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Half Pregnant: Canada's Unspoken Strategy in Southern Afghanistan

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ABSTRACT

After nearly five years of fighting a difficult counter insurgency campaign in Afghanistan, the experiences have reshaped how Canadians view the Canadian Forces (CF). More importantly, it has changed the manner in which the Government of Canada employs the military as an instrument of foreign policy within a complicated modern security environment. This paper will argue that CF doctrine for counter insurgency warfare can only be successful at the strategic level if there is unwavering political will to succeed. It will examine Canada's strategic policies regarding support to failed or failing states. From there, the discussion will focus on the factors of CF counter insurgency doctrine, political will and insurgent strategic objectives from August 2005 to present, during which the Canadian centre of gravity was Kandahar Province. This period will be broken into three distinct time frames. The selected periods will effectively illustrate how doctrine and the insurgents' strategic objectives have evolved and more importantly, how political will influences tactical action and ultimately strategic mission success.

The thesis concludes that success in a counter insurgency demands a committed, fully integrated whole of government approach supported by a clearly articulated campaign plan that extended from the strategic to the tactical level. CF doctrine has evolved to meet the demands of counter insurgency warfare, however its implementation is dependent on consistent and unwavering political will. Success demands that both military and civilian agencies work in close cooperation to achieve national objectives. It is only through a willingness to evolve doctrinally and through close cooperation that Canada can ensure war winning effects on the ground.

CHAPTER ONE -INTRODUCTION AND THESIS

For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.¹

Sun Tzu

Canada initially committed ground forces to Afghanistan from February to July 2002 with the deployment of an Infantry Battalion Group in direct support of the United States (US) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Kandahar Province. However, it was not until July 2003 that there was a more concerted and substantial Canadian Forces (CF) deployment to the country, initially focused in the national capital of Kabul.² This first phase, known as Operation ATHENA, was part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). This mission was primarily a military contribution to Kabul until the CF shifted focus to Kandahar Province in August 2005 as part of ISAF Stage III expansion.³ This shift in operations brought about an increase in the number of military personnel and equipment but, more importantly, it marked the addition of personnel from other governmental departments (OGD). These OGDs included the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and Canadian

¹Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1963), 77.

²Canadian Forces Expeditionary Command, "The Canadian Forces' Contribution to the International Campaign Against Terrorism," <http://www.comfec-cefcom.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/nr-sp/doc-eng.asp?id=490>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2010.

³Canadian Forces Expeditionary Command, "International Operations," <http://www.comfec-cefcom.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/ops/index-eng.asp>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2010.

Civilian Police, notably members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).⁴ Despite the fact that there are other named military operations in Afghanistan today, Operation ATHENA remains Canada's primary military and Whole of Government (WoG) commitment to Southern Afghanistan.

Regardless of the reason why Canada initially became engaged in Afghanistan, it is widely accepted that it was based upon the existing national interests of the day.⁵ Political interests, just as the Afghan insurgency itself, have evolved since the onset and have had a direct impact on the Canadian contribution on the ground. The mission has always been, and will continue to be, marked by political influence. As a tool of the government, the CF must continue to operate within the prevailing political environment. Once Canada, particularly the CF, recognized that they were becoming decisively engaged in a complex counter insurgency (CI) operation in Southern Afghanistan, measures were taken to drastically alter strategy, doctrine and training in order to deal with the growing insurgency.⁶ Although actions were taken by the government, OGD and the military it was highlighted by the Manley Report that efforts were not all in unison, consistently supported or with a common strategic goal of succeeding in Afghanistan.⁷ Why does Canada, as a key contributing nation in Southern Afghanistan, remain unsuccessful in managing their CI efforts despite adapting their approach numerous times since first committing to the region in 2002? Without unity of effort or

⁴The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "Canadian Civilian Policing in Afghanistan," <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/po-mp/afghanistan-eng.htm>; Internet; accessed 31 January 2010.

⁵John Kirton, "Canadian Foreign Policy in a Changing World," (Toronto: Nelson, 2007), 170.

⁶Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar* (Toronto: Penguin Group Canada, 2007), 264.

the desire to “know the war [you are] in” at the strategic level it has proven extremely challenging to turn tactical victories into strategic successes.⁸

THESIS

This paper will argue that Canadian Forces doctrine for CI warfare can only be successful at the strategic level if there is unwavering political will to succeed. This paper will focus solely on the mission in Southern Afghanistan as it provides a current, comprehensive counter insurgency theater of operations that integrates WoG participation. The execution of relevant CF CI doctrine in conjunction with a clearly articulated strategic campaign plan that reinforces the principles of a WoG approach is the catalyst for success in Southern Afghanistan. Without the synergistic effects of all WoG players at work, it will be extremely challenging to combat the dynamic and novel nature of insurgency warfare. Doctrine will only be successful if it exists within an environment that has consistent and focussed political will that spans from the strategic to the tactical level. A solely military solution founded on the sound execution of CI doctrine is not sufficient to achieve strategic success in Southern Afghanistan.

In order to narrow the scope of this paper, the discussion will focus on the factors of CF CI doctrine, Canadian political will and insurgent strategic objectives within three distinct time frames. It is during this period, commencing in August 2005, in which the

⁷John Manley and others, *The Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan* (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services, 2008), 39.

⁸Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, eds. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press, 1976), 732.

Canadian centre of gravity was Kandahar Province, Southern Afghanistan. The periods of analysis will comprise: August 2005 to August 2006 when the CF shifted attention from Kabul to Kandahar, August 2006 to February 2007 which was marked by conventional military action against a determined enemy, and lastly, the current day theatre of operations. This third period is discernible from the others through effective tactical operations supported by sound CI doctrine and WoG participation within an atmosphere of wavering domestic and political support for the mission.⁹ In addition to the strategic value of international intervention in Kandahar Province, the time frames selected for analysis will effectively illustrate how CF CI doctrine and the insurgents' strategic objectives have evolved. More importantly, it will demonstrate how Canada's political will influences tactical action and ultimately strategic mission success.

⁹Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar . . .*, 196.

CHAPTER TWO - BACKGROUND

*War is merely the continuation of policy by other means*¹⁰

Carl von Clausewitz

The analytical framework of this paper will encompass the successful evolution of CF CI doctrine in response to WoG operations in Southern Afghanistan since August 2005. Although the CF has recently published their first CI Doctrine, it is only reflective of how the CF will conduct operations in a given environment. While it does consider other players and promotes their indispensable participation, it certainly does not bind those players to act or plan accordingly.¹¹ Despite the best intentions or modus operandi of any one agency, it is necessary to have a unifying purpose or a unity of effort among them if Canada is to succeed in complex multi-dimensional and multi-agency operation such as the insurgency we are facing in Southern Afghanistan. In order to maintain political will and prevent the insurgents from achieving their strategic objectives, it is critical to have a comprehensive campaign plan. A successful strategic campaign plan must provide the direction and common ground from which independent agencies can operate in a unified manner within a context that meets the needs of their respective agencies, be it written or institutionally accepted.

As Clausewitz notes, “war is only a branch of political activity; that it is in no sense autonomous”.¹² Each agency must therefore have the inherent flexibility and

¹⁰Clausewitz, *On War* . . . 87.

¹¹Director of Army Doctrine, *B-GL-323-004/FP-003, Counter-Insurgency Operations* (Kingston: Army Publishing Office, 2008), 4-1.

¹²Clausewitz, *On War* . . . , 605.

motivation to evolve doctrinally in response to existing challenges, but more importantly, in preparation for the demands of the future. Focused political will is the foundation on which consistent WoG contribution can be built and it will ensure that sound CF CI doctrine is integrated and complementary to that of other government agencies.

