations in both of the above missions. The conduct of combat operations was not the difficulty in Afghanistan but rather how such kinetic efforts were tied in with the much larger strategic framework to produce a lasting, stable, and secure Afghanistan. This is particularly apropos in a counterinsurgency (COIN) where bullets alone will not bring victory. While many governments believe that more must occur with the non-military elements of national power, there are few workable solutions put forward.

Afghanistan should not be considered unique to twenty-first century conflict but it is different than what the global community witnessed in the Balkans.² The ongoing fight in Afghanistan has, since its initiation, brought together support from the international community in the way of military support to the fight, diplomatic, and economic assistance. The latter diplomatic and economic efforts are defined in various United Nations Resolutions and international agreements such as the Bonn Agreements, Berlin Declaration, and the Afghan

¹ Michael Hiemstra, Col, *Operation Enduring Freedom Tactics, Techniques and Procedures Handbook, No 02-8, 2008* [book on-line](Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 2008, accessed 10 December 2008); available from <http://www.strategypage.com/articles/operationenduringfreedom/chap1.asp>; internet. The contemporary operating environment or COE is defined as the overall operational environment that exists today and in the near future (out to the year 2020).

² John Alexander, Colonel (retired), *Future War: Non-Lethal Weapons in Twenty-First-Century Warfare*, (New York, Thomas Dunne Books, 1999), 28-29. See also Ali Ahmad Jalali and Lester W. Grau, *Afghan Guerrilla Warfare: In the Word of the Mujahideen Fighters*, (London, Compendium Publishing, 2001), xiv

Compact.³ These continued and changing agreements between the international community and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) gave credence to the need for a coordinated and integrated approach to the creation of a stable and sustainable country. While the authors of these agreements may have had great humanitarian intentions, with each nation contributing where it could and keeping respective national interests as secondary to those of rebuilding Afghanistan, sadly, this has not occurred.⁴

A need exists for a workable model of a WGA that is capable of assisting in the COIN effort. This implies that we need more interagency cooperation, collaboration and consensus building at the strategic level; simply putting provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) on the ground to assist provincial governments, while useful in many aspects, does not in itself assist the country's government in defeating an insurgency. In an effort to address this apparent shortfall, Canadian political and military leadership developed a concept in 2005 to integrate the WGA directly into the branches of the Government of Afghanistan with the invention of a Strategic Advisory Team.⁵ While initially military heavy, the team has since transitioned to a civilian

³ **Bonn Agreement** 2001 - on 5 December 2001, the major Afghan factions agreed to the formation of a Broad-Based Government. A key component of the agreements was the creation of a UN mandated International Security Force in Afghanistan. **UNSCR 1386** (Followed by eight others) – Under the Bonn Agreement, initial ISAF deployment was limited geographically to Kabul. On 11 Aug 2003, upon request of the UN and the GIROA, NATO assumed command of ISAF. **Berlin Declaration** – is a regional agreement signed by the Government of Afghanistan, China, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan aimed at strengthening their collaboration in the fight against narcotics production and trafficking. **Afghan Compact dated Jan 06** – Bonn Agreement was superseded by the Afghan Compact (London 2006). This compact supports the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) which sets out the Afghan Government's clear vision for their country. This was endorsed by UNSCR 1659 (Feb 06) and sees the GIROA taking the **lead** in the country's reconstruction and development with continuing support from the IC, which continues under the auspices of the UN (UNAMA).

⁴ Sean M. Maloney, *The War in Afghanistan* [article On-line] (New York, NY: Praeger Security International, 03 April 2006, accessed 12 August 2008), available from http://psi.praeger.com/doc.aspx?q=%22The+War+in+Afghanistan%22&newsearch=1&c=&p=0&s=&newindex=1&orig_search=The+War+in+Afghanistan&adv_search=1&num=0&freeform=&term_0=The+War+in+Afghanistan&index_0=words&imageField.x=14&imageField.y=11&d=/commentary/Maloney-20060403-Maloney-20060403.xml&i=0#xmlhit; internet

⁵ Henri St Louis, Lieutenant-Colonel, "A Comprehensive Approach to Stability The Strategic Advisory Team in Afghanistan" in the Canadian Army Journal Vol 10.4 (Winter 2008): 51. See also The

component integrated within the government of Afghanistan and has links into the military effort within Afghanistan.

This scope of this monograph will examine WGAs from various governments. More specifically it will focus on WGAs that have been brought to bear on fighting or overcoming an insurgency problem, particularly in Afghanistan. There is no universally accepted model for a WGA and the successes of past efforts have been mixed.⁶ Are there international or national organizations that can harness the efforts of the global community in a COIN environment? Is a WGA needed to defeat an insurgency? Can a model be created, which serves as a foundation for WGA on an international scale? Can such an effort be used again in other troubled areas of the world where failed or fragile states are the focus of attention? Can national governments focus on supporting a host government in a COIN to the extent that the host government's needs are addressed before individual national interests? Who is the strategic sponsor in a multinational effort against an insurgency?

Working Hypothesis

The Canadian SAT provided a successful model of a WGA within a multi-agency, intergovernmental and joint environment that can have successful application at the multinational level to better deal with an insurgency. Unilateral national actions should be considered an act of the past. In the current operational construct of forming coalitions of the willing to engage in

Government of Canada, "Afghanistan: Canadian Diplomatic Engagement" [report on-line] (Ottawa, ON: Library of Parliament, February 2008, accessed 18 December 2008); available from <http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/library/PRBpubs/prb0738-e.htm>; internet

⁶ David Kilcullen, *Three Pillars of Counterinsurgency* [article on-line](Washington, D.C., 2006, accessed 10 September 2008); available from <http://www.usgcoin.org/docs/1/3PillarsOfCounterinsurgency.pdf> Remarks delivered at the U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Conference, Washington D.C., 28 September 2006 internet

various actions around the globe,⁷ such a coalition needs to be based on more than simply military agreement and as such must also consider the adaptation of a partnership based on a WGA from the contributing nations. Surely if nations can band together to form military coalitions, understanding that the potential loss of a nation's most precious resource, through the employment of military means, then they should be able to work through the needed administrative measure necessary to allow such an option to function.

Any WGA has elements of various efforts of national power and in some cases WGA efforts are imbalanced favoring one element of national power over another. What is critical, regardless of the name given to the approach it must focus on being a comprehensive method.⁸ As Sean Maloney explains, "there is no clear delineation between "war" and "peace" in Afghanistan. The fighting doesn't just stop and reconstruction suddenly begins: they are concurrent activities."⁹ This clearly suggests the need for a multidisciplinary approach involving more than the military component and that other agencies of government need to be integrated. This is particularly true in counterinsurgency operations which have tended to surface after the end of the traditional combat phase of an operation and which plague stability efforts. This would lead to the realization that there cannot be an effective counterinsurgency undertaken that does not imply a WGA which emphasizes the needs of the host nation's leadership

⁷ In the past 30 or more years, the building of coalitions to resolve international challenges as appeared to be the norm. Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM, OEF, ISAF, OIF and multiple UN actions attest to this.

⁸ Richard Cobbold, *Warfare in the 21st Century*, [article on-line] (New York, NY: Praeger Security International, 2006, accessed 12 August 2008); available from <http://psi.praeger.com/doc.aspx?q=Richard+Cobbold&c=&imageField.x=17&imageField.y=4&d=/commentary/Cobbold-20061120-Cobbold-20061120.xml&i=0#txmlhit> ; internet

⁹ Sean M. Maloney, 2006

Methodology

While the SAT was a onetime effort, the evidence derived from personal interviews with the architects of the SAT, as well as, journal articles and reports from within the three active Canadian government departments with influence over the SAT begins to demonstrate just how the team functioned as a WGA. Specifically, interviews were conducted to gather the intent and purpose of the SAT, how it interacted with the Afghan government, how it assisted in COIN, if it achieved the assigned goals, how it was to transition over time, and whether the model was felt to be sufficiently robust enough to be adapted into a multinational effort. Interviews focused primarily on the initial SAT Commander, Colonel M. Capstick, the Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan at the time of implementation, Mr. Christopher Alexander, and the lead representative for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) at the time of implementation, Dr. Nipa Banerjee.

The reference to the SAT as it was applied in Afghanistan serves as an example of the level of cooperation that is possible when a single nation can direct and focus its collective expeditionary energy but also how it can be integrated within the host government to ensure success. Such a model could be applied to any stability operation in the future. The challenges of fragile states imply not only *doing things differently* but also *doing different things*.¹⁰

Research Question

Can the Canadian Strategic Advisory Team to Afghanistan (SAT) serve as a model of a whole of government and multinational approach to defeating an insurgency?

