Asymmetrical Gain of Irregular Forces

A Proposed Doctrinal Method for Irregular Force Recruitment, Utilization, and Subsequent Reintegration into Target Populations For Conflict Environments

Major Ben Zweibelson (US Army)

AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE
AIR UNIVERSITY
A Research Report Submitted to the
Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Graduation Requirements

Advisor: LTC Kyle E. Feger

Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama
April 2010

i

Disclaimer:

Contents

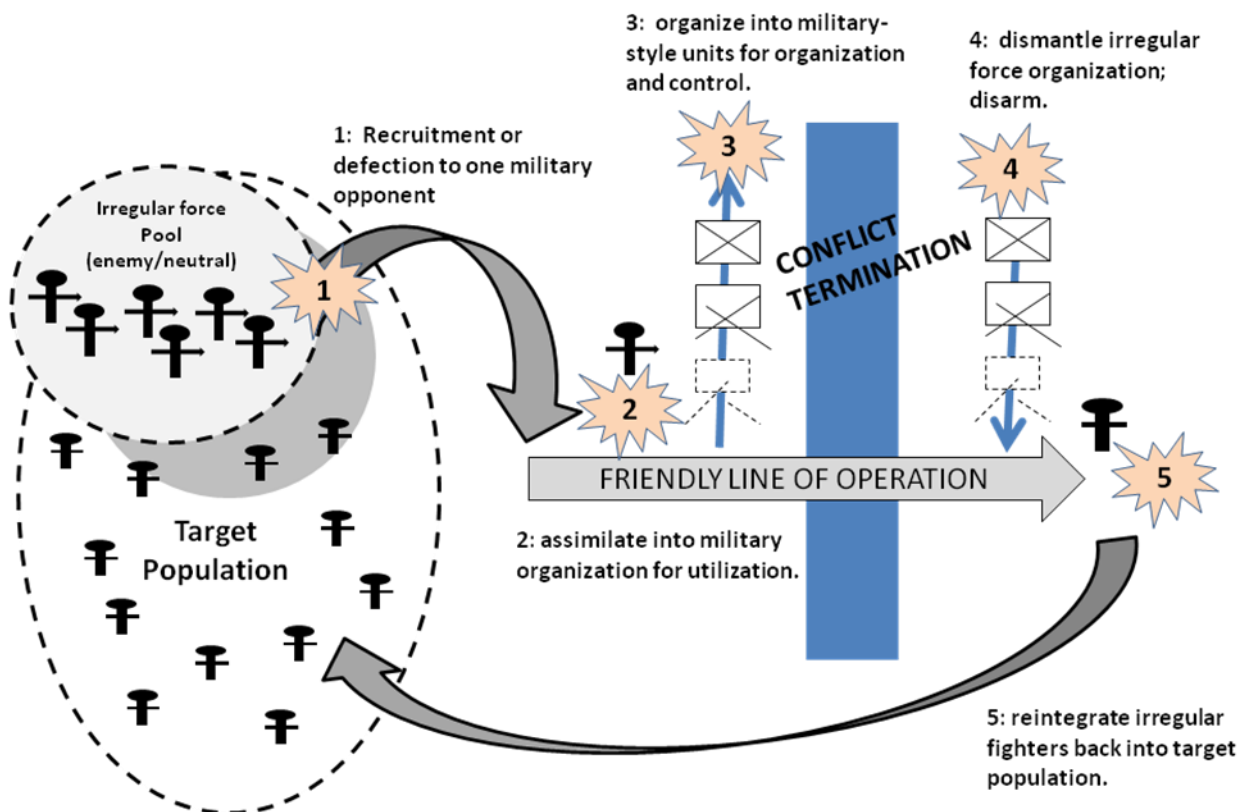# Illustrations

(all illustrations created by the author)

Abstract:

Irregular forces are recruited (or defect) in conflict environments throughout the full spectrum of conflict. Whether during an unconventional warfare environment or in a subsequent COIN or conventional fight, any irregular fighters that join the Coalition are often utilized and not effectively disarmed, demobilized, and reintegrated effectively back into the post-conflict target population. Existing doctrine is compartmentalized within various organizations and often conflicts with other doctrine or omits critical phases for these irregular fighters. The bottom line is that when an armed civilian irregular is recruited, their journey from that moment through their entire utilization and eventual reintegration back into the population needs to be planned and executed with a common doctrinal based methodology that spans joint publications and nests with other government agencies (OGA) and international government/non-government organizations (IGO/NGO). With future conflicts likely remaining in the irregular warfare arena, planners across the military instrument of power disciplines must synergize a cohesive and adaptable line of operation for irregular forces that provides a "cradle to grave" methodology for every irregular fighter integrated into the fight. This paper proposes one such concept, and provides the necessary existing doctrine that is currently available in fragments across the military and non-military spectrum. United Nations doctrine such as Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) is blended with Systemic Operational Design (SOD), Counterinsurgency (COIN), Foreign Internal Defense (FID), and Unconventional Warfare (UW) to demonstrate a full-spectrum adaptable methodology that draws upon lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan.

1. Introduction:

The 'irregular force defection, utilization, and subsequent reintegration' model is a concept as old as warfare itself. From a pool of prospective military aged males, men are courted with bribes, ideological constructs, or other motivational tools to win their allegiance to a cause. From ancient times through the World Wars and subsequent Cold War proxy wars of the 20th Century, armed local men are hired, employed, bribed to another side, and later reintegrated back into the post-conflict population. Generally, this is a messy process where military leaders on the ground rely less on their existing doctrine and more on their creativity, experience, and understanding of the conflict. Figure 1 below provides a graphical depiction.