Although the scope of this paper does not discuss OGD doctrine or policy with respect to CI operations in great depth, it is essential to highlight the fact that they too support the Government of Canada's policy of a WoG approach in Afghanistan. The coordination of Canada's WoG engagement in Afghanistan is being executed by the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan. It has the mandate of considering security, governance and development in the country.¹³ DFAIT clearly states that with respect to Afghanistan, the department implements a WoG approach through the execution of their six targeted priorities and three signature projects while cooperating with the Government of Afghanistan and other Government of Canada partners.¹⁴ CIDA also communicates that their involvement is part of Canada's WoG engagement in Afghanistan.¹⁵

What is uniquely absent from the guiding policies of the Government, DFAIT and CIDA is any reference to war or CI operations in Afghanistan. Aside from a few token references to the term insurgency, the theme of the Government and its' civilian departments is that Canada is committed to an 'engagement' in Afghanistan and at best, their efforts are to weaken the insurgency. In 2006, there was nothing overtly stated by

¹³Government of Canada, "Canada's Approach in Afghanistan," http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/approach-approche/index.aspx?menu_id=1&menu=L; Internet; accessed 31 January 2010.

¹⁴Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, "The Priorities of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada 2009-2010," http://www.international.gc.ca/about-a_propos/priorities-priorites.aspx#a; Internet; accessed 31 January 2010.

¹⁵Canadian International Development Agency, "Afghanistan," <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/Eng/JUD-129153625-S6T>; Internet; accessed 31 January 2010.

the Government of Canada (GoC) that even suggested that the country was committed to defeating an insurgency in Afghanistan. Meanwhile the CF was sustaining more casualties since Korea and was recognized by General Rick Hillier, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) as a CI campaign.¹⁶

The government's position, according to Gordon O'Connor the Minister of National Defence (MND) in 2006, was quite clear when he stated to a Commons Committee that "Canada is not at war in Afghanistan."¹⁷ Even the Prime Minister (PM) Paul Martin went as far to state that Afghanistan was not even a priority to him despite the fact that it had become Canada's largest aid commitment.¹⁸ Clausewitz stated "[i]t is only when we have reached agreement on names and concepts that we can hope to progress with clearness and ease and be assured of finding ourselves on the same platform with our readers."¹⁹ The simple fact that the GoC, DFAIT, CIDA and the CF did not agree on how to label the ongoing commitment in Afghanistan - be it war, robust peace support, or CI - it should not be hard to accept that there was not a unified approach during the early stages of Canadian efforts in Southern Afghanistan.

In order to examine how CF CI doctrine has evolved in unison or in isolation of other Canadian OGDs since 2005, it is essential to understand the historical context of the three time frames. Having a basic historical and factual understanding of Canada's mission in Kandahar Province will facilitate an improved comprehension of why political

¹⁶Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar* . . . , 210-211.

¹⁷Canadian Press, "Canada Not at War in Afghanistan: O'Connor," http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20060503/afghanistan_oconnor_060530/20060531?hub=Canada; Internet; accessed 2 March 2010.

¹⁸Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar* . . . , 191.

¹⁹Dr Milan N. Vego, Operational Functions, Lecture Canadian Forces College, 18 January 2010.

will and CF CI doctrine has evolved as a result of, or in isolation of, insurgent strategic objectives since 2005.

KANDAHAR BOUND: THE MOVE FROM KABUL (8/05-8/06)

The first time frame, August 2005 to August 2006, is characterized by the CF move from Kabul to Kandahar in July 2005. This period is also marked by the establishment of the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team (KPRT) in Kandahar City. As part of Operation ATHENA, the CF had committed a Battle Group (BG) to Kabul from July 2003 and would continue to do so until July 2005. At that time, ISAF began to extend its operations beyond Kabul to other parts of the country in an effort to promote the development of governmental institutions to include the security forces. Eventually, after a series of political negotiations, Canada committed to expanding ISAF's span of influence to Kandahar province with the first KPRT as well as the move of the Infantry BG from Kabul to Kandahar Province. Although not yet deployed, the GoC also authorized the commitment of the first Canadian Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLT) to focus on training the Afghan National Army (ANA).²⁰

Despite a temporary name change to Operation ARCHER, Canada's primary commitment to Afghanistan would revert to Operation ATHENA and continues to exist today. The establishment of the KPRT was of the utmost importance in underlying the Canadian move to establish and instill the tenants of a WoG approach. The first PRT brought with it players from OGDs and was a crucial component of Canada's

development work in the region. As such, it was employed immediately upon arrival, even before the full establishment of the BG. The PRT also, due to the lack of police mentors in the OMLT, assumed the responsibility for mentoring the Afghan National Police (ANP).

THE LEARNING GAME: THE EVOLVING INSURGENCY (8/06-2/07)

Although the second time frame is shorter in duration - August 2006 to February 2007 - it marked a profound period of learning within the CF as well as an awakening for the GoC and the people of Canada. The CF and the GoC recognized that a move to Kandahar Province, the traditional homeland of the Taliban (TB), would be challenging and perhaps marked by an increase in military operations to include kinetic operations. In the early fall of 2006, the TB attempts to rout CF forces in Kandahar Province brought about a level of conventional fighting well beyond the expectations or initial analysis of military planners.

The Taliban's sudden move to conventional warfare resulted in increased casualties, increased demand for wartime funding necessary to acquire much needed equipment, and more importantly, the acceptance by the CF that they were at war. The GoC would begin to deal with the public demands for a cessation of combat operations. They would also have to balance the CF's ever increasing appetite for funds to support operations and the political hot potato of supporting such national interests as US

²⁰Canadian Forces Expeditionary Command, "International Operations," <http://www.comfec-cefcom.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/ops/index-eng.asp>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2010.

relations and NATO.²¹ Once the TB were decisively defeated in conventional battle, they again switched back to CI operations.

In an effort to further enable both the PRT and national operational command in the theatre of operations, several critical enablers, to include equipment and weapons systems, were added to the force package. The PRT, due to their inability to independently force project because of a reliance on the BG for Force Protection (FP), were reinforced with an integral security element. Additional Task Force troops were also committed in the form of Police Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (POMLT), Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) and Information Operations (IO) personnel to combat the powerful TB IO campaign. The deployment of the POMLT freed the PRT from the task, enabling them to focus on development tasks. The most important addition to the Canadian commitment, from an operational military perspective, was the addition of an enlarged National Command Element (NCE) to address operational campaign planning from a Canadian perspective. The Canadian Task Force Commander was double hatted as the Regional Command South (RC (S)) Commander. This made it difficult, if not impossible, to properly execute his duties as a higher level NATO commander as well as that of a Canadian commander more regionally focused on Canadian interests.

²¹Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar . . .*, 196.

STALEMATE: MILITARY SUCCESS AND POLITICAL FAILURE (2/07-PRESENT)

The period from February 2007 to the present day defines the last time frame that will be analyzed in this paper. The CF, now fully committed to CI operations after defeating any TB hope of achieving victory via conventional means, have updated their doctrine and continue to yield numerous tactical and operational successes. The Canadian WoG approach was further refined and saw an augmentation in civilian deployments as part of OGD contributions to the mission to include Corrections Canada, the RCMP, DFAIT and CIDA. The PRT remained the foundation from which Canada was able to manage its three signature projects to include: the Dahla Dam irrigation project, education and the eradication of polio in Kandahar Province.²² Military numbers also increased in an effort to either reinforce combat operations, mentoring tasks for the Afghan National Army and Police, or to back-fill the manning voids in the areas of reconstruction and development resulting from a WoG inability to staff civilian positions. Personnel and equipment were committed to enable those on the ground to achieve their tactical and operational missions. This period also marked a profound increase in domestic support for the members of the CF despite their waning support for the mission itself.

²²Canadian Forces Expeditionary Command, "International Operations," <http://www.comfec-cefcom.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/ops/index-eng.asp>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2010.