¹⁰Kaysie Brown and Stewart Patrick, *Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts? Assessing “Whole of Government” Approaches to Fragile State*, (Washington, D.C.: Center of Global Development, 2007), 2

Literature Review

In attempting to gain a more thorough understanding of how to counter an insurgency it is useful to gain a shared understanding of what an insurgency is and perhaps what it is not. David Kilcullen provides a suitable definition of an insurgency, which is “a struggle for control over a contested political space, between a state (or group of states or occupying powers), and one or more popularly based, non-state challengers.”¹¹ This definition is also in line with those found in both David Galula’s and Bard O’Neill’s writings in which they both identify the struggle for political control as a key feature of an insurgency.¹² In O’Neill’s definition of an insurgency, he admits that the definition itself is arbitrary and contentious, but continues to suggest an insurgency is “a struggle between a non-ruling group and the ruling authorities in which the non-ruling group consciously uses political resources and violence to destroy, reformulate, or sustain the basis of legitimacy of one of more aspects of politics.”¹³ What is clear from his definition and similar to Galula is that an insurgency presents itself as an alternative to a political authority. One of the great differences for O’Neill compared to Galula, is the nature of the insurgent, where O’Neill has defined nine different insurgencies based on their ultimate goals and further grouping them as either revolutionary or revolutionary transformation.¹⁴ His intent on typecasting the insurgencies is far more than an academic exercise as he contends that there are practical applications for those involved in the counterinsurgency, where a failure to understand the type of insurgency can limit policy options that may end an insurgency sooner at a lower cost.

¹¹ David Kilcullen, 2006. As Kilcullen notes, his definition is in line with that of Gordon McGormick who suggests that “an insurgency is a struggle for power (over a political space) between a state (or occupying power) and one or more organized, popularly based internal challengers.”

¹² David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Praeger, 1964), 1-2 and Bard O’Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare*, (Dulles, Virginia, Brassey’s, 1990), 13

¹³ Bard O’Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*, (Dulles, Potomac Books Inc, 2005), 15.

¹⁴ O’Neill, 19 - 29

Understanding the goals of a group, according to O'Neill, allows for better focused counterinsurgency options.¹⁵

Additionally, O'Neill focuses on insurgent strategies by observing the importance of popular and external support, organization, cohesion, the environment, and the government's roles. In an attempt to better understand insurgencies he also categorizes them into four broad strategic approaches: conspiratorial, protracted popular war, military focus, and urban warfare.¹⁶ The categorization differs from Galula who makes no distinction between urban or rural inhabitant, ideologue, or religious fanatic.¹⁷ Perhaps where O'Neill brings difference in the understanding of the insurgency is in the assessment of the strategic approaches where he notes that insurgent movements frequently have independent groups pursuing several strategies simultaneously and that some of the groups are only used insofar as they advance the main goals of the insurgent leadership.¹⁸

While the three key authors share a common understanding of an insurgency they vary greatly in their respective approaches to COIN. Galula offers a more prescriptive approach to COIN, "...the operations needed to relieve the population from the insurgent's threat and to convince it that the counterinsurgent will ultimately win are necessarily of an intensive nature and of long duration." Galula emphasizes that to fight a successful counterinsurgency, it is important to have a national consensus and resolute political leadership.¹⁹ O'Neill's approach is more constructive in his approach which requires detailed and continuous analysis of the insurgent(s) in order to bring the right mix of national power to the solution.²⁰ Kilcullen, while writing from a

¹⁵ O'Neill, 155 - 157

¹⁶ Ibid, 45-63

¹⁷ Galula, 75-76

¹⁸ O'Neill, 63

¹⁹ Galula, 75-76

²⁰ O'Neill, 125-126

U.S. perspective, advocates a WGA, which marshals all the necessary agencies of the U.S. government along with those of the host government and those of allies.²¹ This seems to be an extension of O’Neill’s need for a detailed analysis leading to the matching the right resources to meet the challenge. These different approaches are interpreted to mean that COIN is a combination of measures used to defeat an insurgency using a variety of the elements of national power to regain influence over the population and formulated to the specific requirement.

The literature on WGA and its application to COIN is lacking; acknowledging Kilcullen’s *Three Pillars of Counterinsurgency* as one of the few which takes a look at the evolution and reassertion of WGA within the context of COIN. Stewart Patrick and Kaysie Brown in *Greater Than The Sum of its Parts* provides an analysis of how several nations deal with “fragile states,” by applying various WGAs. A key finding with this analysis is that nations will meet with varying degrees of success based on their ability to have a shared understanding amongst its agencies and departments of what constitutes a fragile state.²² It is these fragile states that present not only a development challenge but represent a leading source of transnational threats to security.²³ Joseph Cerami’s work provides a good overview of the key concepts and introduces the primary factors which affect the interagency process and its role in stability operations. The authors in this edited volume draw on lessons learned from current and historical instances of stability operations, such as US practices in Iraq and Afghanistan and makes recommendations to effect change in the interagency process.²⁴ The Australian Government has also developed an in depth approach as represented in “Connecting Government: Whole of Government Responses to Australia’s Priority Challenges”, which provides a clear definition of

²¹ Kilcullen, 2006

²² Brown and Patrick, 128

²³ Brown and Patrick, vii

²⁴ Joseph Cerami, ed., *The Interagency Counterinsurgency Warfare: Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Roles*, (Carlisle, PA, Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 2-3

WGA as “public service agencies working across portfolio boundaries to achieve a shared goal and an integrated government response to particular issues.”²⁵ This definition is consistent with most others but fails to incorporate the need to cooperate and collaborate with the host government and allies when facing an insurgency. While such a concept is laid out by Kilcullen, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in its *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States* postulates the need for “... well-sequenced and coherent progress across the political, security, economic and administrative domains.”²⁶ While this is consistent with the basic concept of WGA it must be remembered that OECD’s mandate is development within fragile states. It does serve as another global organization, which the majority of industrial nations are members.

In an attempt to address the research question, the author sets out to examine why traditional approaches to bringing stability to conflict areas are no longer apropos in today’s contemporary COIN environment.²⁷ The recent release of the U.S. Army’s Field Manual (FM) 3-07 *Stability Operations* and FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* clearly demonstrates that the change is necessary.²⁸ Noting that a change in methodologies towards a more comprehensive WGA is necessary and will provide a better chance of success, the author examined why the stability framework is different in a COIN environment. While the SAT represents a Canadian approach, there are other models of WGA advocated by RAND and National Defense University (NDU) and other sources, which provide for a comparative analysis against the two aforementioned organizations. Additionally, discussions by numerous professional journals and web sites of other

²⁵ Peter Shergold, *Connecting Government: Whole of Government Responses to Australia’s Priority Challenges*, (Commonwealth of Australia, 2004), 1

²⁶ Luc L.P. van de Goor and Mariska van Beijnum, *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States*, (Paris, France, OECD, 2006), 7

²⁷ Brown and Patrick, vii, “Stove-piped policy responses are “out,” integrated approaches are “in.”

²⁸ FM 3-07 *Stability Operations* was released in October 2008 while FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* was released in December 2006.

models add support for the WGA concept. Included in these sources are examples of approaches that have worked and under what conditions they may or may not work. Articles from both NDU and Praeger Securities address in part contributions of military forces within a WGA at various echelons. This research will also compare the Canadian SAT model with the other proposed models to make a determination of its overall effectiveness in assisting in COIN. Accepting that WGAs are more desirable than isolated approaches by various branches of governments in COIN (supported by professional journals and reports) is a necessary precursor to adding the multinational dimensions to the equation.²⁹

As an emerging concept, Joint Interagency Intergovernmental Multinational (JIIM) adds complexity to COIN operations. As the name implies, JIIM, represents the U.S. military's recognition and understanding that its operations must be coordinated with the activities of other agencies of the United States Government (USG), International Government Organizations (IGO), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), regional organizations, the operations of foreign forces, and activities of various host nation agencies.³⁰ Perhaps more appealing is that the same doctrinal manual alludes to the fact that the importance of coordination and integration does not equate to command and control. It is the coordination and collaboration with all involved agencies and organizations that enable the USG to build international support, conserve resources, and conduct coherent operations that efficiently achieve shared international goals.³¹ Understanding how the JIIM framework is applied in operations is a necessary precursor in order to compare the concept, intent, and workings of the SAT in Afghanistan.

²⁹ Mark L. Asquino, "Whole of Government and Whole of Effort Approaches to Conflict Response and Mission Requirements: Challenges and Opportunities," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal*, Volume VI, Number 2 (Summer 2007); 19

³⁰ JP 3 08, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination During Joint Operations* Vol I, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), vii

³¹ JP 3 08, vii

Finally, with an understanding of the WGA and the JIIM framework, the author will analyze whether the Canadian SAT can serve as a model to assist governments in battling an insurgency which is the ultimate aim of this research. This analysis is aided by the opinions gained through interviews with those who were closest to the SAT.

Organization

In order to gain a better understanding of the WGA and particularly how something like SAT can be successful, the author outlines in the next two sections, the COIN environment and why it requires a different approach than past conflicts. The third section will introduce numerous WGA models prescribed by other governments and research corporations and attempt to identify the functional and/or dysfunctional approaches of each. The fourth section will look specifically at the development of SAT and its employment in Afghanistan and compare it to other WGA models in use in Afghanistan. This section will also note the challenges the SAT encountered. The fifth section will focus on the “road blocks” to success in a WGA. The sixth section will conclude with a summary of each section make recommendations on the future potential of a WGA using the SAT as a model.