Figure 1: irregular force defection, utilization, and reintegration

This linear path of the irregular fighter in conflicts from unconventional warfare through conventional and counterinsurgency translates into a confusing combination of doctrinal terms[1] regarding indigenous irregular forces for Joint and U.S. Army leaders today. Existing Joint, U.S. Army, Other Government Agency (OGA), and International Government/Non-Government Agency (IGO/NGO) doctrine struggles to effectively link armed neutral or enemy irregular forces within the target population and how they are recruited, utilized, and eventually reintegrated into the host population upon termination of the conflict. Part of this doctrinal confusion stems from how asymmetric gains in irregular warfare (IW) relates to the qualitative exploration of the conflict in question. Systemic Operational Design (SOD) provides some unique insight into the *irregular force defection* aspect of this indigenous irregular force model, yet SOD has not yet leap from military academia into mainstream doctrine. Doctrine on irregular force utilization remains so disjointed between rival unconventional warfare (UW), Foreign Internal Defense (FID) [2], and Counterinsurgency (COIN) methodologies that the majority of recent asymmetrical gains in irregular warfare originate from non-doctrinal *grassroots* efforts such as the 'Sons of Iraq' movement in OIF. This paper proposes a new cognitive model for asymmetric gain in IW that combines aspects of SOD qualitative exploration
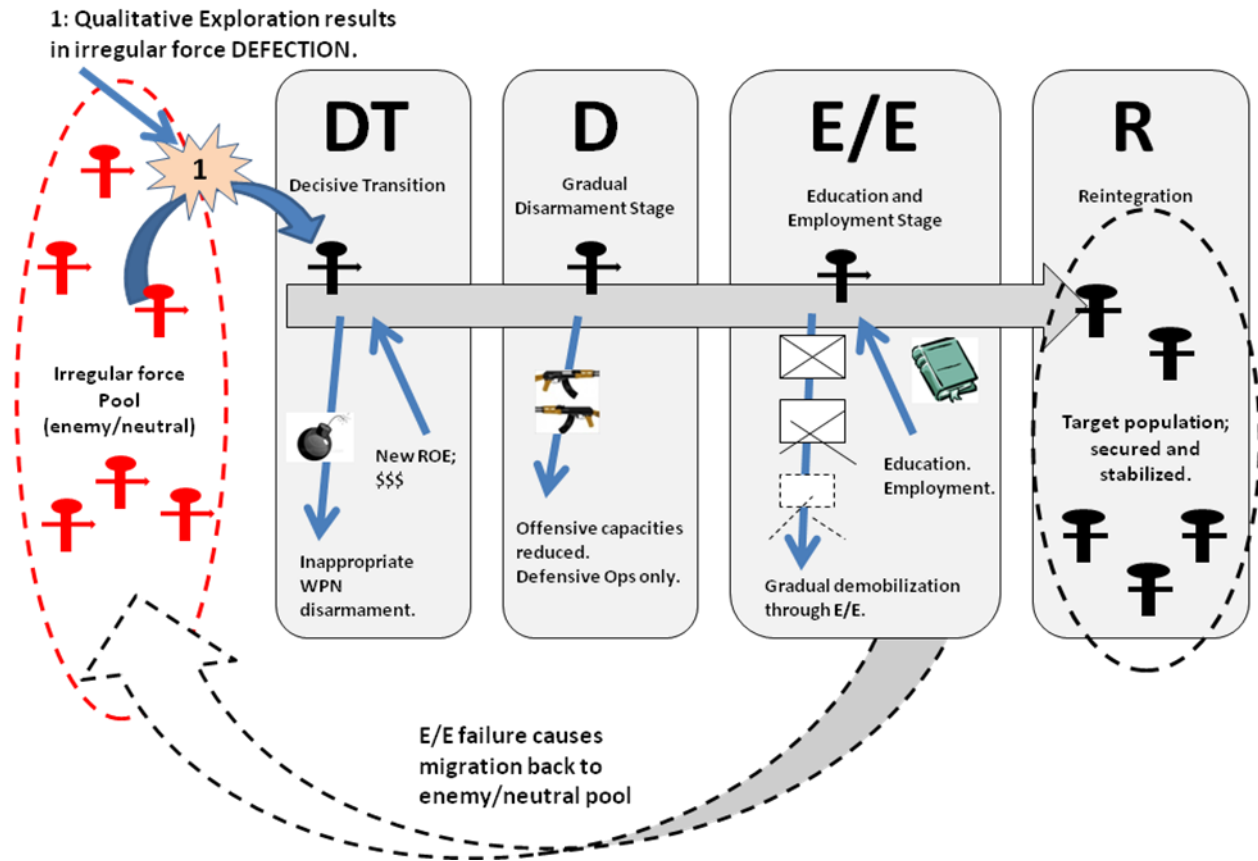
---

[1] *Irregular Defection, Utilization, and Reintegration:* While FM 3-24 warns against using terms such as 'irregular' or 'unconventional' (FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* chapter 1; 1-8), the term 'irregular' is employed in FM 3-05.130 *Unconventional Warfare* and better suits the evolutionary role that armed civilian elements take within the host population as "state and nonstate actors struggle for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population"- FM 3-05.130 Chapter 1; 1-8. These irregular forces can *defect* to the Coalition/HNSF side throughout the entire spectrum of conflict (UW, IW, conventional operations, COIN, FID, or DDR), and once they *defect,* they are *utilized* in some fashion (UW: offensive operations in support of a resistance movement; conventional warfare: defeating enemy forces; FID: restoring law and order; COIN: defeating the remaining insurgency; DDR: community security forces). Finally, regardless of their origin, any irregular forces armed and utilized within any form of military conflict must at some point be *reintegrated* into the host population in a manner that enhances the security of that population, the legitimacy of the government, and without reverting irregular forces back into a hostile or destabilizing stance.

[2] FM 3-24 states in 1-12 that COIN "is not an approach to war that can be classified simply as FID." This author agrees that COIN and FID are not interchangeable terms and reflect diversely separate conflicts; however one is often present in some relationship to the other. Because of this yin-yang dynamic, this paper will use the joint acronym COIN/FID to indicate when the DTDE/ER model applies to either COIN or FID as appropriate.

with existing fragmentary military IOP doctrine (UW, FID, and COIN) along with essential non-military IOP doctrine such as the United Nations' *Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration* (DDR) concepts. The proposed cognitive model is called: *Decisive Transition, Disarmament, Education/Employment, and Reintegration* (DTDE/ER) and is reflected below.

Figure 2: DTDE/ER and the evolutionary process of an irregular fighter

Irregular force asymmetric gain is expressed in the acquisition phase of the above model. The *decisive transition* (DT) stage is unique to each conflict and requires the quantitative exploration that defines SOD. The reasons for why Sunni insurgent groups defected from the enemy to friendly camps in OIF cannot be reproduced like a rubber stamp in future conflicts; the DT stage is a *complex* problem that requires extensive consideration, analysis, and reassessment. Existing UW/IW and COIN/FID doctrine provides various irregular force asymmetric gain

examples, but many of these joint publications conflict with each other and fail to overlap. No Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) or FID doctrine exists within military IOP publication that adequately explains *reintegration* whereas a non-military organization (the UN) does. This paper will demonstrate how various portions of existing UN DDR doctrine can be tailored to military IOP doctrine under the proposed DTDE/ER model. Without this proposed doctrinal synergy and realignment of irregular fighter asymmetrical gain, future conflicts will continue to see old wheels reinvented over and over with new labels.

2. The Iraqi Awakening Movement: Not as Revolutionary as Hyped.

Whereas the 2005 OIF Awakening Movement made headlines, another closely related example occurred with far less fanfare in Afghanistan in late 2001. In fact, the Awakening Movement is merely another reincarnation of the historic and frequent utilization of irregular fighters in an asymmetric environment. The same general model (figure 1) was observed during the first stages of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) where very similar 'awakenings' occurred in moderate Taliban forces. "As early as October 9 (2001), with the help of CIA money, 35 to 40 Taliban commanders and some 1,200 Taliban fighters were persuaded to defect, in the process giving the alliance control of a major Taliban resupply route northwest of Kabul."[3]

In what started with CIA bribes, various moderate Taliban leaders and their respective militias converted from enemy combatants to irregular forces in support of an insurgency against the Taliban government. Later, these same irregular forces became part of the FID patchwork of *Host Nation Security Force* (HNSF) for the fledgling Afghan government. Once Afghanistan stabilizes enough to downsize security forces, many of those original irregular forces will require aspects of DDR to reintegrate them into the population. Neither the original OEF invasion plan

---

[3] Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Air Power Against Terror; America's Conduct of Operation Enduring Freedom*. (RAND National Defense Research Institute, RAND Corporation, 2005). 104.

nor subsequent campaign plans over the last eight years of US involvement contained any unifying DDR concepts other than the short-term and disjointed efforts that collectively bring us to present day in Afghanistan. Yet the sequential transition of Afhgan irregular forces from enemy to armed ally, then to disarmed and reintegrated civilian is a simple and historically grounded model. The problem lies in the doctrinal gaps and compartmentalized planning processes of UW, IW, FID, COIN, and DDR strategies.