CHAPTER THREE - CANADIAN FORCES COUNTER INSURGENCY DOCTRINE

*Operational victories are useless unless converted into strategic successes*²³

Dr. Milan N. Vego

To prevent confusion over terminology, the CF Land Operations publication defines CI as “those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken to defeat and insurgency”.²⁴ An insurgency can be characterized by “. . . attempts to effect or prevent change through the illegal use, or threat, of violence, conducted by ideologically or criminally motivated non-regular forces, groups or individuals, as a challenge to authority.”²⁵ Applications of warfare that are deemed to reside outside the umbrella of conventional operations are referred to by a myriad of ambiguous terms such as, but not exclusively: unconventional, irregular, asymmetric, indirect, operations other than war (OOTW) and CI.

Dr. Eric Ouellet of the Canadian Forces College states that some of these terms are often used to define tactical rather than strategic forms of warfare.²⁶ Colin Gray even suggests that the terms are inherently empty concepts, definable only with the reference to their opposites.²⁷ Ouellet argues that irregular warfare is not new and it represents the

²³Dr Milan N. Vego, Operational Command, Lecture Canadian Forces College, 3 February 2010.

²⁴Director of Army Doctrine, *B-GL-300-001/FP-001, Land Operations* (Kingston: Army Publishing Office, 2008), 3-15.

²⁵Director of Army Doctrine, *B-GL-323-004/FP-003, Counter-Insurgency Operations . . .*, 1-1.

²⁶Dr Eric Ouellet, Irregular Warfare: Deja Vu All Over Again, Lecture Canadian Forces College, 8 January 2010.

²⁷Colin S. Gray, "Irregular Warfare: One Nature, Many Characters," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* Vol 1, No 2 (Winter 2007), 43.

most ancient and common form of warfare since World War II, resulting in the deaths of as many people in the twentieth century as during both World Wars combined.²⁸ The novelty and complexity of all forms of war have evolved over time, as have the capabilities of our adversaries.

One can not prepare to fight tomorrow's battles without learning from historic successes and failures. In order to do this effectively, it is vital that the analysis be conducted at the appropriate level. Applying a term or template that represents a tactical method or form of warfare can not simply be applied against strategic socio-political goals and operational military objectives. A strategic holistic approach must be taken in order to tackle the challenges of war vice shaping our structure and campaign plans to win at the tactical level. Confusion over terminology, tactics, and levels of operation can blur the ability to succeed.

Factors that influence the decision by militaries, or the society they represent, to use irregular warfare can be linked to cultural or societal preferences. However, the primary factor remains a matter of realistic evaluation of resources, both physical and political.²⁹ It is important to note that conventional and irregular forces can utilize tactics not normally representative of their particular classification. The boundaries between 'regular' and 'irregular' warfare have become blurred and combatants will always employ tactics that will help them achieve victory. The blend of conventional and CI operations is described by Frank Hoffman as hybrid warfare.³⁰ This form of war is

²⁸Ouellet, *Irregular Warfare: Deja Vu all Over again*. . . , 8 January 2010.

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰Frank Hoffman, "Hybrid Warfare and Challenges," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 52, 1st Quarter (2009),35.

typical of most modern conflicts where there is an insurgency, but he stresses that it does not signify the end of conventional warfare. Alternatively, it reinforces the challenges that this type of warfare poses to the modern military, most notably the requirement to consider the social and political factors at play. Gray concurs by stating “[i]rregular warfare does not have a distinctive nature. Warfare is warfare, and war is war, period.”³¹ The conduct of war is not in question, but rather the integration of the political and military spheres.

The Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS) states that the military must be modern, well-trained and equipped with the core capabilities and flexibility necessary to address both conventional and asymmetric threats while supporting foreign policy and national security objectives.³² The CFDS implies that the military is not to focus solely on one threat or type of operation, but maintain a balanced, flexible approach that is afforded by conventional military forces. The CFDS, through its articulation of six core missions, indicates that the primary focus must be on conventional operations while being able to meet the asymmetric threat.³³ The CF must therefore take a balanced approach to operations and maintain a capability to operate within the asymmetric realm with armed troops, be they with conventional, Special Forces (SOF) or both.

Driven by the necessity to shed light on doctrine as a result of our ongoing commitment in what was become widely accepted as a CI campaign in Afghanistan, the CF published the CF CI Operations manual in 2008. After essentially borrowing the US

³¹Gray, *Irregular Warfare: One Nature, Many Characters* . . . , 39.

³²Department of National Defence, *Canada First Defence Strategy* (Ottawa:DND Canada, 2008), 7.

³³*Ibid.*, 10.

CI doctrine in 2007, this was Canada's first publication of its kind and it was a product of our experiences as well as those of our US allies.³⁴ The publication reinforces the necessity of a multi-agency, or a comprehensive, approach to CI operations in order to achieve unity of purpose and effort and ultimately achieve the desired end state.³⁵ Just as with the term CI, there are many descriptors that are synonymous to WoG and often used interchangeably to include Diplomatic, Information, Military and Economic (DIME) as well as the more recent Joint, Interagency, Multinational and Public (JIMP). For the purposes of this paper however, the term WoG will be used to describe the multi-departmental approach that is necessary to achieve success during CI operations. The progressive evolution of Canada's CI Doctrine to include the WoG component in Afghanistan since 2005 will be now illustrated by critical time frame.

KANDAHAR BOUND: THE MOVE FROM KABUL (8/05-8/06)

Although there was no formalized CF CI doctrine in 2005, the GoC and the CF realized quite early on that it was necessary to approach the challenges of Afghanistan from a WoG vice a military centric point of view. In 2005, the GoC published the International Policy Statement (IPS) and was essentially a precursor to the CFDS published in 2008. The IPS was driven by PM Paul Martin in an effort to, despite internal GoC challenges, evolve Canadian Foreign Policy to become more responsive and

³⁴Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar* . . . , 264.

³⁵Director of Army Doctrine, *B-GL-323-004/FP-003, Counter-Insurgency Operations* . . . 1-15.

capable of operating effectively in the twenty-first century.³⁶ PM Martin further articulated that new threats in the world must be met with a forward looking and integrated approach across departments and levels of government.³⁷ From a CF perspective, this meant that the military would need to remain versatile and capable of operating in complex environments to include counter terror operations in support of Canada's integrated approach to resolve future conflict. It is therefore fair to suggest that the CF began accepting in 2005, from a GoC policy standpoint, that their ability to conduct CI operations must be a component of CF doctrine and that military action was but one cog in the wheel of a WoG campaign in Afghanistan. The reality on the ground in Afghanistan would quickly reinforce this requirement.

The creation of the first Strategic Advisory Team Afghanistan (SAT-A) to Kabul in 2004 was a concept of General Rick Hillier, the then ISAF Commander. From his experiences in Bosnia, he learned that there was a need to build the Afghan government from scratch.³⁸ After explaining the concept and obtaining the support of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA), the SAT would become instrumental in the development of key national strategies and mechanisms for implementation by the new Afghan government. It is widely accepted that the effort to increase the Afghan capacity of governance was not a military function. Regardless of

³⁶Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World Overview* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2005), 1.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 12.

³⁸General Rick Hillier, *A Soldier First: Bullets, Bureaucrats and the Politics of War* (Toronto: Harper Collins Publishers Ltd, 2009), 423.

the fact that it was not effectively addressed by civilian or GoC agencies, it still demanded attention none the less.

The CF leadership recognized the importance of such a capability and believed that the GoIRA would receive great benefit from such a commitment. Unfortunately, due to a lack of capacity or desire by Canadian OGDs to support its creation, General Hillier was forced to commit CF officers to fill the void in what was to soon become one of the most useful 'civilian' contributions to building capacity within the GoIRA and was highly regarded by their ministers.³⁹ The SAT underlined the fact that the CF believed in the WoG approach and that there was a critical necessity to perform non-military lines of operation in addition to security.⁴⁰ From a CF CI doctrinal point of view, albeit developmental at the time, taking a military centric approach to CI operations was not sufficient. Despite the fact that CF personnel were employed in civilian domains, the CF could not have afforded to ignore a vital line of operation that appeared neglected by a lack of OGD capacity or desire. Failure to do so would have resulted in irreparable set backs in the other lines of operation to include security in Kandahar Province.