ENVIRONMENT

Background

Drawing parallels between wars of annihilation of the Twentieth century and the struggles with insurgencies which marked the latter half of that century extending into today is by no means simple and does not yield an example of a successful WGA that can be applied in all circumstances. The manner in which the global community reacted and responded during both the First and Second World Wars was reflective of what nation states do in wars of exhaustion.³²

³² Ian F.W. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies: Guerrillas and Their Opponents Since 1750*, (London, Routledge, 2001), 217

Their respective reactions were synchronized based on their alliances and the circumstances in the conflict areas and at home. While it cannot be argued that there was not a WGA to bringing the respective wars to an end, the approaches were more in line of supporting the military effort through national mobilization to ensure the complete defeat of the enemy. Once defeat was achieved the necessary reconstruction and development efforts began.

At the conclusion of the First World War, the Treaty of Versailles held Germany responsible for the costs of reparations.³³ The Second World War ended with an assorted methodology of reconstruction and development efforts contributed by multiple nations until 1947 when the “Marshall Plan” came into effect.³⁴ What was unique about both of these efforts is the enemy had been defeated, combat operations were over and the nations involved desperately needed assistance to rebuild.

In October 1945 when the United Nations was created, it represented, as it does today, the will of the international community to put an end to the “scourge of war,” protect rights and promote social growth.³⁵ The efforts of the various United Nations operations have served as an example of a WGA on a multinational level. The effectiveness of such efforts was diminished on the world stage since being plagued by allegations of abuse and inefficiencies as well as notable peacekeeping failures in Somalia and Bosnia.³⁶ This was particularly evident in the failure of the United Nation’s Protected Areas (UNPAs) such Srebrenica and Goražde. In Srebrenica, approximately 8,000 Bosniac males were killed by the Serb forces while the UN forces stood

³³ Treaty of Versailles was signed at the Palace of Versailles, France on 28 June 1919, a lengthy document of over 400 articles in 15 sections. Brassey’s 219

³⁴ The Marshall Plan, was brought into affect on 5 June 1947 was designed to promote European economic recovery through the infusion of economic aid to all of Europe. Brassey’s 201

³⁵ The Charter of the United Nations lays out its intent and purpose in its preamble. Available on line at <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/preamble.shtml>, Accessed, 18 October 2008

³⁶ The Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations is often referred to as the Brahimi Report and was submitted to the Secretary General in August 2000 and paved the way for the reform of the United Nations. Available at http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations/, accessed 18 October 2008

helplessly by. The same almost occurred in Goražde, the only town in Bosnia not to be ethnically cleansed, where approximately 2,000 Bosniac were killed while the UN forces were ordered out of the area.³⁷ While many improvements have been made to the effectiveness of the United Nations, skepticism still remains and many nations are not fully committed to the use of UN peacekeeping or peace enforcement missions to resolve the challenges offered in an insurgent conflict. This was perhaps most evident in the Balkans crisis that erupted in 1992 and was initially managed under a United Nations mandate and later transitioned to a NATO mandate.³⁸

The approaches noted above were all reactions to either wars or exhaustion amongst nation-states or the reactions towards the instability that surfaced during the “Cold War.” Unlike dealing with the challenges of open conflict or the post-conflict era, the Cold War offered a period of tensions between the polar ideals of the super powers. These tensions often manifested themselves in the bolstering of weaker states by a respective super power further leading to polarization. The changes to the international environment became more violent as rogue non-state actors became more common place and intent on using terrorism and sabotage to achieve their aims.³⁹ The absence of a formal military was not new but it did create the requirement to rethink how to deal with and defeat such an adversary. What resulted was a field of military activity known as COIN.

³⁷ Roy Gutman and David Rieff, *Crimes of War: What the Public Should Know*, (New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 320

³⁸ UN Security Council Resolution 1031(1995), [document on-line] (New York, NY: United Nations, 1995, accessed 18 October 2008); available from <http://www.un.org/Docs/scres/1995/scres95.htm>. This resolution was initiated by the UN Secretary-General’s report of 13 December 1995 in part due to dissatisfaction to bring about a lasting, sustainable peace.

³⁹ United States Department of State, *Counterinsurgency for U.S. Government Policy Makers: A Work in Progress*, (Washington, DC: Department of State,2007), 7

COIN

The main effort in COIN is to find an approach that will solve several challenges within the same framework. While the primary focus in COIN is to win the support of the population the methodologies employed require more than a military effort and often lean on other government agencies and efforts aimed at separating the insurgent from the population.⁴⁰ In other words, make the population not only self-organizing but also sustainable. Galula's claim that an insurgency is a form of revolution and, therefore, is a political war leads him to declare that all actions have political effects and must be weighed accordingly.⁴¹ He also asserts that insurgents have an advantage over democracies because they are not constrained by the same rule set. For Galula, "an insurgency is a protracted struggle conducted ... to attain specific intermediate objectives leading finally to the overthrow of the existing order."⁴² While the insurgencies may not be violent they will follow a pattern, either orthodox or Bourgeois-Nationalist according to Galula, which he further divided into two periods: cold – that timeframe when the insurgent's activities are legal and nonviolent; and hot – when the insurgent's activities are openly illegal and violent.⁴³ Actions against an insurgent will depend on the period in which it is identified. Galula contended that during the "cold" period there are four courses of action which he also notes are not mutually exclusive. These are: direct action against the insurgent; indirect action against the insurgent; infiltration of the insurgent movement; and strengthening the political machine.⁴⁴ The difficulty here becomes understanding the start of a revolutionary movement and, as a legitimate authority, acting within the confines of the laws. Actions in this realm are extremely political and are essentially the purview of government and law enforcement.

⁴⁰ Galula,8-9

⁴¹ Ibid, 86-89

⁴² Ibid, 4

⁴³ Ibid,43

⁴⁴ Ibid, 44-47

In responding to an insurgency in the “hot” stage, Galula is extremely prescriptive, devising an eight-step strategy, which he notes are step-by-step procedures that range from hard military action and policing actions to political actions.⁴⁵ Galula is adamant about the issue of unity of command in a counterinsurgency, there can only be one authority and that authority is a representative of the political side.⁴⁶ This is consistent with his theme of fighting a political war and that all actions have a political effect and a likely precept to successful WGA approaches.

According to Galula, success is achieved when the population cuts off contact and support of the insurgents by their own will and using their own resources. The challenge, described as the myth of Sisyphus, is achieving irreversibility at every step.⁴⁷ This will only occur if the population perceives the cause of the legitimate authority or counterinsurgent as greater than that of the insurgent. This is perhaps where Galula fails to clearly articulate that the cause is just as significant for the counterinsurgent as it is for the insurgent.

O’Neill for his part spends a great deal of effort on the importance of analysis in order to understand the insurgents, their goals, and their basis for support. It is only through this understanding that an appropriate response can be assembled, one which maintains a focused COIN option for success.⁴⁸ His identification of insurgent strategies and the categorization of the four broad strategic approaches allow for the potential of multiple response strategies to put⁴⁹ together against the potential multiple strategies that the insurgents may be pursuing. These potential multiple strategies are considered from the capabilities across the spectrum of available resources and capabilities of the government as a whole, not simply from a military reaction.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Ibid, 55-56

⁴⁶ Ibid, 87

⁴⁷ Ibid, 57

⁴⁸ O’Neill, 157

⁴⁹ Ibid, 63

⁵⁰ Ibid, 190-191

The concepts expressed by both Galula and O'Neill, give credence to the fact that a holistic approach is required to defeat an insurgency. This is supported by Kilcullen, who in his "Inter-Agency Counterinsurgency Framework," lays out the necessity to create a unity of effort at best, and collaboration or deconfliction at least.⁵¹ The declaration of a political struggle, the need to identify the insurgents and their respective goals and interests, requires an approach that lies somewhere between that proposed by both authors. That is to say, an integrated WGA, which aims to separate the insurgent from the population with the various instruments of national power, traditionally seen as diplomacy, development and defense.