OEF began with CIA and SOF planners following UW doctrine in creating resistance pockets of irregular forces within Taliban held territory.   Yet current COIN/FID planners in Afghanistan are continuing to struggle with how best to continue converting moderate Taliban over to the Alliance, and how to better disarm and reintegrate these temporary forces in the future. Part of this disorganized approach reflects the doctrinal conflicts between unconventional and conventional warfare. Arming an irregular fighter starts a process that must have an ending that supports the military and strategic end state; otherwise that fighter is merely a short-term advantage and a long-term liability.

Following the 'Anbar Awakening' in August 2006, the current Iraqi government now faces political, financial, and social challenges with financing the Sons of Iraq (SOI) volunteer force and generating job placement for them. The Awakening strategy brought short-term security solutions to Iraq, but "the long term effect could be runaway tribalism, warlordism, and secretarianism." [4]   Conditions in Iraq today appear promising, yet there are numerous complications with transitioning SOI management over to the Iraqi government. This is likely directly related to the entire SOI model being a grassroots strategy with no real national or

---

[4] Greg Bruno, *Finding a Place for the 'Sons of Iraq.'* (Council on Foreign Relations; January 9, 2009). http://www.cfr.org/publication/16088/ . Greg Bruno quotes CFR Senior Fellow Steven Simon in part of this passage; that reference is subsequently located at http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/63398/steven-simon/the-price-of-the-surge under Steven Simon's *The Price of the Surge;* also for the Council on Foreign Relations.

strategic planning initially. When one of the pioneers of the 'Awakening Movement' in Iraq, COL MacFarland, initially started his defection phase with groups of Sunni sheiks in the Anbar province, "his superiors initially were wary, fearful that the plan could backfire, he says. He forged ahead anyways."[5] The same article went on to state, "military analysts say there are no textbook guides for what MacFarland did. Battling a counterinsurgency demands leaders who understand that this is a different kind of war than the Army and Marine Corps have trained for."[6] This paper argues even further that existing doctrine fails to provide leaders such as COL MacFarland a general framework for defecting, utilizing, and reintegrating irregular forces in a variety of military conflict settings.

Iraq provides a telling example of the current dysfunctional reintegration strategy with the March 2009 arrest of SOI leader Raad Ali in Fadhil, Iraqi. While Ali was arrested by Iraqi Security Forces under an arrest warrant, his deputy publicly stated that he feared for his own life and that many of the SOI working for Ali would likely abandon their guard posts. "I feel that I am targeted by both the Iraqi forces and the terrorists," stated Ali's deputy, Atheer Mustafa.[7] The SOI strategy has fumbled several of these reintegration policies in Iraq and risk further straining the delicate ideological balance keeping the SOI volunteers in line. These irregular forces in Iraq that are currently being utilized for local security must be reintegrated into the host population successfully so that the Iraqi people, Iraqi government, and the SOI groups concur on the process. Friction between any two elements will make reintegration more costly and challenging. The lack of coordinated doctrine contributes to that burden exponentially.

---

[5] Jim Michaels. *Behind Success in Ramadi An Army Colonel's Gamble.* (USA Today, October 30, 2009); http://usatoday.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=USATODAY.com&ex
[6] Jim Michaels. *Behind Success in Ramadi An Army Colonel's Gamble.* (USA Today, October 30, 2009); http://usatoday.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=USATODAY.com&ex
[7] Ned Parker and Caesar Ahmed. *Sons of Iraq Movement Suffers Another Blow.* (Los Angeles Times; March 30, 2009). http://articles.latimes.com/2009/mar/30/world/fg-iraqi-sunnis30?pg=2

The Iraqi government views the community-based security forces (defected irregulars being utilized for local security) as a potential threat to both the national government's legitimacy and security. In part this is a result of ideological imbalances and political dysfunction between Sunnis and Shiites in Iraq. However the greater problem lies in the lack of *irregular force defection, utilization, and reintegration* planning at the operational and strategic level from 2003 to present. The very grassroots nature of the SOI movement provided tactical short-term success, yet the current political and security issues threaten long-term stability and reintegration and are based upon national level distrust of these grassroots movements. Another former insurgent and current SOI leader, Abu Maarouf, stated to a reporter in April 2009 that "no one could capture [Al Qaeda in Iraq]. And the Iraqi government stood by helplessly. We fixed the situation, and now they want to oust us. It's not right." Today in Iraq the reintegration stage for irregular forces is dysfunctional and may inadvertently prolong or rekindle the civil war.

These setbacks highlight the grassroots nature of the entire SOI strategy and illustrate the lack of synergy within the overarching COIN strategy in Iraq. In both Iraq and Afghanistan, multiple forces have entered and exited the conflict arena with differing doctrine, operations, and methods concerning the same inclusive pool of irregular forces. Doctrine defines how a military trains, adapts, and prepares for conflict; therefore current doctrine may be the culprit.

3. Military IOP Doctrine: Self Interests, Self Preservation, and Compartmentalization.

Despite the United Nations' DDR model being the closest related published doctrine on irregular force reintegration methods, other Joint and U.S. Army doctrine currently available offer overlapping and at times contradictory views on defecting, utilizing, and reintegrating irregular forces in a variety of conflict settings.

Figure 3: Current Doctrinal Fragmentation Concerning Irregular Force Defection

Regime Change

Peace Settlement; post-conflict

United Nations Or Coalition DDR
UN IDDRS & academia
DOD directive 3000-5

Pool of Irregular Fighters (Enemy, Neutral)