A logical and important evolution of Canada's commitment to Afghanistan was the creation of the first KPRT in Kandahar City during the summer of 2005. The PRT was a US concept essentially adopted by NATO after it had proven successful in many areas of Afghanistan since its inception in 2003. The inclusion of non-military players in the KPRT marked the first true, although somewhat limited, physical WoG commitment on the ground in Southern Afghanistan. The KPRT and its first commander, Colonel

³⁹*Ibid.*, 425.

⁴⁰Canadian Forces Expeditionary Command, "International Operations," <http://www.comfec-cefcom.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/ops/index-eng.asp>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2010.

Steve Bowes, were to initially focus on stability and reconstruction tasks throughout the Province of Kandahar. However due to a limited capacity with respect to force projection and protection, they would focus primarily on Kandahar City. The grouping of different players, representing the various agencies, would therefore allow for an improved understanding of capabilities, deficiencies and interdepartmental objectives. In theory, this would then result in increased cooperation and a holistic view or understanding of the situation on the ground. From a tactical point of view, cooperation and synergy between the players was evident from the beginning, but the capacity of each OGD varied due to numbers and mandate and that was often the point of contention within the unit.⁴¹ Despite the will and best intentions of the small number of OGDs on the ground the apparent disconnect with their strategic headquarters limited their ability to do what was needed. The PRT concept, with its growing pains, did eventually form the foundation for stability and reconstruction efforts throughout Afghanistan and the concept, when supported in its entirety by the GoC, illustrated the essence of WoG at work.⁴²

One could argue that CF doctrine has always embraced the concepts and principles that define the role of the PRT. Long before the introduction of the plethora of terms that simply define the cooperation between agencies, the CF has always considered this interaction as part of the factors analysis during operational planning. The equal recognition of the necessity for interagency cooperation has evolved over time such that both military and civilian players engaged in CI operations accept the value of doing so.

⁴¹Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar . . .*, 277-278.

⁴²Peter Gizewski and LCol Michael Rostek, "Toward a JIMP-Capable Land Force," *Canadian Army Journal* 10.1 (Spring 2007), 61.

From a US perspective, their Army has had a Civil Affairs capability that underscored the importance of civil military cooperation (CIMIC) since WWII. The CF began incorporating CIMIC as a specific enabler to Battle Groups in Bosnia as part of NATO in the late 1990's and 2000's. The foundation components of CIMIC doctrine could therefore be linked as a precursor to the current day PRT.⁴³ Just as strategic will and leadership are vital to success in CI operations, doctrinal enablers such as CIMIC that are command driven must also rely on leadership at the highest levels of the military and civilian chains of command.⁴⁴

Although the concepts of WoG operations were evolving theoretically and to a degree practically within the KPRT, the tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) of the Battle Group (BG) did not differ drastically from those executed in Kabul or even during other peace enforcement operations such as in Bosnia or Kosovo. The transition from Kabul to Kandahar did not initially, due to a relative degree of stability, demand highly kinetic military operations. As such, our posture did not evolve beyond that of conventional peace enforcement or a deterrence presence. This then translated to the fact that initially there was no catalyst to promote a change in pre-deployment training or CF doctrine. It was not long after the BG was full entrenched in their new area of operations (AO) that the CF would find that the CI in Kandahar would fundamentally change the way the CF would operate for years to come. NATO and the CF would move to quickly respond to emerging insurgent tactics and ignited what would become, essentially, a revolution in CF doctrine as well as the GoC's approach to Afghanistan.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 62.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 65.

THE LEARNING GAME: THE EVOLVING INSURGENCY (8/06-2/07)

The deployment of the Canadian BG to Kandahar Province occurred almost simultaneously to an Afghan attempt to clear TB from the districts of Zhari and Panjwai. This was initiated by the Kandahar Province Governor, Asadullah Khalid, and led by Abdul Razik, Commander of the Afghan National Border Police (ANBP). The move of an Achakzai tribal based Police Force into a Noorzai tribal area prompted a sudden flow of TB into the area and ultimately resulted in the defeat of the ANBP.⁴⁵ The TB had not only gained the support of the local population but had also reinforced what was previously considered a limited TB presence in the area.

The Canadian disposition on the ground, however, was not in a manner that ensured adequate troop density in any one area of the province, but was instead dispersed to have a limited presence throughout. In response to the build-up, the BG moved to clear the enemy from Zhari and Panjwai in the fall of 2006. They would soon witness a determined TB who felt that they had the capabilities and capacity to fight toe to toe, conventionally, and defeat the Canadian military presence. While not discounting the reasons behind the insurgent strategy of the time, TB actions and posturing ultimately sparked a change in how the GoC and the CF looked at the Afghan commitment. In fact, it was more of an awakening. The ensuing Operation MEDUSA would become the largest conventional NATO battle of the Alliance's existence and Canada's largest since

⁴⁵Carl Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar* (Washington: Institute for the Study of War, 2009), 26.

the Korean Conflict of the 1950s.⁴⁶ NATO, led by the CF in Kandahar Province, would fight the TB throughout the fall of 2006 in Panjwai District.⁴⁷ The sole fact that the TB attempted to fight the CF on an equal footing clearly highlighted that the Canadian role was not, at this particular time, limited only to a robust peace support presence. The CF had to fight and aggressively project combat power into Panjwai in order to destroy the TB.

Although the CF and its allies did decisively defeat the TB from a conventional military standpoint, it does not indicate that the mindset of ISAF, and in particular the CF, at the onset of MEDUSA was ideal. From a conventional warfare point of view and despite the fact that the CF have not fought on this scale since Korea, the CF was generally equipped and professionally prepared to fight a force on force battle. At this time, pre-deployment training was primarily focused on the conventional battle with distinct phases of war. There was very little in terms of CI operations and it did not include the participation of the OGD players necessary to make WoG doctrine work. The mindset of the CF was that if they prepared for all out conflict they could adjust to other forms or lesser degrees of conflict and OOTW.

Immediately after, and in some case during MEDUSA, efforts were made to deploy additional capabilities, new or existing, into theatre in order to be better equipped for high intensity combat. The MND, Gordon O'Connor, stated in a news release

⁴⁶Adam Day, "Operation Medusa: The Battle for Panjwai, Part II," *Legion Magazine* (2007), <http://www.legionmagazine.com/en/index.php/2007/11/operation-medusa-the-battle-for-panjwai-2>; Internet; accessed 11 March 2010.

⁴⁷Adam Day, "Operation Medusa: The Battle for Panjwai," *Legion Magazine* (26 January 2008), <http://www.legionmagazine.com/en/index.php/2008/01/operation-medus-part-3-the-fall-of-objective-rugby/>; Internet; accessed 12 January 2010.

announcing the Tank Replacement project that “[t]he government was committed to providing the CF with the equipment they need to do the very demanding jobs we have asked of them.”⁴⁸ The project would witness the loan and acquisition of newer Leopard 2 tanks that would begin deployment to Afghanistan in the summer of 2007 and replace the aging Leopard 1 C2 fleet that were pushed into theatre November 2006. Although new capabilities with lethal capabilities were introduced, many projects that were initiated following this time frame had the goal of improving CF Force Protection. A good example of this was the Expedient Route Opening Capability (EROC) which eventually came into service in the summer of 2007. A May 2007 announcement by Gordon O’Connor reinforced that “[p]roviding Canadian soldiers with the protection they need is of the utmost importance. That is why this government is making sure that they have a capability to detect, investigate and dispose of IEDs. . .”⁴⁹

The rapid deployment of equipment into theatre reflected a CF realization, or perhaps an understanding, that the complexities of CI operations demanded an evolution in doctrine. From a political perspective, though, the will to provide the funding and approval for the procurement of operational equipment consistently revolved around protecting CF personnel as the met the demands of the public to do something to protect the troops. The number one priority of the government was therefore to provide tactical equipment to allow for increased survival in a tactical environment. They failed to recognize that this was a Band-Aid solution and that the real fix was that they needed to

⁴⁸Department of National Defence, "Protection the Top Priority with Tank Acquisition," <http://www.admpa.forces.gc.ca/site/news-nouvelles/news-nouvelles-eng.asp?cat=00&id=2251>; Internet; accessed 12 March 2010.