Fragile States

As Kaysie Brown and Stewart Patrick have noted, a leading cause for the failure of governments and the international community to engage an insurgency effectively is a lack of a shared understanding of a fragile or failed state. Whether a state is referred to as fragile, failed or weak, the intention is to point to, as Seth Kaplan indicates, "...poverty, weak institutions and corruption can make states vulnerable to terrorist networks..."⁵² He further alludes that where the government institutions are so dysfunctional and perform their respective functions badly or not at all, they create the space for insurgencies to flourish.⁵³ While many countries in our global community fall into the categories of failed or fragile states, a general consensus is that Afghanistan, often referred to as the second poorest nation in the world is a fragile state. It is evident that its fragile nature led or contributed to the growth of the insurgency during the Taliban

⁵¹ Kilcullen, 2004

⁵² Seth Kaplan, *Fixing Fragile States: A New Paradigm for Development*, (Westport, CT, Praeger Security International, 2008), 2

⁵³ Ibid, 5. See also Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding A Fractured World*, (New York, NY, Oxford University Press, 2008), 222

reign. The vacuum that was created since the collapse of the Taliban or post-2001 has led to an increase in insurgent activity post the 2001 invasion.⁵⁴

Afghanistan Today

Both Galula and O'Neill have described the significance of understanding the insurgent in order to develop an appropriate approach. In Afghanistan, the ability to discern the difference between war and peace is often clouded. Unlike the wars of the early 20th century, there is no distinction when fighting stops and reconstruction starts, they are concurrent activities.⁵⁵ The effort in Afghanistan is also complicated by the various adversarial groups ranging from the Taliban, al-Qaeda, Hizb-e Islami Gulbuddin (HIG) and other insurgent groups, which may require separate strategies to defeat. The very fact that these organizations have been able to reassert their presence in a region despite the numerous attempts by the government of Afghanistan and the international military, diplomatic and economic efforts, should point to the need for a different more holistic approach. Currently this does not exist.⁵⁶

Since the U.S. led invasion of Afghanistan to oust the Taliban regime in 2001, and the global community became interested in the country, violence has been on the rise, often in a cyclical manner. The BONN agreements resulted in the creation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to assist in providing sufficient security in the capital region of the country to allow a government to be formed and grow.⁵⁷ It soon became apparent that the focus

⁵⁴ Brown and Patrick, 2

⁵⁵ Sean Maloney, 2006

⁵⁶ "Afghan Insurgency Stronger Than Ever," CBS News, 11 November 2008 [news on-line], accessed 23 November 2008, available from http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/11/11/evening_news/printable4594109.shtml , internet.

⁵⁷ UN Security Council S/2001/1154, Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions, [document on-line] accessed 18 December 2008, available from <http://www.undemocracy.com/S-2001-1154>,. ISAF was assumed under NATO leadership and was concentrated in Kabul with a multinational brigade and a Corps size

and efforts of ISAF and the continued U.S. led effort under the banner of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) where often at odds.

The multipronged military approach was also replicated in the diplomatic arena. The United Nations was quick to re-establish its presence in Afghanistan as where many of the Western democracies. As embassies opened, the divergent opinions on what needed to be done next and how it should be done showed that there was no unifying authority to bring focus to the international efforts. The interests of each individual nation often took precedence over what agreements may have been reached on the international level.⁵⁸ The Bonn Agreements resulted in the implementation of a democratic government in Afghanistan.⁵⁹ Unfortunately the government institutions so needed to help prevent further decay in the country were, perhaps, a leap to far. In 2006, at the London Conference on Afghanistan, The Afghanistan Compact was reached, which outlined a five-year plan to cover the critical the pillars of security, governance, economic and social development, and narcotics.⁶⁰

Summary

The separation between fighting and the need to return to normalcy once evident in conflicts of the past has become blurred during conflicts involving insurgencies. The methods employed in the early 20th century were effective when nations were engaged in wars of

Headquarters reporting to Joint Forces Command Brunssum. Since its inception the force has grown to have a national country wide responsibility.

⁵⁸ Seth Kaplan, 8

⁵⁹ “Agreement On Provisional Arrangements In Afghanistan Pending The Re-Establishment Of Permanent Government Institutions,” [document on-line] (New York, NY: United Nations, 2001, accessed 18 December 2008) available from http://www.afghan-web.com/politics/bonn_agreement_2001.html , internet. This international agreement is often referred to as the Bonn Agreement after the city in which the agreement was reached.

⁶⁰ “The Afghanistan Compact”, [document on-line] (London, UK: 2006, accessed 18 December 2008); available from <http://collections.europarchive.org/tna/20080205132101/www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1133773247211>, internet.

exhaustion. With the sanctity of the bipolar world that existed during the “Cold War” shattered through the increase in violence by non-state actors through the use of terrorism, the old approaches could no longer function. In adopting another approach or in developing a new approach, three of the leading thinkers on COIN, Galula, O’Neill, and Kilcullen point towards a need to clearly understand the adversary, their respective interests and goals in order to develop a successful strategy to counter them. In part, the global community can focus its attention towards those fragile and failed states, which have proven to be the breeding ground for terrorist networks due to the dysfunctional and poor performing institutions. The complexity of our global community has often put individual national interests ahead of those of a coalition or partnership, which painfully evident in Afghanistan today.

WGA MODELS

As the bridge was destroyed and the river was high, new bridges had to be built...Orders were given for the construction of three bridges...My recollection is that [Lieutenant] Hains built a raft bridge; [General] McPherson a pontoon using, using cotton bales in large numbers, for pontoons; and that [General] Ransom felled trees on the opposite banks of the river, cutting only on one side of the tree, so that they would fall with their tops interlacing in the river, without the trees being entirely severed from their stumps. A bridge was then made with these trees to support the roadway.⁶¹

Ulysses S. Grant, Vicksburg, 17 May 1863

The epigraph above, while from the U.S. Civil War, aims to remind the reader that there is usually more than one right way to accomplish something. The same can be said of WGAs, there is more than one way to develop a WGA and, as many of the acclaimed experts have indicated, there is no “cookie cutter” approach. As such, each situation will require a different WGA tailored to meet the demands of the local actors or host government.⁶² When attempting to isolate and defeat an insurgency there is a need to insure that the specifics of the insurgency are

⁶¹ Al Kaltman, *Cigars, Whiskey and Winning: Leadership Lesson from General S. Grant*, (Prentice Hall Press, 1998), 125

⁶² Brown and Patrick, 144.

identified, so that the appropriate mixture of national power can be applied to the effort.⁶³ The one thing that the majority of the experts agree upon is that the mixture of national power will most often contain the three main elements of diplomacy, development, and defense, otherwise known as the 3Ds, and will use other agencies such as treasury, health, and justice to name but a few.⁶⁴

Why WGA?

This simple title header may seem curious when looking at defeating an insurgency, but as the principle counterinsurgency theorists have noted an insurgency must be defeated by the population if it is to remain effective. In other words, it is not just about killing or locking up the insurgents. The heart of COIN is protecting the population.⁶⁵ In keeping with Galula's concept, one which is shared by O'Neill, political power must have primacy over military power in COIN.⁶⁶ Another theorist, Sir Robert Thompson, also stresses the importance of politics in COIN in his outline of the Malayan Campaign. He says the government must develop a plan that covers all facets of the insurgency, i.e. social, political, administrative, police, and economic. He stresses the importance of addressing all of these facets in a mutually supporting way.⁶⁷ As David Kilcullen posits, protecting the population is not about imposing order through unquestioned dominance but rather achieving collaboration towards shared objectives.⁶⁸ So the end state of

⁶³ O'Neill, 155

⁶⁴ Kilcullen, 2006. See also "Connecting Government: Whole of Government Responses to Australia's Priority Challenges" (Commonwealth of Australia, 2004), 1

⁶⁵ Galula, 87

⁶⁶ Ibid, 89

⁶⁷ Sir Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam* (New York: Praeger Securities International, 1966), 111-112

⁶⁸ Kilcullen, 2006

COIN could be seen as a political compromise rather than a military victory. An insurgency can often be halted by addressing the grievances that motivate the population,⁶⁹

Many grievances of the affected populations are well beyond the scope of the military to achieve single handedly and are more suited to the other elements of national power which are better suited to deal with the plethora of issues. So there is a need to integrate all of a nation's power against a threat or at least integrate those elements that the nation wishes to use.⁷⁰ After all, if an insurgency aims at using political resources and violence to destroy an existing government and to legitimize itself, then one should reasonably conclude that there must be a great deal of effort other than military to sway the impact on the political structure.⁷¹ This interaction of the other agencies of government needs to occur in an integrated and collaborative fashion at all levels of government and warfare with the aim of delegitimizing and disempowering the insurgency while strengthening the host government's efforts to control its territory.

Not only can a WGA be targeted against an insurgency and the population, a WGA reduces the ambiguity created from individual nations providing assistance. From a donor nation's central government through to the actions on the ground, there must be a coherent plan outlining what support will be provided to the host government and how that support will be provided and by whom.⁷² In a perfect world the donor government would coordinate its assistance with the host government. Unfortunately, this is not always the case and the resulting disunity in Afghanistan demonstrates were President Karzai indicated that many of the PRTs around the country were akin to creating a parallel governments simply by funding provincial projects

⁶⁹ O'Neill, 169-170

⁷⁰ Kilcullen, 2006

⁷¹ O'Neill, 13

⁷² Brown and Patrick, 129-131

which are not in the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS).⁷³ This disunity with ANDS creates a sense of power at the provincial level which is often shared by the provider, the PRT. This is not to say that PRTs are a bad idea, quite the contrary, when properly supported by the donor government and in line with the host governments plan they are an excellent tool in reaching the population.⁷⁴ The author is simply stating that PRTs alone will likely fail when not integrated and coordinated in a WGA through the host nation.