FID/COIN
JP 3-07.1
FM 3-24

Decisive Transition

Irregular *defensive* security

Failure to DDR this pool causes migration back to enemy/neutral pool

Decisive Transition

Irregular Asset

FSO Conventional War
Wide variety of doctrine
JP 3.0
JP 5.0
FM 100-5

Decisive Transition

Irregular *offensive* asset

UW/IW
OGA doctrine
FM 3-05.130

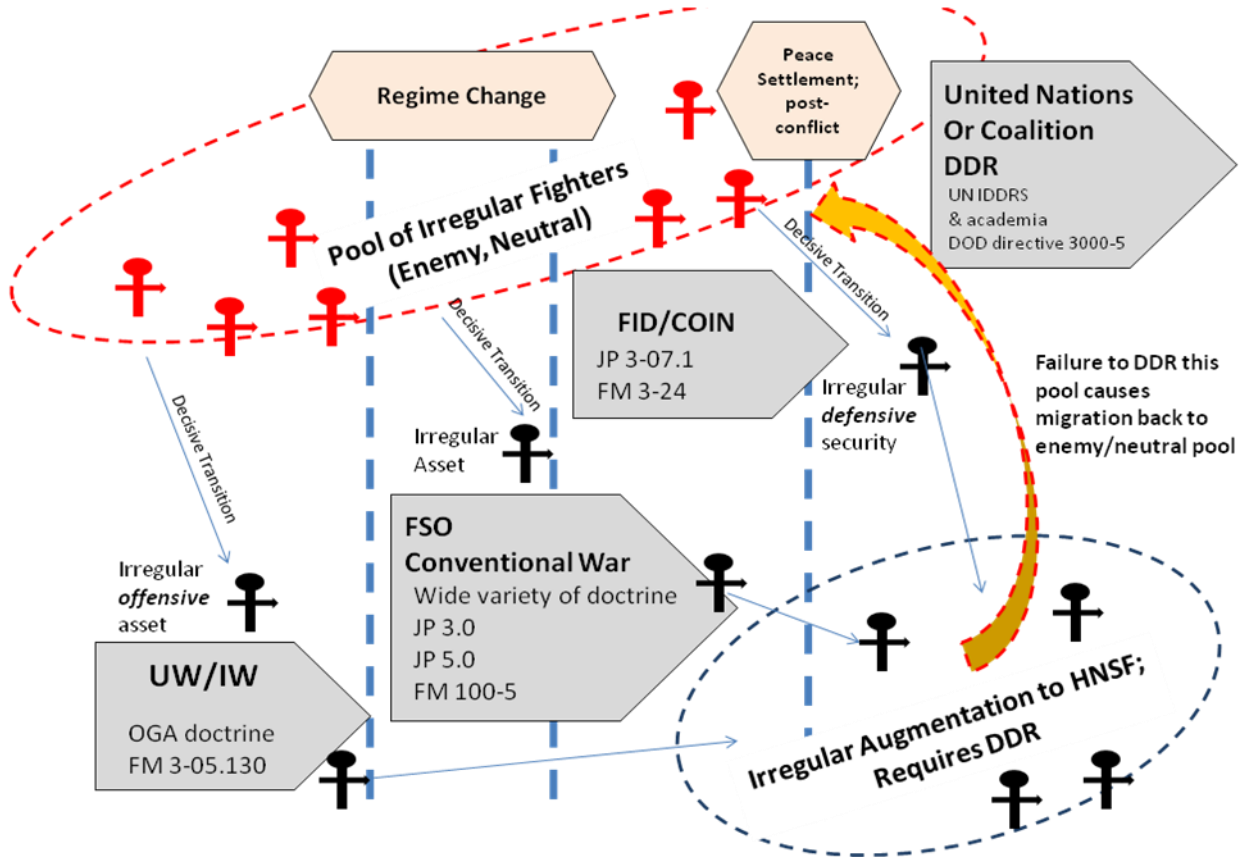Irregular Augmentation to HNSF; Requires DDR

Figure 3 illustrates how the same pool of neutral and enemy armed irregular forces within a target population (not including enemy foreign fighters such as Al Qaeda) is routinely exploited by each component or sub-component of major military operations. As each component derives its own doctrine, these various military and non-military IOPs identify with their own unique capabilities, limitations, desired ends, and cultural identities.

Unconventional warfare doctrine casts 'insurgents' in a far more neutral light in their doctrine than does FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency*, which refers to insurgents as 'unscrupulous'[8] actors that 'thrive on terrorizing and intimidating the population to gain control.'[9] This dissimilarity reflects the cultural and operational differences between unconventional warfare

---

[8] FM 3-24; Counterinsurgency (June 2006 Final Draft; Headquarters, Department of the Army). 1-3.
[9] FM 3-24. preface.

operators and their conventional counterparts. Military cultural differences notwithstanding, when conflicts evolve from one discipline into another such as when the opening unconventional warfare strategy in OEF developed into a conventional fight and later into a COIN/FID conflict, the respective doctrine fails to transfer their methods involving irregular forces effectively.

Joint Publication 3-07.1 (Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense) covers numerous aspects concerning irregular forces within a host population for security and stability purposes. FID is designed to "emphasize the building of viable institutions that respond to the needs of society." [10] Joint FID doctrine is generally preventative in nature and embraces the basic imperative that all FID operations must "maintain HN sovereignty and legitimacy." [11] However, FID doctrine promotes a top-down planning approach with an emphasis on Special Operations, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations units assisting with an "anticipating, precluding, and as the last resort, countering an internal threat" [12] strategy. This strategy is well suited for Phase 0 (stability) operations but not full counterinsurgency phases such as OIF/OEF.   The Iraqi 'Awakening Movement' ran counter-culture to FID doctrine with a grassroots and initially unsupported tactical level movement by commanders on the ground. The Shiite majority government in Iraq distrusts the Sunni minority 'Awakening' movement because it jeopardizes the FID principle of national sovereignty extending from the top of the legitimate government down to the tribal or local levels. These conflicts increase friction. Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) Senior Fellow Stephen Biddle commented on the bottom-up strategy of purchasing community security forces from opportunistic insurgent groups in Iraq as an unpopular method, "but given the alternatives, stabilization from the bottom up may be the least

---

[10] Joint Publication 3-07.1, Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense (FID); 30 April 2004. I-1.

[11] Joint Publication 3-07.1. III-1.

[12] Joint Publication 3-07.1. III-1.d.

bad option." FID doctrine does not translate well with irregular force asymmetrical gain, yet supportive doctrine does exist in an interesting location.

FM 3-05.130 (Army Special Operations Forces Unconventional Warfare) adds unique insight by highlighting the very opposite of COIN doctrine. Unconventional warfare (UW) is defined "by, with, or through surrogates" involving indigenous personnel and should not be confused with *overt, direct* assistance methods such as FID where the US government operates with recognized Host Nation (HN) *regular forces*. [13]

However, recent conflicts such as the OEF opening phases in 2001 demonstrate the nebulous transition from UW to FID where initially, SOF personnel with significant air power support conducted a UW operation with various Northern Alliance militia groups to overthrow the Taliban government in Afghanistan. [14] The CIA used money to win over moderate Taliban commanders and their militia forces in the early stages of OEF just as Commanders in Iraq would later use CERP funds to bring moderate Sunni insurgents over to the Allied side. The first example occurred in a UW environment while the latter occurred during FID, thus blurring the line between both the concepts and the existing UW/COIN doctrine in question. After Kabul fell and the UN Security Council facilitated a transitional government, the same NATO forces/Afghan militia relationships earlier categorized as UW became by definition FID, and eventually the 'civilian augmented personnel'[15] will be reintegrated into conventional HNSF or the population using aspects of DDR.

Ultimately, the majority of conceivable UW operations that succeed will empower a resistance movement (insurgency) with irregular forces to win legitimacy and influence over a

---

[13] FM 3-05.130; Army Special Operations Forces Unconventional Warfare (September 2008; Headquarters, Department of the Army). 1-3.

[14] Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Air Power Against Terror; America's Conduct of Operation Enduring Freedom*. (RAND National Defense Research Institute, RAND Corporation, 2005). 93.