⁴⁹Canadian American Strategic Review, "New Vehicles to Enhance Protection Against Improvised Explosive Devices," <http://www.casr.ca/doc-dnd-route-opening.htm>; Internet; accessed 3 March 2010.

dedicate the time and resources to address the strategic issues that plagued the mission. It appeared that the GoC was open to giving money to the CF to allow them to deal with the issues but were not overly keen on making the WoG approach work leading and enabling OGDs to do their part in the mission. Regardless of the military might of the CF, technology alone is not sufficient to win in CI operations. The full commitment of the WoG is necessary.

Pre-deployment training was almost immediately altered such that more emphasis was placed on fast paced combined arms operations with a very kinetic focus at day and night. In the immediate aftermath of Op MEDUSA, the prevailing CF mindset appeared fixed on fighting a full out conventional combined arms battle. It was not until after defeat that the TB shifted to irregular and perhaps more traditional insurgent methods that the true learning game began for the CF. It was soon recognized that conventional combat alone, especially in response to the evolving irregular nature of the TB, was not sufficient and that a much more focused effort on learning how to fight an insurgency would be necessary. Although Canada and its' allies defeated a determined TB during OP MEDUSA, it was quickly seen that it was only achievable due to conventional posture of the TB at the time. With the shift of the TB back to insurgency tactics, it was quickly evident that troop density was not sufficient to clear the enemy from the areas surrounding Kandahar City. The necessity to balance dispersed deployment with the requirement to consolidate assets to not only clear a determined enemy but protect the people would quickly become a challenge. This resulted in a demand for additional CF and coalition assistance in Kandahar Province.

Recognizing the necessity to amend CF doctrine to reflect what was now publically recognized as a counter insurgency, the CF with borrowed US CI doctrine.

Staffs in Ottawa and Kingston made a deliberate effort to consolidate and apply lessons learned from experience on the ground or from our allies in Iraq in order to rapidly modify TTPs while creating draft Canadian CI doctrine.⁵⁰ Those troops preparing to deploy in early 2007 were already applying lessons learned and draft doctrine during their training. The result was such that they were not only prepared for another Op MEDUSA but also for the CI challenges that were rapidly becoming an equally challenging trend. Training now included, in addition to conventional war fighting, the inclusion of the OMLT as a stand alone capability. Some of these personnel were re-rolled in September 2007 to provide the manpower necessary for the newly formed Police Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (POMLT) that would assume the task of training, advising and mentoring the Afghan National Police (ANP).⁵¹ The OMLT and POMLT training would also incorporate WoG considerations however there remained no involvement of the OGDs, and therefore no integration, during pre-deployment training.

After only one year, Canadian CI doctrine was published in 2008 and it reflected the value of Canada's WoG approach. Moreover it promoted the necessity to deploy multi-purpose combat capable troops and equipment who are prepared to fight and operated in a CI environment in concert with a balanced SOF component. In particular, Canada's WoG approach was proving itself as a viable and sound complement to the security line of operations. The CF moved to give the KPRT more autonomy because of

⁵⁰Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar* . . . , 196.

⁵¹Canadian Forces Expeditionary Command, "Change of Command - Operational Mentor and Liaison Team," <http://comfec-cefcom.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/fs-ev/2008/02/22-2-eng.asp>; Internet; accessed 3 March 2010.

its necessity to operated independently and force project outside Kandahar City. This would facilitate the KPRT's ability to implement reconstruction and development projects where and when necessary in support of the CF campaign in the area. During a January 2007 interview with *McLean's Magazine*, the Commander of the KPRT, LCol Simon Hetherington, confirmed that his unit finally received a much needed Force Protection Company (FPC) as well as integral engineering support in the form of the Strategic Engineering Team (SET) in December 2006. With these assets, he was better prepared to fulfill the mandate given to him.

In its original form, the KPRT, due to a lack of dedicated fighting units, was incapable of projecting beyond Kandahar City and into the outlying areas due to increased TB threat against local civilian contractors. The addition of the SET facilitated construction planning while the FPC allowed the PRT to reach out to the province's impoverished and strife torn villages to provide much needed reconstruction assistance.⁵² The addition of military forces to the PRT gave them independence from the BG. This assisted in enabling the security line of operation and underscored the CF's doctrinal and practical willingness to support governance, reconstruction and development. Additional military capacity gave the PRT and its limited number of civilian personnel the capability to perform what functions they could with the capacity they had throughout the province.

This period of time illustrated the dynamic and evolutionary nature of the insurgent and the requirement for the CI to be even more flexible. From a CF perspective, it emphasized the fact that there was an overarching necessity to maintain a

⁵²John Geddes, "The Canadian Forces in Afghanistan Focus on Reconstruction," *McLean's Magazine*, 1 January 2007; <http://www.canadianencyclopedia.ca/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=M1ARTM0013061>.; Internet; accessed 12 March 2010.

‘war fighting’ mentality, to develop or modernize CF doctrine to better reflect the reality on the ground along with the novel nature of the conflict. Lastly, it highlighted the necessity to properly equip, train and man our forces to ensure both capability and capacity to be successful in a CI.

STALEMATE: MILITARY SUCCESS AND POLITICAL FAILURE (2/07-PRESENT)

Just as the CF must consider and support governance, reconstruction and development, the leadership of the OGD must too consider security in the conduct of their operations.⁵³ Our OGD and military personnel must be prepared to cooperate and, at times when resources are thin, take on non-traditional tasks in support of the greater mission or national objectives. From a CF perspective, it has been articulated that military personnel have assumed other roles. These have ranged from supporting governance in the form of the SAT-A, reconstruction and development through CIMIC operators, and the broader application of security through the mentoring and training of civilian Afghan police. The CF recognized early on that in order to execute sound CI doctrine all lines of operation must operate in unison. When there is a void in one of these areas, CF personnel will do what is necessary to address this void to ensure collective progress. CI doctrine has evolved since Canada’s first deployment into Southern Afghanistan because of sound lessons identified and learned combined with the CF’s willingness to grow as a professional force regardless of the tactical, operational or strategic challenges.

⁵³Gizewski and Rostek, *Toward a JIMP-Capable Land Force . . .*, 69.

Despite having produced and published a solid CI doctrine in 2008, it is clear that the CF did not always apply the principles of their own doctrine. In particular, the shift in focus towards Force Protection and the dispersed placement of forces throughout the province highlighted the military-centric approach to the campaign. The greatest issue was the positioning of forces in isolated Forward Operating Bases (FOB) away from population centers. It can be argued, however, that each of these examples of the CF straying away from CI doctrine was the result of a conscious decision that was made by the military leadership in light of the prevailing circumstances of the time. Too large of an area of operations (AO) with insufficient troops to cover all would have forced a decision on force protection versus CI doctrine. This was similar to the necessity for military personnel to perform civilian roles due to a lack of civilian commitment or deployment to the mission area. Doctrine, regardless of the type, is a guide for best practices and if conditions were ideal forces could apply the principles with great success. When doctrine, in particular CI doctrine, demands cooperation and participation of many agencies within an evolving and complex environment, it is simply not possible for one agency to do it all alone.