Measuring Success

One of the issues often debated is in the development of how success can and should be measured when using a WGA.⁷⁵ The debate existed because there is no straightforward answer. When the WGA is being applied against an insurgency, one should be careful in attempting to use such measures such as reduced number of violent attacks or even simply reduced violence. Subscribing to the principle theorists on COIN would lead one to understand that if an insurgency is a struggle for political control then a suitable measure must be tied to the government's ability to enforce its policies on the population, seeking a self-generating and self-sustaining capability for the population to follow the government and not the insurgency. As such, any measures must be tailored to ensuring that they focus of the host government's ability to manage and change the current situation.

⁷³ Fisnik Abrashi, "Karzai says U.S., NATO Created 'Parallel Government,'" Associated Press, 26 November 2008, [news on-line] available from <http://www.afghanconflictmonitor.org/2008/11/index.html> internet.

⁷⁴ Nima Abbazadeh et al, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams: Lessons and Recommendations," [article on-line] (Journal for Small Wars, January 2008, accessed 27 November 2008) available from <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2008/02/provincial-reconstruction-team>, internet.

⁷⁵ Craig Cohen, "Measuring Progress in Stabilization and Reconstruction" [article on-line] (Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace, March 2006, accessed 24 March 2009); available from <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/srs/srs1.pdf>; internet. Here Cohen notes that the main barrier to measuring progress is political, not conceptual. He refers to agencies being more apt to declare success based on programs initiated as opposed to their respective impacts on stabilization.

PRTs

Regardless of the composition of the WGA, when dealing with an insurgency, the targeting of the approach needs to be considered. Bottom up approaches such as those seen in the efforts of PRTs in Afghanistan have had a great track record at the local level. They tend to be blend of local (provincial) government and the desires of individual donor countries operating the PRTs. The PRTs are civil military organizations, which for the most part, represent a WGA at a tactical level. That is they have representatives from many different governmental departments and agencies ranging from defense, international aid, policing, foreign affairs/state, and health.⁷⁶ As such, their efforts tend to be locally focused and may or may not meld into the desires of the host country's national government.⁷⁷ Such efforts can be tamed and made to address the host government's needs if there were a national level by the host government coordination body such as a PRT steering committee.

The indication that there needs to be higher level coordination is not only germane to PRTs but also to individual national efforts. While there needs to be unity of a national effort internal to a PRT, this effort must be in line with the donor government's approach and also the desires of the host government.⁷⁸ To be truly effective, such interagency coordination needs to exist at the ministerial/secretariat level of national government to provide not only clear policy guidance but also authority. It is from this ministerial level that there should be a connection to the receiving country to "wed" the donor country's policy with the host government's needs.⁷⁹ While all this has the appearance of sounding simple, the coordination is not always sound. In

⁷⁶ Ibid,

⁷⁷ Dr Banerjee, interviewed by author 4 December 2008 for SAT monograph - Comparing the role of SAT and PRTs.

⁷⁸ Brown and Patrick, 132-133

⁷⁹ Ibid, 136

looking at the efforts underway in Afghanistan, the author offers models from the U.S. and the United Kingdom. In the next section, these approaches will be compared to the Canadian SAT.

United States of America

The navy under Porter was all it could be, during the entire campaign. Without its assistance the campaign could not have been successfully made with twice the number of men engaged. It could not have been made at all, in the way it was, with any number of men without such assistance. The most perfect harmony reigned between the two arms of the service. There never was a request made, that I am aware of, either of the flag officer or any of his subordinates, that was not promptly complied with.⁸⁰

Ulysses S. Grant, Vicksburg 1863

The epigraph above exhorts the lesson that allies need to be treated well whether they report within the same chain-of-command. This includes making them part of the process from planning through execution and in sharing the taking of credit for success. Only through nurturing a relationship will its value increase beyond the sum of its parts. “Interagency coordination forges the vital link between the military and the diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of power of the USG.”⁸¹ This statement from the most recent U.S. military joint publication on the topic identifies the vital significance the military has placed on the coordination of the interagency.

The U.S. has had great experience with mixed degrees of success in its approaches to WGA as it applies to the counterinsurgency. As early as 1962, it had produced the doctrine of Overseas Internal Defense Policy (OIDP), which was the work of an Interdepartmental Committee with representatives from the Departments of State (DOS) and Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S. Information Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, and the Agency for International

⁸⁰ Kaltman, 1998, 107

⁸¹ JP 3-08, vii

Development.⁸² While ODP provided a framework for a WGA applied to COIN, assigning resources and responsibilities for each agency did not work well. Because of its classified nature, it prohibited a coherent link from policy makers to application on the ground.⁸³ As the Vietnam War escalated ODP was dropped and the U.S. military and DOS muddled through the effort.

In the later part of the 20th century and up to today, the U.S. has approached the interagency in an ad hoc manner.⁸⁴ Often viewed under the heading of Stability and Reconstruction operations, the U.S. has struggled with command and control issues as opposed to focusing on a lead agency status under a national policy.⁸⁵ At the national level, the National Security Council is the entity that would coordinate the interagency or at a minimum assign the tasks and resources necessary to allow the interagency to conduct a successful COIN.⁸⁶ This approach begins to break down at the operational level where the U.S. Ambassador or Charge d'Affairs, who is the senior representative responsible for implementing national policy, does not have control of the military component in the area.⁸⁷ Combatant Commanders (COCOMs) have had, since 2002, a limited capability Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACGs), which is aimed at enhancing interagency planning and coordination at the operational level.⁸⁸ The intent is

⁸² State Department, Office of the Historian, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-63, Volume VIII, Document 106, (Washington, DC, Government Printing Office, 1990), 382-383

⁸³ Kilcullen, 2006

⁸⁴ Neyla Arnas et al., *Harnessing the Interagency for Complex Operations*, (Washington, DC, National Defense University, 2005), 1

⁸⁵ Ibid, 3

⁸⁶ The White House, "Organization of the National Security Council System," (Washington DC: The White House, 13 February 2001, accessed 21 January 2009); available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-1.htm>, internet. See also Department of State, "Counterinsurgency for U.S. Government Policy Makers: A Work in Progress," (Washington, DC, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, 2007), 29

⁸⁷ Department of State, "Counterinsurgency for U.S. Government Policy Makers: A Work in Progress," (Washington, DC, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, 2007), 20. The Ambassador as Chief of Mission (COM) leads the Country Team but the U.S. geographic Combatant Commander is neither part of the team nor subordinate to the COM.

⁸⁸ Neyla Arnas et al., 9

to use the JIACG as a regional country team for a COCOM, which would coordinate with the actual Embassy country team in a manner determined by the COCOM, while decision making authority would rest with the COCOM.⁸⁹ The JIACGs amongst the various COCOMs operate differently and all have different reporting requirements based on the COCOMs needs.⁹⁰ This differing approach does not lend itself to consistency and would tend to see the JIACG being used for completely different purposes than those which were envisioned for such a group. Another challenge inherent in the U.S. JIACG model is that DOD cannot task the representatives of other agencies, all of whom remain under operational control of their respective agency headquarters and the COCOM, through the senior military member in the field has tactical control.⁹¹ CENTCOM's JIACG deployed to Afghanistan in 2001 and functioned primarily as an intelligence gathering and fusion center. While this does not mean that there was not cooperation between the two but there is however a clear dividing line.

The disconnect begins to widen more at the tactical level where military commanders, using Commanders Emergency Representation Program (CERP) funds often outspend their USAID counterparts by investing in quick impact projects which are entirely focused at the local village level. In fact, The U.S. moved away from a unique civil military cooperation model it first introduced in Afghanistan, the Regional Team, which was a venture between the Afghan government and the coalition military. These teams were to function in each province in order to enhance the reach of the central government, enhance security, and facilitate reconstruction. These very missions were to be enshrined in DOD policy and accepted by the Afghan PRT

⁸⁹ Ibid, 14

⁹⁰ Ibid, 15

⁹¹ Ibid, 11, **Tactical control** is defined as Command authority over assigned or attached forces or commands, or military capability or forces made available for tasking, that is limited to the detailed direction and control of movements or maneuvers within the operational area necessary to accomplish missions or tasks assigned, see DOD Joint Publication 3-0 Operations, (Washington, DOD, 2006), GL-30

Executive Steering Committee. What is surprising with the U.S. efforts in Afghanistan is that their PRTs being 97% military in the make-up are less a representation of a civil-military team.⁹²

The U.S. Government's COIN strategy represents, at least in the doctrinal or policy level, the recognition that WGA must be the way forward. Not only does it mention the need for internal collaboration, it also stresses the need to coordinate with Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).⁹³ The U.S. has adopted three different PRT models between Afghanistan and Iraq, with DOD exerting far more influence over PRT activities. Additionally, despite the various interagency attempts, effective interagency collaboration can be hampered by the lack of a true interagency process in Washington.⁹⁴

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom (UK) has had success in making progress in its WGA effort in creating an integrated policy towards weak and fragile states, using common resource pools to encourage interdepartmental collaboration.⁹⁵ In fact, they have created a special post-conflict unit (PCRU) to foster civil-military coordination.⁹⁶ Yet despite these headways, interdepartmental coordination often remains elusive, hampered by individual departmental mandates and a lack of underlying consensus among the departments on national objectives and the means to achieve them.⁹⁷ At the strategic level there is the absence of a central coordinating body with the authority to direct the various departments. This is particularly evident in operations during an active