[15] FM 3-05.130; 1-3.

relevant population; hence a regime change will occur. Successful UW operations transition into FID while the irregular forces that brought about the regime change must undergo a DDR transition into either HNSF or contributing members of the population. If this holds validity, then most UW operations create a causal chain that begins with irregular warfare and ends with a conventional FID style operation that may involve COIN, but clearly terminates with DDR. Yet current Joint Doctrine is missing the DDR portion and current planning often separates the operational design of SOF empowered UW[16] from any follow-on conventional FID planning.

4. *Explaining United Nations DDR Doctrine.*

In 2004, the United Nations put their vast post-conflict experience to paper by publishing a comprehensive doctrine titled *United Nations Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards* (IDDRS). Prior to 2004 the UN executed DDR by capitalizing on planner and operator experience and creativity; there was no doctrine to guide their process in each challenging conflict. The UN defined DDR's objective in their new doctrine as "to contribute to security and stability in post-conflict environments so that recovery and development can begin. The DDR of ex-combatants is a complex process, with political, military, security, humanitarian, and socio-economic dimensions."[17] The important distinction concerning the United Nations' DDR model is that the UN is not a military IOP of any nation, and IDDRS, while flexible, does prescribe several pre-conditions that the US military IOP often
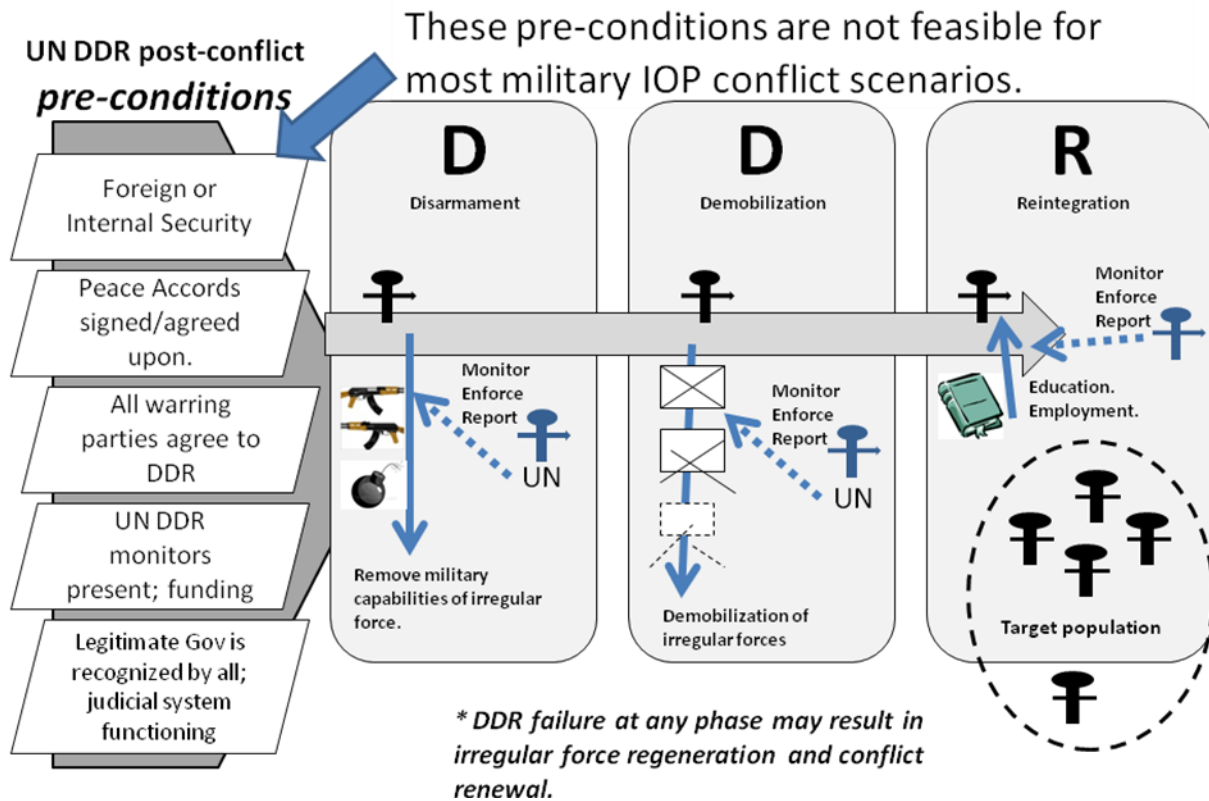
---

[16] UW doctrine does mention 'local defense training'[16] under its *Civil Affairs Operations* chapter, yet it is light on details and is again disjointed from the earlier irregular combatant sections. This local defense training occurs while the hostile government exists; therefore it falls under UW/IW instead of FID. However the concept itself is largely identical to FID/COIN community security force models demonstrated in OIF. Semantics aside, when an irregular is paid to carry a weapon on the side of US forces, that irregular transitions throughout the period of conflict until they are reintegrated into the population. Whether recruited in a UW phase or during the height of a COIN/FID environment, the path of the irregular is often mishandled and overlooked by the various disjointed operational plans. At any point, these irregulars are at risk for exploitation by the enemy.

[17] United Nations Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), 01 August 2006; Introduction to the IDDRS; section 1.10. 1,2.

will not consider. Figure 4 illustrates all three DDR phases and the post-conflict pre-conditions

generally necessary to initiate the process.

Figure 4: Graphic Depiction of United Nations IDDRS doctrine on DDR:

'Disarmament' in the UN model "is the collection, documentation, control and disposal

of small arms, ammunition, explosives, and light and heavy weapons of combatants" [18] and has

the assumed pre-conditions that peaceful conditions exist between the hostile parties due to

negotiations or some brokered cease-fire. Secondly, IDDRS assumes that existing security on

the ground (either foreign, UN, or host nation) is adequate enough to stabilize the area of

operations for DDR to be implemented. "There are certain preconditions for DDR to take place,

including: the signing of a negotiated peace agreement that provides a legal framework for DDR;

trust in the peace process; willingness of the parties of the conflict to engage in DDR; and a

---

[18] IDDRS; section 1.10.. 2.

minimum guarantee of security." [19] DDR strategy requires some re-tooling for direct military

IOP adaptation for COIN operations in a hostile environment where security will likely be

inadequate and all hostile parties remain engaged in combat. The UN DDR places

'disarmament' as the first stage in their peace-building strategy based upon the aforementioned

security pre-conditions that any military application will lack.

'Demobilization' forms the second stage of the UN DDR strategy and is defined as "the

formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed

groups."[20] In expected UN operations where a collection of nations apply their collective IOPs

in a conflict region, the demobilization stage is a clear step toward permanent stability and

security in the target population. For military planners, the demobilization stage is less likely to

emerge within an ongoing military conflict due to balance of power and security issues. For

example, Sunni insurgents in OIF defected to the Coalition side yet continued to maintain much

of their pre-defection organization, armament, and mobility for their own protection and the

security of the target population under their protection. Finally, peace accords by definition

address demobilization procedures in detail and the UN forces have the advantage of molding

their plan into the peace accord framework for implementation. Military planners have no such

framework during active conflicts.