The CF in Southern Afghanistan was forced, due to a limited civilian involvement, to perform the duties of all. The civilian officials deployed to Kandahar Province are doing what they can on the ground and to coordinate with their parent agencies, however their capacity is insufficient to do their part. As stated quite bluntly by General Hillier, “[t]here is a Three D policy and the military does all three of the Ds.”⁵⁴ Canadian CI Doctrine, although linked to the military, considers and essentially demands

⁵⁴Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar . . .*, 277.

that a WoG commitment is necessary to win in an insurgency. Moreover, it also demands 100% support from the GoC and all applicable OGDs. When the whole country is fully committed and in agreement that the nation is 'at' war, such as in WWII, there is both government and public support. Conversely, participation in a CI alone does not necessarily guarantee 100% government or public support, particularly if the public does not see itself 'at' war! There were, as proven in Afghanistan, other competing political agendas that demanded the resources or attention of the GoC.

If Canada, and its allies, hope to achieve success across all lines of operations in Afghanistan, there must be a concerted effort to apply the principles of CI doctrine. If, and only when, these principles can be consistently executed will the coalition forces be able to positively control and protect the population away from the TB influence. Only then will the CF be able to diminish TB effectiveness at employing tactical weapons, such as IEDs, against our troops. When the locals are completely engaged in the counter IED campaign and inform ISAF where they are planted, will we truly begin winning the battle for GIRoA legitimacy.

If a counter insurgent hopes to gain victory against an insurgent they must fully understand their enemy's centre of gravity (CoG), as well as their tactical, operational and strategic objectives which ultimately reflects their desired end state.⁵⁵ In order to do this, intelligence is necessary to direct forces and efforts. Its importance is therefore compounded when CI troop density is not sufficient to adequately interact with the population in order to ensure their protection. From the TB perspective, it can be shown that since 2004 they had the consistent desire of gaining control of KANDAHAR

CITY.⁵⁶ The Canadian effort in Kandahar Province, despite the fact that CF CI doctrine reinforced the necessity of understanding the TB CoG and objectives, failed to fully recognize this fact or adequately prioritize available force deployments to areas of less strategic importance to the TB.⁵⁷

Lastly, it is widely accepted among CI practitioners, and contained within the CI doctrine of the CF, that we must do our part to train and mentor the host nation security forces in order for them to assume responsibility for security for their country with the CIs depart. In Southern Afghanistan, the CF dedicated OMLT and POMLT resources to enable the ANP and ANA. The challenge, unfortunately, was that CF tactical successes were often limited as a result of under trained and ill-disciplined Afghan police and army units.⁵⁸ These organizations were plagued by a myriad of problems that extend from tribal dynamics, poor pay and equipment, as well as corruption. While ISAF and other counter insurgents were working hard to prevent TB influence over the population, elements of the ANSF would often undermine the legitimacy of the GoIRA and ISAF due to their unprofessional and often illegal behavior.

On numerous occasions in 2008 and 2009, the author was told by citizens of Arghandab District in Kandahar Province that they were more afraid of the ANP than they were of the TB.⁵⁹ As highlighted by the GoC, in particular Ron Hoffman, the

⁵⁵US Department of the Army, *The US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 25.

⁵⁶Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar* . . . , 22.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 47-50.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 30-31.

Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan, the necessity to train and equip 134,000 ANA is a critical component of Canada's exit strategy from Afghanistan.⁶⁰ In an effort to generate the numbers and capacity within the ANSF before the end of mission date, the soldiers are often pushed too quickly into the operational or combat environment before they are effective. The CF, while attempting to apply CI doctrine by training the host nation security forces, are essentially forced to operate subordinate to untrained forces in a challenging and dangerous battle space. This often results in being forced to fight and die while retaking terrain lost by the ANSF.⁶¹

CONCLUSION

The PRT construct must continue to evolve based on lessons learned and theory. Peter Gizewski and Michael Rostek suggest that the concept behind this type of unit may form the building blocks for the next iterative step for both Brigade (Bde) and BG structures that incorporate political, developmental, reconstruction as well as other capacity building players such as police and corrections.⁶² Although the PRT is a vehicle for facilitating the non-security lines of operation, it is imperative that the GoC commit fully and not only enable OGDs to do their part but implement a clearly communicated

⁵⁹The Author was the Officer Commanding Reconnaissance Squadron as part of Canada's contribution to Operation Athena Rotation Six from September 2008 to May 2009 and was responsible security within Arghandab and Lower Shah Wali Kowt Districts.

⁶⁰Government of Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Year-End Interviews with Canada's Representatives in Afghanistan," <http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/speeches-discours/yir-index.aspx?lang=eng>; Internet; accessed 21 March 2010.

⁶¹Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar* . . . , 30-31.

⁶²Gizewski and Rostek, *Toward a JIMP-Capable Land Force* . . . , 68.

and politically-led strategic campaign plan for Afghanistan. If there is a failure to do so or inconsistent resolve in tackling the CI from a WoG stand point, the GoC is failing those men and women, military or civilian, who are on the ground doing what they can in the name of Canada.

Although CI operations demand that contributing nations enable the host nation to develop their own security forces, it can not be done such that we hinder the CI from performing what is necessary. If the host nation security forces are not capable or do not have the capacity to achieve given results, it is at the detriment of mission success and the CI forces to conduct operations with one hand behind their backs. Without consistent and focused strategic will that commits the appropriate resources, the most effective and developed military CI doctrine will not fully succeed. If one nation can not provide all the resources, the principles of CI operations do not alter; it simply demands that the strategic will of the coalition must be sufficient to ensure that the principles are applied.

CHAPTER FOUR - CANADIAN POLITICAL WILL

*You have to be fast on your feet and adaptive or else a strategy is useless*⁶³

Charles de Gaulle

*One should know one's enemies, their alliances, their resources and nature of their country, in order to plan a campaign, one should know what to expect of one's friends, what resources one has, and foresee the future effects to determine what one has to fear or hope from political maneuvers*⁶⁴

Frederick the Great, 1747

The CF is currently structured and fully prepared to operate in a manner consistent with political policy through an integrated force perspective which synchronizes the relationship between conventional and CI operations.⁶⁵ This sees the CF operating with WoG, international and indigenous partners both domestically and internationally during war or OOTW. Although a WoG context may pose challenges resulting from competing agendas or a lack of unity in command, it is the only way to successfully counter an insurgency. Retired British officer and expert on low intensity operations, General Sir Frank Kitson writes that

there can be no such thing as a purely military solution because insurgency is not primarily a military activity. At the same time there is no such thing as a wholly political solution either . . . because the very fact that a state of insurgency exists implies that violence is involved which will have to be countered to some extent by the use of force.⁶⁶

⁶³Vego, *Operational Functions*. . ., 18 January 2010.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*

⁶⁵BGen S. Beare, Chief of Force Development Presentation, Lecture Canadian Forces College, 30 November 2009.

⁶⁶Director of Army Doctrine, *B-GL-300-001/FP-001, Land Operations* . . ., 3-16.

An insurgency is a WoG problem rather than a military or law enforcement issue.⁶⁷ Of the three lines of operations addressed to resolve a CI, security is the realm of the military however it is a supporting line of operation to those of governance, reconstruction and development.