⁹² Neyla Arnas et al, 18

⁹³ Ibid, 21 See also Nima Abbaszadeh et al, 47-48.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 47

⁹⁵ HM Treasury, "Whole of Government Accounts", [document on-line] (London UK: Queens Printer, 1998, accessed 18 December 2008); available from http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/wga_index.htm, internet

⁹⁶ Brown and Patrick, 9

⁹⁷ Ibid, 10

insurgency where interdepartmental disputes over desirable roles for defense, development, and diplomacy in the design and implementation of operations.⁹⁸

On the operational level, the Stabilization Unit, formerly the PCRU, is intended to lead UK efforts in crisis countries. This includes defining of strategy to the running of operations.⁹⁹ Conceptually, this is a workable approach as the Stabilization Unit responds to a board of directors composed of members from the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Department for International Development (DFID), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), and the Cabinet Office, which report to a cabinet level oversight committee – Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Committee.¹⁰⁰ The SU bridges cross-Governmental issues and collaborates between civilians and the military. The SU focuses on countries (or parts of countries) that are emerging from violent conflict, that are UK foreign policy priorities and where close cooperation between an international military presence and civilian agencies is essential to achieving greater stability.¹⁰¹ To this extent there is a clear link between the nation’s strategy and the application on the ground. The unfortunate issue is that the SU focuses its attention where there are UK troops involved, which in the case of Afghanistan means its attention is drawn to Helmand province as opposed to the country level, where most likely the effects of the work could benefit a greater portion of the Afghan population and greater assist in curbing or defeating the insurgency.¹⁰²

The SU does provide that bridge between the strategic and tactical levels of affairs by providing advisors to the PRT. The PRT in turn is used to advance the UK’s foreign policy goals

⁹⁸ Ibid, 15

⁹⁹ Ibid, 28

¹⁰⁰ “The Stabilization Unit” [document on-line] (London, UK: UK Government, 2008, accessed 18 December 2008) available from <http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk>, internet. See also Brown and Stewart, 27-30. The web site addresses in far greater detail the relationships between the constituent agencies and where and how the Stabilization Unit functions.

¹⁰¹ Nima Abbaszadeh et al. 42-43

¹⁰² Brown and Patrick, 30

and has demonstrated a high level of coordination, not only between the ministries involved but also the local population and government of Helmand province.¹⁰³ While the PRT has a military component it does report, at the regional level, to an FCO official in Regional Command South (Kandahar). The cross departmental cooperation and collaboration evident in the PRT is one of its strengths. This is aided by the pooled funding mechanism that not only enables the cooperation but also spurs it.

Summary

The U.S. and UK efforts at WGA stand as positive examples that collaboration between various governmental agencies is possible. Unfortunately both nations have demonstrated a lack of coherence in applying their respective WGA. The U.S. efforts are plagued by the lack of a true interagency process in Washington at the strategic level and a disconnect between the COM's country team and the COCOM's JIACG at the operational level which in turn produces a military top heavy PRT at the tactical level. The UK, while having more experience at WGA efforts; has a similar problem at the strategic level, although there is a cabinet level committee, it appears to be more for accountability than for providing direction. The UK 's SU is a wonderful example of an operational level WGA but continues to be focused at UK interests as opposed to the needs of the host government, remaining focused on the provincial level hinders the real progress potential offered by this team.

CANADIAN SAT

General

The genesis of the SAT was mentioned earlier but needs to now be placed in context. When the Canadian government decided that it must begin to focus on a WGA that would create

¹⁰³ Ibid, 43

not only synergies of government agencies but provide an opportunity for Afghanistan to rebuild its capacity, it created offices at multiple levels of government to ensure there was a semblance of coordination and collaboration. While Canada continues to participate in both Operation Enduring Freedom and NATO's ISAF mission, along with the provision of a PRT in Kandahar province, it attempts to build the capacity of the central government of Afghanistan. This effort was the Canadian Strategic Advisory Team to Afghanistan or simply SAT. The government's new 3D approach was sanctioned.¹⁰⁴ The harnessing of the 3D model was backed by an aggressive public awareness campaign both in Canada and abroad in an effort to ensure transparency in the new approach. The government created a permanent interagency Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START) which operates under the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) but has representation from CIDA and the Department of National Defence (DND).¹⁰⁵ As Brown and Stewart note, Canada has already attained a good level of interagency coordination and collaboration.¹⁰⁶ Canada has recognized the need to focus its WGA on state building and developing the capacity of a legitimate government in order to ensure that the government can become self sustainable to provide the basic services required by the population.¹⁰⁷ Such a move, if successful would address the grievances of the population making it difficult for an insurgency to exist.¹⁰⁸

This overarching framework provided by the central government's commitment to WGA and the creation of START provides the impetus for a strategic link to the host government of

¹⁰⁴ The Government of Canada, "Afghanistan: Canadian Diplomatic Engagement" [report on – line] (Ottawa, ON: Library of Parliament, February 2008, accessed 18 December 2008); available from <http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/library/PRBpubs/prb0738-e.htm>; internet.

¹⁰⁵ Government of Canada, "START: Mobilizing Canada's Capacity for International Crisis Response", Fact Sheet,[Document on-line] (Ottawa, ON: 2007, accessed 18 December 2008)available from <http://www.international.gc.ca/start-gtsr/year-review-revue-annee-0607.aspx>, internet.

¹⁰⁶ Brown and Patrick, 56

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 60

¹⁰⁸ O'Neill, 169

Afghanistan. This link was the SAT, an advisory team of interagency actors assigned to directly assist the host government in capacity building. The SAT would meet the Canadian strategic interest of supporting and developing the government of Afghanistan and would not focus below the national government level but rather provide the capacity development of the government itself to focus on the provinces.¹⁰⁹

Employment

The SAT was the genesis of several minds meeting and owes much of its success to General R. Hillier, who in 2003 as Commander of ISAF. At that time he placed some of his planning staff into the Interim Afghanistan Government's ministries to build a planning capacity.¹¹⁰ This effort led to a request from President Karzai for similar assistance in the future; the request opened many doors for the SAT when it finally began its work.¹¹¹ When the SAT deployed in 2005 under a military commander, Colonel Capstick, it found itself as an isolated entity in a rather large community. He had a team of military planners, personnel with scientific research experience and personnel with development experience. He was provided focus and contact to the Afghanistan government by the Ambassador Christopher Alexander. As Colonel Capstick expresses the initial concept for the team was to bring some rigor to the planning process in the Afghan Ministries.¹¹²

Initially the SAT focused its attention by assisting Dr. Ishaq Naderi, the Senior Economic Advisor to President Karzai, in the conception and development of the Interim – ANDS, and

¹⁰⁹ Christopher Alexander, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General – Political Affairs, UNAMA, interviewed by author 31 December 2008, Kabul, Afghanistan, e-mail. Mr Alexander was the Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan from 2003 to 2005 and was very instrumental in facilitating the SAT.

¹¹⁰ Mike Capstick, Colonel (retired), Commander of OP ARGUS (SAT Rotation – 1), interviewed by author, 27 October 2008, Calgary, AB, e-mail.

¹¹¹ Michel Henri St Louis, Lieutenant-Colonel, "A Comprehensive Approach to Stability The Strategic Advisory Team in Afghanistan" in the Canadian Army Journal Vol 10.4 (Winter 2008): 51

¹¹² Mike Capstick, Colonel (retired)

eventually the actual ANDS.¹¹³ These were significant efforts which account for how the country plans to combat poverty and coordinate reconstruction efforts of the country, actions that, according to Kilcullen and O’Neill would help win over the population and create a down turn in the insurgent activity.¹¹⁴ Additionally, ANDS would ultimately lead to the Afghan Compact, a commitment by the international community to resolve the situation in Afghanistan.¹¹⁵

When the SAT was planned and launched into Afghanistan it had an open-ended mandate to support the Afghanistan government’s objectives.¹¹⁶ The fact that the team was not burdened up front with a deadline allowed them to better able focus on building the necessary relationships and providing the Afghan authorities with a planning and analysis background necessary to move towards self sufficiency. As Christopher Alexander explained, the team was to operate until such time as NATO furnished the capacity to the government and the government then became capable of generating the capacity internally.¹¹⁷ The time spent building relationships and understanding the cultural requirements that needed to be taken into account made for a more successful mentoring process.¹¹⁸ The building of government institutions and capacities would lead to a better potential that the Afghanistan central government could strengthen its reach to its provinces and by extension the population in order to defeat the ongoing insurgencies.¹¹⁹

¹¹³ Michel Henri St Louis, Lieutenant-Colonel, 50

¹¹⁴ Kilcullen, 2006 and O’Neill 190

¹¹⁵ Michel Henri St Louis, Lieutenant-Colonel, 50. Also confirmed in the interview with Mike Capstick, Colonel (retired) 27 October 2008

¹¹⁶ Christopher Alexander, interview 31 December 2008

¹¹⁷ Ibid

¹¹⁸ Michel Henri St Louis, Lieutenant-Colonel, 52

¹¹⁹ O’Neill, 155. See also Christopher Alexander interview, 30 Dec 2008 “The key to effective counter-insurgency is effective, credible government institutions. SAT has championed them from the beginning; without SAT, their development would have been slowed. But the investment in police, governance and rule of law has not so far been equal to the security challenge: it needs to be scaled upward”.