'Reinsertion' and 'Reintegration' are the last two stages for the UN DDR construct.

Reinsertion translates roughly to short-term assistance (food, shelter, safety, medical care) for

ex-combatants while reintegration reflects a long-term significant economic, financial, and

sociological assistance package designed to integrate ex-combatants into the post-conflict society

as productive members of the population.   This final phase of DDR supports much of the current

---

[19] IDDRS; The UN Approach to DDR; section 2.10. 1.
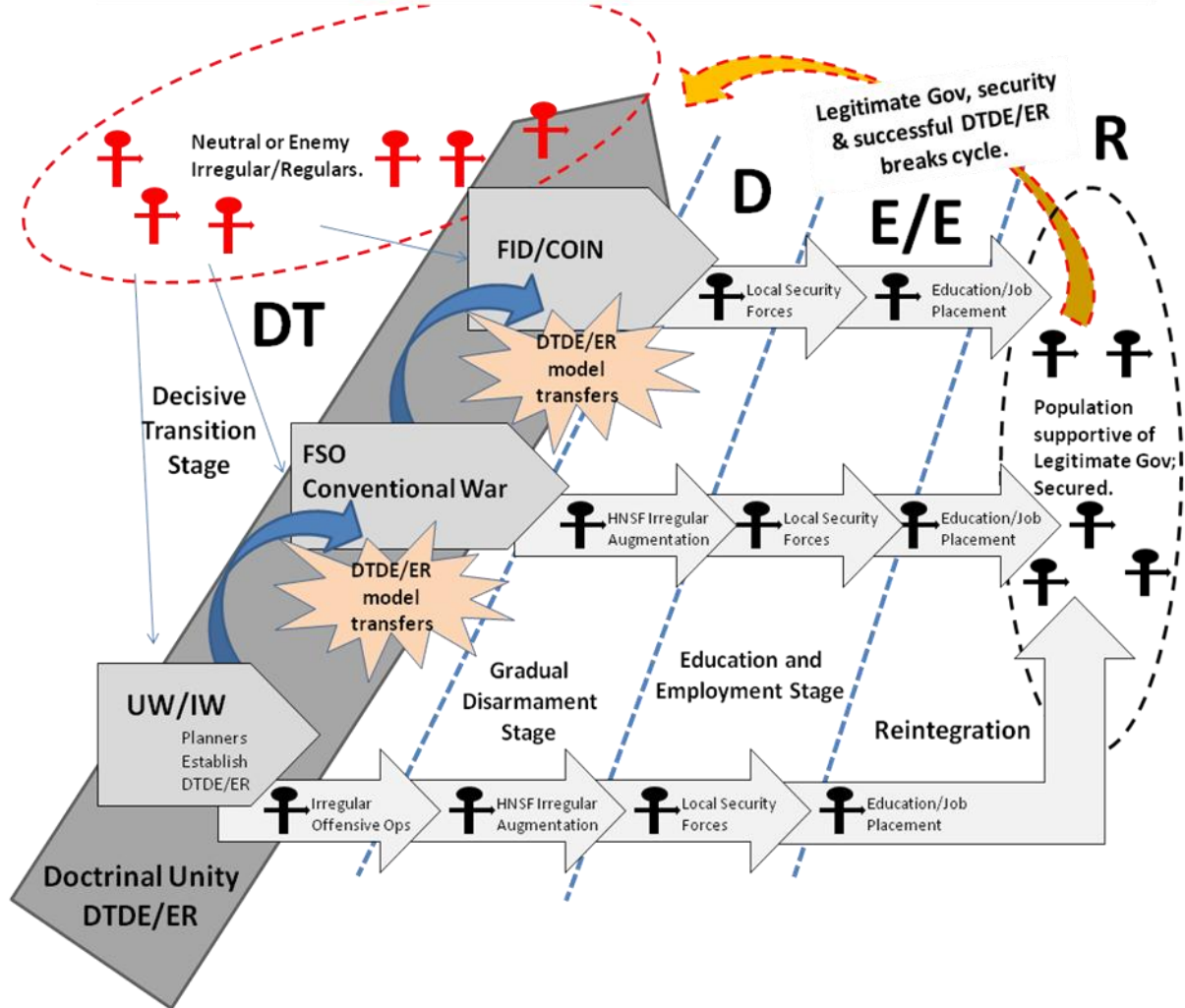[20] IDDRS; Introduction to the IDDRS; section 1.10. 2.

COIN operations already in practice in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Reintegration is perhaps the most difficult stage within DDR because a triangle of responsibility and consent exists between the irregular forces, the target population, and the legitimate government in question. The reintegration will succeed only when all three parties are in agreement. Military planners must develop a long-term and robust reintegration model that effectively addresses all three parties in reintegrating defected enemy and irregular fighters into a post-conflict environment. The concept is easy to understand, yet remarkably complex to execute.

These irregular forces within a target population during any conflict become either an asset or a liability to those parties attempting to control and influence the host population. IDDRS is the lone existing doctrine that roadmaps methods in reintegrating these irregular forces back into the target population in a post-conflict setting. UW doctrine defines their recruitment. FID/COIN attacks the irregular force problem in a variety of conflicting manners. The proposed DTDE/ER model offers a unification of all of these concepts for military applications.

4. DTDE/ER: A Model for Irregular Defection, Utilization, and Reintegration

After diagnosing the problem and highlighting the disjointed nature of available doctrine, the proposed DTDE/ER cognitive model will be explored in detail. Figure 5 below graphically depicts how the DTDE/ER model can span across multiple doctrines during conflict planning. Figure 5 builds upon the disjointed doctrinal gaps between various organizations as they relate to irregular forces within the conflict.

Figure 5: Demonstrating DTDE/ER graphically; Irregular Force Defection and Reintegration

If a UW planner develops within their operational design a DTDE/ER line of operation for dealing with irregular forces, they will have a 'cradle to grave' methodology that carries those irregulars from recruitment through employment and into eventual reintegration. Should that conflict evolve into a conventional fight, such as when OEF transitioned from a SOF UW conflict with the introduction of the 101st Air Assault and other conventional forces in late 2001, the model will quickly adapt into the operational framework of the inheriting conventional planners as they prepare their operation.

The same irregular forces continue their activities while any organizational hand-over does not disrupt the journey of those irregular forces from defection to utilization and through subsequent reintegration. DTDE/ER doctrinal flexibility is tailored to work as a guiding set of principles within each of these separate doctrines concerning various conflict environments, yet it synergizes campaign plans if a conflict changes or evolves, the irregular fighters continue on a well forecasted and progressive plan toward reintegration into the host population. DTDE/ER is further flexible by acknowledging the continuous nature of defection from the irregular pool regardless of the conflict. Irregular defection may occur during UW or during a later COIN phase such as when minority Sunnis broke with Al Qaeda and brokered a defection with Coalition forces in Iraq. The overarching principle of DTDE/ER is to establish a cognitive framework for planners to target and deplete the irregular force pool in a target population in any conflict setting and prevent any reintegration failures.