When the GoC initially committed to deploying the CF and OGDs to Afghanistan, it was evident that there was no clearly articulated national strategy nor was Canada's reason for commitment ever communicated with balance and candor by the government.⁶⁸ This sentiment is reinforced in the 2008 Manley Report, noting that in order to fulfill Canada's commitment in Afghanistan ". . .it demands the political energy that only a Prime Minister can impart."⁶⁹ Without the full support of the PM, a unity of effort among the departments and effectively the development of a national strategy is challenging, if not impossible. Due to an incoherent national strategy, the political objectives and national interests were not effectively driving the Canadian defence strategy and ultimately the campaign plan for CF Operations in Southern Afghanistan. It could be suggested that the CFDS outlined the CF's commitment overseas in general terms under one of the six core missions, specifically to lead and/or conduct a major international operation for an extended period.⁷⁰ However, it is widely accepted that the military is a supporting player in CI operations and that all efforts must be harmonized in

⁶⁷David J. Kilcullen, "Countering Global Insurgency," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28, No 4 (August 2005), 605.

⁶⁸Manley and others, *The Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan* . . . , 20.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 28.

⁷⁰Department of National Defence, *Canada First Defence Strategy* . . . , 10.

a comprehensive approach with those of other agencies in order to properly address the political, social and economic root cause of an insurgency.⁷¹

Control over the employment of armed forces is traditionally left to the political leadership, thus the military remains under civil control. Clausewitz's writings emphasize his belief that political policy is simply the guiding intelligence of which war is the instrument.⁷² It is therefore only logical that Canada's military strategy would reflect the political goals of foreign policy. Although in draft form, the Strategic Framework for the CF articulates how national military strategy will employ forces to secure policy objectives through the projection, application or threat of force.⁷³ The strategy defines the military objectives to be achieved within a strategic political context and can be further restricted by articulating what resources are available to accomplish the assigned tasks.

The creation of the CFDS and the significance placed upon the WoG approach underlines that in 2005, after the publication of the IPS, the GoC recognized what was needed to succeed in a complex security environment, to include the CI in Afghanistan. While highlighting the principles of the WoG approach, Dr. Ouellet discusses the cultural reflex of how a state could deal with CI. He purports that by taking what we accept as the norm in a nation, or Canada as an example, we could apply the same principles on expeditionary operations.⁷⁴ His principles support those of the CFDS as well as the

⁷¹Director of Army Doctrine, *B-GL-300-001/FP-001, Land Operations* . . . , 3-15.

⁷²Clausewitz, *On War* . . . , 607.

⁷³Department of National Defence, "Strategic Framework for the Canadian Forces (Draft)," http://barker.cfc.dnd.ca/Admin/jointdocs/cdnpubs/StratFrame/stratframe_Ch1.html; Internet; accessed 10 January 2010.

⁷⁴Ouellet, *Irregular Warfare: Deja Vu all Over again* . . . , 8 January 2010.

belief that CI operations must be dealt with by more than military forces alone. His model further defines the general composition of the military and security forces necessary to operate in the CI environment. In order to assist in the control or security of the population, and therefore removing the insurgents' ability to influence and terrorize the population.

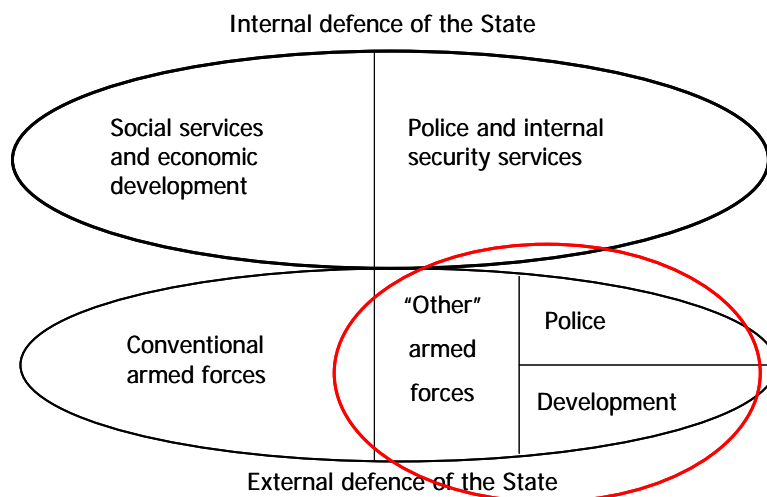


Figure 4.1 – External Defence of the State

Source: Ouellet, *Irregular Warfare: Déjà vu all over again*.

From his model above (Figure 4.1), he illustrates how the proposed balanced approach demands a conventional military capability as well as other armed forces.⁷⁵ The model places the emphasis on conventional forces while the 'other' forces appear to remain subordinate in terms of number and therefore focus.

Clausewitz's premise that "[p]olitics is the womb in which war develops" reinforces that war, or OOTW across the full spectrum of conflict, is initiated because of political will.⁷⁶ Whether the national interests were linked to Canada-US relations or an

⁷⁵*Ibid.*

⁷⁶Clausewitz, *On War* . . . , 147.

ideology to assist the oppressed citizens of Afghanistan, it is irrelevant because the political leadership alone will decide when or when not to commit the CF and OGDs as well as the strategic end state when these resources are committed. Although the end state may evolve over time, it in theory would mark the completion of the national objectives and ideally trigger the end of the commitment to the country, be they diplomatic, reconstruction or security. The challenge however comes from the fact that the end state, just as equally as the reasons for committing in the first place, must be clearly articulated. Failure to have a unifying focus will only result in competing objectives, timelines and priorities among the various GoC agencies.

In a CI for example, counterinsurgents may not have the strategic patience to see things through to termination or even longer, resolution. The end state therefore may only represent the achievement prescribed objectives along the path to termination or resolution. If the counterinsurgents do not have a clear end state, their approach to conflict resolution may be falsely based on these objectives, termination or resolution all of which demand very different levels of political will. If a nation is committed to resolution or termination they must have the desire to accept the domestic back lash associated with increased casualties, expenditures and public scrutiny associated with a prolonged CI campaign. Insurgent strategies have influenced the political will of the counterinsurgents by targeting their centre of gravity (GoG) represented by the citizens of their respective countries. The population, domestic or host nation, are critical to the insurgents' strategic objectives.

The GoC's decision to become heavily engaged in South Afghanistan in 2005 can be linked to the IPS in that it discreetly emphasized the necessity to pursue multilateral relationships in addition to reinforcing our strong US connection. Moreover, with the US

intently focused on operations in Iraq. Afghanistan proved to be an opportunity for Canada to effectively rejuvenate the credibility of NATO. Further this presented an opportunity to mitigate the effect of not having deployed to Iraq on the Canada-US relationship.⁷⁷ Neither the GoC or the CF believed that the extension of operations into Kandahar Province would pose any additional challenges to what they were already dealing with in Kabul and therefore there was no requirement to view the mission in a different light other than a robust peace keeping mission.⁷⁸

This sentiment would soon change after deployed personnel would become engaged in regular fighting with the TB and that the CF was undeniably engaged in counter insurgency warfare. While the GoC were able to achieve their foreign policy goals of enhancing their multinational position around the globe and within international institutions, they were now forced to react and apply a new approach to the Afghan commitment. Unfortunately, despite the strategic successes gained by deploying to Afghanistan, the GoC struggled to achieve strategic success in winning the CI battle. The political motivation to gain international prominence was critical however the political will to dedicate the effort and huge amount of resources into a rapidly evolving insurgency was slow in coming.

KANDAHAR BOUND: THE MOVE FROM KABUL (8/05-8/06)

After a diplomatic absence of over two decades in Afghanistan, Canada reopened its Embassy in Kabul in 2003. From a diplomatic standpoint, the move to become

⁷⁷Norman Hilmer and Jack Granastein, *For Better or for Worse: Canada and the United States into the Twenty First Century* (Toronto; Thomson Nelson Ltd.,2007), 312-313.

reengaged in Afghanistan to facilitate and contribute to stabilization and reconstruction was an excellent example of increased political will. The initiator for increased diplomatic ties however was not generated from within DFAIT, but by the CF or more specifically the CDS. The establishment of the Afghan embassy was justified because of Canadian security interests and preventing Afghanistan from again becoming a haven for terrorists.⁷⁹ Although the CF may have initiated the establishment of the embassy and essentially the first visible diplomatic presence on the ground in Afghanistan, one would assume that the GoC and DFAIT in particular would have been forward looking enough to initiate a process that they are responsible for, especially when the GoC was already committing troops to the country.