Challenges

While the SAT represented a WGA tied in at the strategic level with the potential for far reaching impacts, it had its challenges at home and abroad. These challenges started from the team's conception when attempting to win over participation from both DFAIT and CIDA. According to Capstick, CIDA had insufficient staff so they provided a contractor to fill the requirement, but DFAIT resisted additional participation other than through the country team headed by the Ambassador.¹²⁰ The desire had always been to have a greater civilian component to the team as both Alexander and Capstick confirmed, but the challenge was to identify the right skills sets. These include but are not limited to strategic planning; project management; advisory; and secular skills, all of which could be found among either civilians or military personnel.¹²¹ The shortage of civilian representation on the team was a concern from DFAIT and CIDA, as well as from development agencies in Kabul. "Some internationals would look at the team with a fair degree of suspicion as they could not believe that soldiers could work without a hidden agenda from their capital. In addition, the SAT attracted unwanted attention from some regional intelligence services that had the potential of putting their Afghan counterparts at risk. Much of this was mitigated by adopting civilian dress and through the team's extensive networking efforts."¹²² That said, the greater number of team members from the military was merely a result of the Canadian Forces (CF) having the capability to force generate on short notice as opposed to their civilian counterparts in DFAIT and CIDA. Both of these agencies lack a standing deployable contingency capability. It is however interesting to note that these vary agencies that could not provide the staff to build the team would complain that the work being done should be

¹²⁰ Mike Capstick, Colonel (retired) interview 27 October 2008

¹²¹ Christopher Alexander, Interview 31 December 2008

¹²² Mike Capstick, Colonel (retired) interview 27 October 2008

done by civilians.¹²³ This was the eventuality in August 2008 when the military component on the SAT was replaced by civilians.¹²⁴

Potential

Was the SAT a “one hit wonder” or could its efforts be reproduced in different settings and different constructs? Can the SAT model be used with a multinational cadre? In attempting to answer these questions the author relied on interviews. The assistance provided in the development of the ANDS leading to the Afghan Compact should be viewed as a significant accomplishment in facilitating the host government’s desires. According to the testimony offered supports the contention that the team could be modified to include experts from a variety of countries, making it a truly multinational effort. In fact, Mr. Alexander explained that NATO (SACEUR and JFC Brunssum) and some member states were approached, but ultimately were unable to emulate or perpetuate the SAT model. He maintains that it could be used in a multinational environment.¹²⁵ This is also supported by Colonel Capstick, who believed that the process could be made better by the creation of a permanent inter-departmental “core” to conduct planning and to develop the capacity for a multi-disciplinary team that can be deployed quickly. The team should have high level guidance to develop plans for a variety of contingencies; the principle being that when entering a fragile or failed state there must be a plan that is anchored with that of the host government.¹²⁶

¹²³ Jeff Davis, “Military’s Afghan Strategic Advisory Team to be Replaced by CIDA Consultants” EMBASSY: Canada’s Foreign Policy Newsweekly, [news on-line] (accessed 8 October 2008); available from http://embassymag.ca/page/view/2008.august.13.afghan_advisory, internet.

¹²⁴ Ibid

¹²⁵ Christopher Alexander, interview 31 December 2008

¹²⁶ Mike Capstick, Colonel (retired) interview 27 October 2008. See also Brown and Stewart, 129-

By focusing on the development of government capacity, such efforts assist in empowering the central government so that it can become singular entity with the purpose of coordinating the capabilities that could harness the multinational and interagency efforts. The UN continues to champion the need for enlarged strategic planning and advisory capacity in assisting fragile states. In such an environment an element such as the SAT has tremendous potential to be used again.¹²⁷ The SAT could be duplicated in future interventions if three basic conditions are met: the host nation is willing and is in need of capacity building; the nation or nations contributing to the SAT have no negative historical ties with the host nation, such as direct or indirect support to the insurgency; and there are positive links with the legitimate government of the country.¹²⁸ These conditions have their roots in the basic tenants of trust, which make it possible to build a strong relationship with the host government.

Measuring Success

As noted in an earlier section, measuring success within a COIN environment will not be a simple matter. As O'Neill explains no two insurgencies are the same and as such different efforts will be required to defeat them.¹²⁹ As such there can be no magic formula for measuring success; each case must be reviewed within its own framework. So, can one truly measure the success of a WGA or even a multinational WGA within a COIN environment? Numerical counts such as a reduction in the amount of violent acts or number of insurgent attacks can be misleading. If the number of violent acts and insurgent attacks is down but those events that do occur are more catastrophic then such a measure would be futile. However, a reduction in

¹²⁷ Christopher Alexander interview 31 December 2008

¹²⁸ Michel Henri St Louis, Lieutenant-Colonel, 55

¹²⁹ O'Neill, 156

violence should also be seen as a positive sign in a COIN environment. Additionally, setting goals which are “unattainable within unrealistic timeframes” can be equally disappointing.¹³⁰

The SATs efforts can be classified as successful simply by the fact that they were directly focused at providing assistance to the legitimate government of Afghanistan through the design and production of ANDS and the Afghanistan Compact. What they accomplished would allow not only the central government of Afghanistan but also the international community to understand, the priorities of effort for stabilizing and rebuilding the country. Long term success, in terms of years, can then be measured based on the government’s ability to fulfill ANDS.

Summary

The SAT was a small but effective team of highly motivated members, while mainly from the military still represented a WGA. The team held a very simple but arduous mission; to assist the government of Afghanistan in developing their capacity to meet the objectives of rebuilding Afghanistan, through governance to reconstruction. While not designed to combat an insurgency, SAT’s efforts of transferring strategic planning capabilities and assisting in the development of significant legislation such as ANDS had a significant impact of focusing not only the central government but also the donor community through the Afghanistan Compact enabled the government to reach out to its population which gave it greater capacity to influence the COIN fight. These actions served to strengthen the authority and reach of the central government, allowing them to better serve their provinces, thus building stronger relationships with the population and dissuading the insurgency. The success of the team’s work is owed in large part to that simple fact that it was focused on the central government, working for and within that structure as opposed to trying to influence it from the outside. The team did face

¹³⁰ Craig Cohen, “Measuring Progress in Stabilization and Reconstruction,” [article on-line] (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2006, accessed 24 March 2009); available from www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/srs/srs1.html, internet.

numerous challenges both internally and externally as it was often seen as duplicity of efforts or was conducting work that civilian ought to have doing. The team overcame these challenges by building strong relationships with the host government. The SAT, as a conceptual model, has the potential to be duplicated to assist the government of any fragile or failing state so long as there is a will, need and desire.

ROAD BLOCKS

Engaging in any WGA will have challenges. Initially these can be seen as simple turf battles and power struggles between the contributing departments and agencies. Left unchecked such disunity will inevitably lead to fractures in the observance of whatever national strategy may exist.¹³¹ What follows are a few of the typical road blocks to a WGA and more specifically the employment of a SAT.

National Will and Cohesion

At times when multiple nations become involved in battling an insurgency such as the one underway in Afghanistan today there is chance that a “blinding of judgment will occur,” the thought the insurgency can be solved by military force alone. Perhaps this is a simple first response that most nations can agree upon, that military action needs to occur. Unfortunately, nations are not as quick to agree to other approaches involving the remainder of the WGA as was evidence by the lack of follow through with Bonn and the Berlin Declaration. In a multinational setting there is a host of competing national interest and objectives often blur the focus on the interests and objectives of the host government. As the major theorist on insurgencies have noted, a struggle against an insurgency will be long and often drawn out, requiring the investment of all of the national power that can be mustered.¹³² This indicates there needs to a strong national will

¹³¹ Brown and Patrick, 3

¹³² O’Neill, 156

to overcome the insurgency on part of the host government, often very difficult to determine in a failed state,¹³³ and a will on the part of the donor governments to do what is required to assist the host government.¹³⁴ In Afghanistan, a few of the most powerful states and important development agencies, have weakened the possibility of a strong central government by their insistence on following national and organizational agendas and priorities and opposed to those that have been indicated by the host government.¹³⁵ Simply put, the need exists for nations to focus on the host nation's needs at the expense of national or organizational interests. This requires a strong will at either the national or organizational level to ensure that the focus remains fixed on the host government.