The first stage in DTDE/ER is called 'Decisive Transition' and reflects the essential ambiguous combination of socio-economic, political, and military factors that motivate insurgent militias to abandon their role as an enemy of the host nation and join the security efforts of the host nation at a local and/or national level. DT is the 'tipping point' where based on a variety of conditions that are often difficult to define, the insurgent militia leadership break with enemy objectives and join the host nation. Figure 5 illustrates DTDE/ER and how it will transition irregular forces from the neutral and enemy pool of a target population through a structured and phased process toward a final reintegration into the host population.

'DT' is the most difficult stage of DTDE/ER because of its complexities. DT is best defined by aspects of SOD that refer to a quantitative exploration of this asymmetrical gain of irregular forces. "Situations are influenced by factors beyond the commander's ability to

control, or even to perceive. The relationships between causes and effects are dynamic and only vaguely discernible at best."[21] Decisive transition brings an irregular neutral or enemy fighter toward defection to the Allied, Coalition, or HNSF side. How a planner accomplishes DT relates back to operational design and art.

> "As early as October 9 [2001], with the help of CIA money, 35 to 40 Taliban commanders and some 1,200 Taliban fighters were persuaded to defect, in the process giving the alliance control of a major Taliban resupply route northwest of Kabul. In a telling testament to the power of money as an effective lubricant in eliciting cooperative Afghan behavior, one Taliban commander later on, as the war progressed, was offered $50,000 to defect. "Let me think about it," the commander replied. A Special Forces A-Team attached to the Northern Alliance unit promptly directed a JDAM attack right outside the commander's headquarters. The next day they called the commander back. "How about $40,000?" The commander accepted." [22]

In the above example, the A-Team created a valid DT stage for that Taliban leader through a combination of military and economic lethal and non-lethal effects. For other insurgent and irregular forces, different factors may work instead. At times, a planner must recognize when only effects that are outside their span of control are the ones most likely to create a valid DT stage for a targeted enemy leader.

> "When Al Qaida terrorists came to town [Ramadi, Iraq], they intimidated, through murder and other acts of violence, the people of Ramadi [were forced] into their homes, away from their places of employment, turning the city into a battleground….[Colonel] MacFarland said his forces have sought to use no more force than is absolutely necessary, preferring instead to forge partnerships with area residents. This strategy, he said, also has given his troops "the opportunity to engage the people of Ramadi…we've established real relationships with the people in parts of the city that we hadn't been able to in the past." [23]

This second example describes one of the early reported accounts of the 'Awakening Movement' in Iraq. It shows how COL MacFarland only achieved a valid DT stage after Al Qaeda terrorists themselves conducted effects that drove a wedge between the Suuni insurgency

---

[21] John F. Schmitt, *A Systemic Concept For Operational Design.* USMC Warfighter Laboratory; http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/mcwl_schmitt_op_design.pdf 2.

[22] David McKeeby, *Iraqis Taking Their City Back from Terrorists, Say U.S. Colonel.* (Washington File, America.gov. 14 July 2006). http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2006/July/20060714173321idybeekcm0.950

[23] Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Air Power Against Terror; America's Conduct of Operation Enduring Freedom.* (RAND National Defense Research Institute, RAND Corporation, 2005). 104

and AQI. Had AQI not conducted forced marriages into these Sunni tribes or began an

assassination campaign to intimidate them; the U.S. forces there in Ramadi may not have had the

opportunity to cause these insurgent groups to defect to the HNSF and Allied side. "When the

hardest part of the problem is figuring out what the problem is- planning alone will be inadequate

and design becomes essential." [24] The DTDE/ER model concurs with SOD principles in that for

such a complex problem such as 'decisive transition' in any given conflict, no doctrinal example

will likely conform to the reality on the ground.

In the UN DDR model, disarmament was the first stage due to aforementioned pre-

conditions that a peacekeeping force would expect on the ground. 'Disarmament' is the valid

first stage in UN DDR models for the precise reasons why it simply cannot be the first stage in a

UW, COIN, or unstable FID environment. The security, peace accords, and other post-conflict

factors are likely non-existent.   A gradual 'disarmament' stage should occur after a militia group

reaches the decisive transition stage. Understandably, no armed group would voluntarily disarm

completely while enemy or rival groups remain armed in the same vicinity. Yet a community

security force should only employ weapons that are appropriate in relation to the new mission of

defensive local security. Otherwise, friction will remain for the population and security forces.

"In Afghanistan, increasing numbers of private security companies (PSCs) have contributed to a

blurring of roles with illegal armed groups. There are concerns that many ex-combatants joined

the private security sector without having to give up their weapons. The heavy weapons carried

by some PSCs in Afghanistan have also contributed to negative perceptions in the eyes of local

populations." [25]

---

[24] John F. Schmitt, *A Systemic Concept For Operational Design.* USMC Warfighter Laboratory;
http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/mcwl_schmitt_op_design.pdf 8.

[25] IDDRS; Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards; section 6.10. 16.

Disarmament requires that leaders and planners adapt their campaign to the changing conditions on the ground and implement careful disarming stages that gradually remove the weapons and offensive capabilities of the repatriated militia force. Security forces do not need heavy weapons or IEDs. Initial disarmament may start with the immediate removal of these offensive weapon capabilities with a complementary contractual 'rules of engagement' (ROE) plan for the community security force. As the threat diminishes in the region and/or local police forces expand to assume the security requirements, further disarmament should accompany the terminal transition of remaining security members into government or HNSF occupations.

The Education/Employment (E/E) and subsequent reintegration stages of DTDE/ER denotes a formal separation of the broader UN DDR 'reinsertion/reintegration' stages. Military planners benefit from addressing the critical E/E stage as early in the plan as possible due to the substantial host nation government and other national level coordination requirements. It is reckless to begin recruiting irregular forces if there is not some collective opinion on where these fighters will end up after the conflict terminates.

The Education/Employment stage also incorporates the UN DDR 'Demobilization' as a subcomponent both of the E/E stage and the disarmament stage in DTDE/ER. Demobilization is a valid phase for strict United Nations operations in largely permissive environments; however for the purposes of military operations in a FID/COIN conflict, demobilization requires a less formal and very gradual process. Depending upon the ideological, political, and tribal factors of a given environment, any rapid demobilization may threaten the interests of the irregular forces, those of the national government, or increase the risk of further targeting by enemy forces.

Demobilization for military IOP use must deviate from UN DDR doctrine and position aspects of demobilization throughout the 'disarmament' and 'education/employment' stages of

DTDE/ER. By gradually reducing the organization, equipment, and offensive capabilities of irregular forces while replacing those capabilities with education opportunities and legitimate employment, the long-term stability and security of the environment is more likely to take hold. Regardless of whether the irregular forces originated from an earlier UW phase or if they resulted from nonlethal effects within a FID/COIN operation, these irregular forces are essentially accepting a *change of mission* (COM) restructuring in order to benefit from joining U.S. and host nation forces. The short term effects of this COM restructuring are couched in the disarmament stage of DTDE/ER where the security forces no longer require weaponry or tactics designed for offensive operations. The long term effects of irregular force reintegration take root in this Education/Employment stage.