Understanding

As Brown and Patrick note, there needs to be not only a shared understanding of what the challenge is and how it should be approached. While the aforementioned authors focus their attention on an understanding of state fragility, it serves as a useful point of understanding. What makes the state fragile and how to best avoid the age-old stove piped methods of assistance?¹³⁶ Having a shared understanding of both the challenge and of a national strategy would indicate better national unity provide for a coherent WGA. This shared understanding is important in understanding the nature of the insurgency and the needs of the host government and its population.¹³⁷ To avoid the stove piping of departmental and agencies agendas a unifying WGA

¹³³ Joseph Cerami, ed., *The Interagency and Counterinsurgency Warfare: Stability, Security, Transition and Reconstruction Roles*, (Carlisle, Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 558

¹³⁴ Brown and Patrick, vii

¹³⁵ Mike Capstick, "Reviewing Canada's Afghan Mission" *Policy Options*, April 2008, 23. [journal on-line] (accessed 23 October 2008); available from <http://www.irpp.org/po>. He continues supporting this claim by pointing out the marginalization of the UN authority by the U.S. and the dysfunctional lead nation system of the Bonn Agreement, which were viewed as structural barriers to cohesion.

¹³⁶ Brown and Patrick, vii

¹³⁷ Kilcullen, 2006

with an authoritative governance structure, able to impart not only advice but also direction is needed. “The directing set of hands may be one man or a few, but they must be of one mind and have the authority to act to achieve the desired result.”¹³⁸ As Dr. Nipa Banerjee states “sustained peace requires linking security with development-development that is planned and delivered to the Afghan government.¹³⁹ The efforts of SAT were perfectly dovetailed in this regard as they focused on developing capacity within several of the Afghan ministries and the development of ANDS. These efforts point to a clear understanding of what was important to the Afghan government.

Military

The military or defense component to a 3D approach is most certainly needed in Afghanistan to assist the host government in developing both the civilian and military capacity to look after its own challenges.¹⁴⁰ Having the defense component present does not mean that it should be in charge, while there may be cases where this is a necessary step in the short term but should be part of a plan from the onset of the military’s involvement.¹⁴¹ If an insurgency exists, then it requires to be addressed in a WGA as Kilcullen notes.¹⁴² In other words, there may be a time where the military must lead the WGA but it generally is an equal partner among equals in a larger approach. This is the predicament that SAT found itself in when the other departments

¹³⁸ Rupert Smith, General, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World*, (London, Penguin Books, 2005), 388

¹³⁹ Nipa Banerjee, Dr. “Short-Term Politics and Long Term State Building Preventing Success” *Embassy: Canada’s Foreign Policy Newsweekly*, 23 January 2008, accessed 1 October 2008; available from <http://www.embassymag.ca/page/view/.2008.january.23.banerjee>, internet.

¹⁴⁰ Robbert Gabrielse, “A 3D Approach to Security and Development,” *Connections: The Quarterly Journal*, Volume VI, Number 2 (Summer 2007); 67-68

¹⁴¹ Michael Gordon and General Bernard Trainor, *Cobra II*, (New York, Pantheon Books, 2006), 503-505.

¹⁴² Kilcullen, 2006

could not muster sufficient deployable skill sets.¹⁴³ The military created the capacity and while the team had a military leader, it worked with the “Country Team” working directly with the Afghan government. This approach, as has been noted, did cause concerns with the development community and other civilian agencies. But as the plan had always been a more robust civilian component there was sufficient justification for the team to proceed.¹⁴⁴ Ideally the military’s contribution to the team would be focused at security sector reform but it may need to be capable of working in other areas. As Mike Capstick noted, professional militaries possess a wide range of skill sets that can be mobilized on very short order. The skills, other than functional area expertise, that are most important are the ability to understand the situation and the culture, as well as a strong and proven background in planning and coordination skills at the strategic level.”¹⁴⁵

Funding

In a country like Afghanistan, the second poorest country in the world, a coherent WGA is required from each nation and needs to be nested within an overall framework provided by the host government. In the early days of dealing with a fragile or failed state the host government may in fact be a UN Administration put in place to administer the country until an interim or democratic government can be raised, such as occurred in East Timor under the United Nations Transition Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).¹⁴⁶ To date the multitude of nations providing assistance in Afghanistan is staggering as is the amount of money, which until recently

¹⁴³ Mike Capstick, Colonel (retired), interview 27 October 2008

¹⁴⁴ Christopher Alexander, interview 31 December 2008

¹⁴⁵ Mike Capstick, *Policy Options*, 24.

¹⁴⁶ United Nations Security Council resolution 1272 (1999), [document on-line] (New York, NY: United Nations, 25 October 1999, accessed 18 October 2008); available from <http://www.un.org/peace/etimor/UntaetM.htm>. The mandate gave UNTAET overall responsibility for the administration of East Timor and was empowered to exercise all legislative and executive authority, including the administration of justice.

lacked a comprehensive strategy to ensure any and all assistance meets the needs of the central government and by extension its population.¹⁴⁷ Unfortunately, when it comes to funding, national interests have proven to win out over the needs and interests of the host government. This is largely evident in the manner in which PRT are operated, diverting well intentioned but limited resources from pan-Afghan projects in favor of supporting provincial interests. A claim which is also echoed by NGOs who feel the funds would have been funneled through them if the PRTs were not operating in the manner in which they are.¹⁴⁸ One of the great challenges to funding is the fact that it is not normally provided from a centralized pool with the exception of the UK model. This means that any and all funds have to be cobbled together from the various contributing departments and by the donor government's promises of aid.¹⁴⁹

CONCLUSION

Cautions

There is no panacea for a COIN operation. It will, as the major theorist have noted, require detailed analysis and effort from across the spectrum of governance. That said there is also no magic solution to providing a coherent and collaborative WGA that focuses sufficiently across the spectrum of fragile states and the manner in which an insurgency can be held off to allow for popular support of the central government. While the latter is the aim measuring success is ultimately tied to the government's ability to provide for its population and for the population to support the government. The SAT provides one method that proved to be successful at both the conceptual level and application on the ground at increasing the central governments capacities. As previously noted, the team assisted greatly in the development of ANDS and the Afghan Compact. The ability to reproduce such an effort in Afghanistan or any other state is subject to

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 24

¹⁴⁸ Mark Skidmore, Brigadier-General, interviewed by author, 31 October 2008

¹⁴⁹ Brown and Patrick, 138

some limitations. There are road blocks to any WGA namely coherence and national will but also the development of a shared understanding of the fragile state and the nature of the insurgency operating within. While an insurgency can be brought to its knees, this will only happen through the will of the government and its population.

WGAs need to be nested within a coherent national strategy that is linked from the national strategic level to the application on the ground. An effort such as SAT should never be considered in isolation but rather as part of a holistic approach designed to support the needs of the host government. This is precisely what SAT was doing by working directly for the Afghan government, imparting skills and developing capacities that would strengthen the reach of the Afghan government. It was able to avoid the major interdisciplinary squabbles ever so popular within inter-departmental or inter-agency operations by creating a strong network of working relations with the host government.

The adjustment made to the team's composition, to have a majority of military personnel, was a necessity at the time of its conception due to that lack of deployable skills sets within the other federal government departments. This led to the need to create a deployable inter-agency capability with additional resources from other departments and agencies added as required. The importance is that the team is formed not to do the work in the host country but rather to mentor and provide the skills needed for the host government to grow its own capacity. The danger in such an approach is if it was applied at the wrong level. Building the capacities of lower levels of government, while important and desirable, should not be undertaken at the sacrifice of developing a strong and capable central government. This is what President Karzai was implying when he faulted NATO countries for undermining the authority of the central government in some of the work being carried out by PRTs which was not in sync with the nation's best interests.

A SAT need not come from a singular nation. The team simply needs to be comprised of the right experts in the areas of security, governance and development and all have a strong

background in planning and coordination at the strategic level as Mike Capstick noted.

Additionally, the limitations noted by Christopher Alexander need to be considered: the nation is in need of capacity building; there are no negative ties between the nation or nations contributing to the SAT and the host nation; and there are strong links with the legitimate government of the country.

Recommendations

Needless to say that it becomes much easier to suggest solutions to challenges when the power of hindsight is available. When considering the application of a WGA the needs of the host government, as opposed to the donor government need to be of the highest consideration. The concept of the SAT should be implemented in any country fitting the requirements of being in need of capacity building. As a model it should be considered as part of a greater strategy on COIN in order to ensure that the host government and population can be strengthened.

The SAT model has its strength in a singularly focused authority, the host government, and aims at developing and strengthening the host nation's central government's ability to provide for its population. The only national or multinational interest at play is ensuring the stability of the host government. As many of the COIN theorist have eluded, the ability of the government to look after the needs of the population, provide for their security and safety will go a long way in creating the conditions where an insurgency cannot gain momentum or even take hold. The development not only aims at benefitting the population but also strengthening the host government and by extension the countries standing both regionally and internationally. Such an approach should also be considered prior to the engagement of military force as nation building, for better or worse, needs to inform most military planning in today's trying times. The SAT model should be considered an important part of an overall strategy that aims at assisting a host government in its effort to defeat an insurgency. Other WGA should be used concurrently

focusing at the different levels of government such as PRT with their ability to do great work at the local and provincial level so long as they are nested within a national development strategy.

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