Police entrance requirements often require literacy and basic police skills. Literacy programs are extensive and require the logistical, administrative, and financial infrastructure to plan and implement. The education/employment stage highlights to planners that appropriate effects and resources must be applied into the prior education/employment stage for the final 'reintegration' phase to take permanent effect. The UN DDR doctrine states that "successful reintegration fulfills a common DDR goal of ensuring a well-managed transition of former combatants to civilian life while taking into account the needs of receiving communities. By contrast, failed reintegration can undermine [efforts] by placing excessive pressures on police, courts, and prisons while harming the security of the state and its citizens." [26] The legitimate government and national security forces, the host population, and the irregular forces undergoing the reintegration process must all be incorporated into a cohesive plan that mitigates friction points and accomplishes the overall end-state.

---

[26] IDDRS; Level 6 Linkages with other Processes; DDR and Security Sector Reform; section 6.10. 5.

The Education/Employment stage will in most instances become a lengthy phase where political turmoil, instability, and ideological differences play out at national and local levels. This stage requires perhaps the most extensive planning and preparation, yet out of all of the DTDE/ER stages, this one provides the most quantifiable measures of effectiveness. For each former insurgent/irregular educated and employed under the legitimate government, that is one less fighter (and his family, clan, and tribe) available to the enemy. Ideological concerns aside, a member of a population may disagree with politics, but they are less likely to take up arms against it provided they are employed and prospering. DTDE/ER drains the irregular force pool of a target population and permanently reintegrates them into the society in an adjusted and mutually satisfactory condition through a well phased and managed LOO.

In 2008 when the U.S. military handed over the 'Sons of Iraq'(SOI) security program to the Iraqi national government, many were concerned that the Shi'ite heavy government might undermine paying and employing the militia. As of January 2010 over 50,000 Sons of Iraq members out of the estimated 83,000 personnel recorded were integrated into permanent government jobs to include 15,000 incorporated into the Interior Ministry for nation-wide police efforts. [27] Education/Employment methodology is a critical step in irregular force asymmetrical gain, and facilitates a more permanent reintegration upon conflict termination.

5. Conclusions

The successes in Iraq (and potentially in Afghanistan) concerning local militia groups and community security forces are important for two reasons. First, Commanders on the ground in Iraq used creativity and IW methodology to capitalize on a growing divide between Sunni insurgents and foreign Al Qaeda terrorists. In some ways, the U.S. 'got lucky' when Al Qaeda

---

[27] Jim Loney, *Iraqi Insurgents Give Up Rebel Life for Govt Jobs.* (Reuters online; posted to New York Times; January 29, 2010.) http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2010/01/29/world/international-uk-iraq-insurgency.html?_r

terrorists drove the Sunni insurgency towards the Coalition. Al Qaeda likely will attempt to

avoid this error again in future conflicts. Planners employing the DTDE/ER model must adapt

and reassess any asymmetrical gains concerning irregular forces, and refrain from misapplying a

previous conflict's unique successes towards another separate conflict. This specifically pertains

to the current fight in Afghanistan where strategists and policy makers debate the particulars on

courting 'moderate Taliban.' Moderate Taliban deserve consideration for asymmetric gain, but

they cannot be confused with Sunni insurgents from Iraq. Few of the variables and sequences

that defined the Iraqi *Awakening Movement* will ever manifest themselves directly in

Afghanistan, and it is a valid danger for OEF planners to remain cognizant of.

Secondly, the disjointed existing doctrine coupled with the habitually compartmentalized

nature of Joint Operations puts all planners at a significant disadvantage. Unconventional

Warfare planners plan their portion while conventional and COIN/FID planners inherit or create

other components as a conflict evolves. Few planners consider SOD principles due to their

universal omission from current military doctrine, and planners that seek *reintegration* concepts

must migrate out of military doctrine entirely to find relevant publications (IDDRS). The entire

asymmetric gain model is currently disjointed and fragmented throughout military and non-

military IOP doctrine, theory, and literature. Future conflict planning requires updated joint

doctrine that integrates the tactical lessons of the Iraqi Awakening Movement and other irregular

defection methods with current non-military IOP products (UN DDR), academia, and

overlapping existing military doctrine such as IW/UW, FID, and elements of SOD.

This paper offered one solution called DTDE/ER that combined each of the

aforementioned doctrinal sources into one irregular force asymmetrical gain planning concept.

Whether this DTDE/ER model or another approach is adapted, current COIN doctrine needs a

strategy for implementing irregular forces into temporary civilian augmentation to HNSF as the

security and stabilization (FID) phase dictates. Once appropriate, those temporary civilian

augmenters require aspects of DDR to return them to the population. Planners must have

flexible and all-inclusive doctrine available to them in order to develop and implement long-term

and well organized operations in today's complex irregular warfare environment. DTDE/ER is

one such method available.

Bibliography

Bruno, Greg. *Finding a Place for the 'Sons of Iraq'.* (Council on Foreign Relations; January 09, 2009); http://www.cfr.org/publication/16088/.

Carter, Sara and Khan, Raza; *U.S. Tries to Thin Taliban With Offers Of Jobs, Cash*. (Washington Times, December 17, 2009); http://ebird.osd.mil/ebfiles/e20091217723030.html

Fusato, Massimo, *Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants.* (Beyond Interactability.org; University of Colorado; July 2003). http://www.beyondinteractability.org/essay/demobilization/

FM 3-05.130; Army Special Operations Forces Unconventional Warfare (September 2008; Headquarters, Department of the Army).

FM 3-24; Counterinsurgency (June 2006 *Final Draft*; Headquarters, Department of the Army).

Joint Publication 3-07.1, Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense (FID); 30 April 2004.

Lambeth, Benjamin S. *Air Power Against Terror; America's Conduct of Operation Enduring Freedom.* (RAND National Defense Research Institute, RAND Corporation, 2005).

Loney, Jim. *Iraqi Insurgents Give Up Rebel Life for Govt Jobs*. (Reuters online; posted to New York Times; January 29, 2010.) http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2010/01/29/world/international-uk-iraq-insurgency.html?_r

McKeeby, David. *Iraqis Taking Their City Back from Terrorists, Say U.S. Colonel.* (Washington File, America.gov. 14 July 2006). http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2006/July/20060714173321idybeekcm0.950

Michaels, Jim. *Behind Success in Ramadi An Army Colonel's Gamble.* (USA Today, October 30, 2009); http://usatoday.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=USATODAY.com&ex

Parker, Ned and Ahmed, Caesar. *Sons of Iraq Movement Suffers Another Blow.* (Los Angeles Times; March 30, 2009). http://articles.latimes.com/2009/mar/30/world/fg-iraqi-sunnis30?pg=2

Parker, Ned. *Awakening Leader's Tale Illustrates Iraq's Volatility.* (Los Angeles Times; latimes.com; October 18, 2009). http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iraq-awakening18-2009oct18,0,25

Schmitt, John F. *A Systemic Concept For Operational Design.* USMC Warfighter Laboratory; http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/mcwl_schmitt_op_design.pdf

United Nations Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), 01 August 2006.

United Nations Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) DDR and Security Sector Reform Update. 14 December 2009