The slow diplomatic start, or perhaps the fact that DFAIT was prompted to act by the CF, may have created some animosity between the two departments. However, the tenuous security situation in Afghanistan was a clear stumbling block for Canadian diplomats and civilian representatives of the OGDs. Despite limited resources, Canada's first Ambassador in Afghanistan, Christopher Alexander, made a lasting contribution to Afghanistan's place on the world stage by co-authoring the Afghanistan Compact in 2006. The Compact, which now forms much of what Canada considers its exit strategy from the mission had guaranteed international commitment to the country until the end of 2010.⁸⁰

⁷⁸Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar . . .*, 210.

⁷⁹Karin Phillips, "Afghanistan: Canadian Diplomatic Engagement," <http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/library/PRBpubs/prb0738-e.htm>; Internet; accessed 24 February 2010.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*

The overt demonstration of government will in the 2005 time frame was nebulous at best. The IPS published in 2005 was a strategic publication which confirmed that Canada would reinvigorate its' foreign policy and that it would approach commitments in a cooperative interagency manner.⁸¹ From a policy perspective, this approach was very conducive to CF CI doctrine, however the practical execution of GoC policy would prove to be inconsistent. Even from a political and OGD standpoint the value of the IPS was lost shortly after publication, in part because of the change of government, but more so from the lack of a concerted and collective effort between the government departments. Despite the value of a renewed foreign policy, the concept of an integrated IPS was alien and the interdepartmental infighting and competing agendas slowed evolution.⁸² Two telling examples of inconsistent political will during this time frame are the SAT-A and the KPRT. They not only highlight how GoC commitment waivered in terms of strategic focus and action but also illustrates how it failed to lead all GoC departments in the achievement of common national objectives.

Although briefly discussed in the previous chapter, the SAT-A was a mechanism that achieved beneficial strategic effect for the GoC and it served as a catalyst to build GoIRA capacity.⁸³ Despite the unending praise for the SAT by President Karzai and Afghan ministers, the GoC did not capitalize on their successes. The GoC suddenly determined that the military-led SAT should be become a civil responsibility and that the CF should not be working outside the security line of operations. This was likely

⁸¹Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World Overview*, 26-30.

⁸²Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar . . .*, 139-140.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 299.

triggered by OGD embarrassment resulting from CF successes within the civilian realm and by the 2008 Manley Report. During the summer of 2008 and after a multitude of reasons, including the government's inability to 'civilianize' the SAT, the GoC allowed a novel and highly praised initiative to dissolve.⁸⁴

The initial establishment of the KPRT was certainly a step in the right direction from a strategic and operational point of view where Canada, through the KPRT, could work to address non-security lines of operation. Although the KPRT was fundamentally a military unit in design and manning, its *raison d'être* was for reconstruction and development in Kandahar Province. While the GoC was heavily involved in the decision to establish and geographically situate Canada's first PRT, they did little to empower it from a civilian manning perspective, despite OGD desires to have it led by a civilian.⁸⁵

While Canadian diplomats, initially in modest quantity, worked with Afghan partners to advance governance, security and reconstruction initiatives, they operated primarily out of Kabul and had limited to no representation on the ground in Kandahar Province. In an effort to better represent GoC goals in Kandahar Province and provide much needed civilian insight, they did establish a civilian Political Director position within the KPRT in the form of Mr Glyn Berry. At its inception however, the position had neither the capacity nor the teeth to take action on behalf of the GoC. Highlighting the high threat environment facing our diplomats and soldiers alike, Mr Berry was sadly killed by a car bomb in January 2006. Mr Berry's death came at a critical point in the

⁸⁴Hillier, *A Soldier First: Bullets, Bureaucrats and the Politics of War* . . . , 425-426.

⁸⁵Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar* . . . , 133.

mission where the threat level was increasing, deaths were mounting and political will was waning.

In the early stages of Canada's mission to Southern Afghanistan, the GoC was politically preoccupied by juggling the perceived repercussions of Continental Ballistic Missile Defence, non-Canadian involvement in Iraq, and the desire of NATO to expand its presence in Afghanistan beyond Kabul. Due to a lack of focus and a true appreciation of the situation in Afghanistan in 2005, the GoC and more specifically the PM, did not give the mission the commitment or the thought that it rightly deserved.⁸⁶ It appeared that the GoC decided to commit the CF, based on a compelling plan by the CDS, to Southern Afghanistan in hopes of regaining credibility with the US and our allies while remaining focused on other national interests elsewhere. While taking a 'fire and forget' approach to tackling what has proven to be much more than a military solution, the GoC has been forced to play catch up, with marginal success, since the beginning.

THE LEARNING GAME: THE EVOLVING INSURGENCY (8/06-2/07)

Although the OGD strength of the KPRT has been marginally increased since inception, the graph below (Figure 4.2) was pulled from the Manley Report and indicated that there were only 47 GoC civilians in all of Afghanistan. This was in comparison to approximately 2500 military personnel.⁸⁷ The Report also stated that these personnel were split evenly between Kabul, the KPRT, and Kandahar Airfield. Using this estimate,

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 244.

⁸⁷Manley and others, *The Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan . . .*, 28.

approximately 16 civilians reside within the KPRT, which means that less than 1% of Canada's deployed civilians are dedicated to non-security operations in Kandahar Province where reconstruction and development is in greatest need. The KPRT, and more specifically Canadian OGDs, were reeling from the effects of Glynn Berry's death and the unit remained hand tied and limited in force projection beyond the city limits. This limitation meant that the KPRT could not provide the requisite protection that the higher echelons of the OGDs demanded for their personnel. KPRT influence and capability, from a WoG perspective, would remain somewhat stalled until the unit was provided with much needed force protection assets.

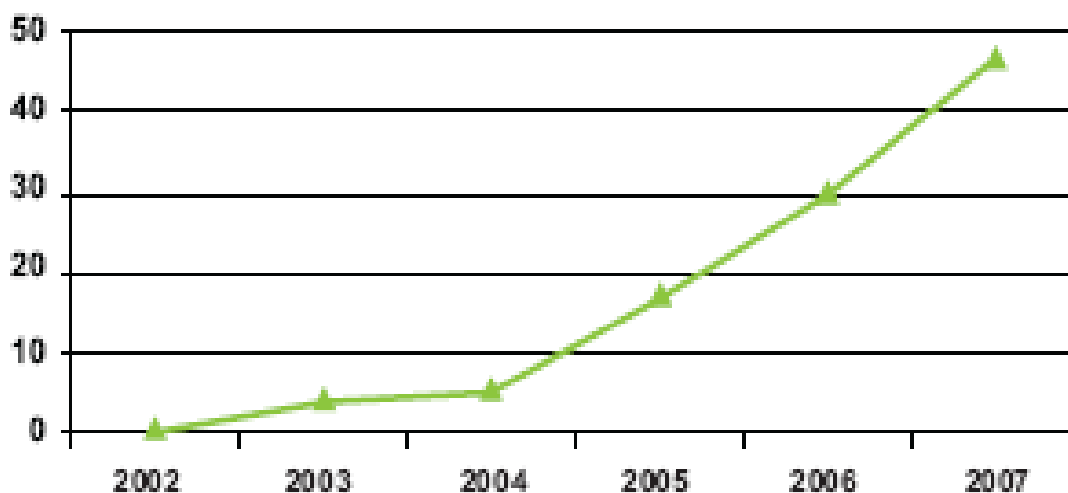


Figure 4.2 – Government of Canada Civilian Deployments (2002-2007)

Source: Manley, *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan*

It would be completely logical, and most likely completely acceptable that the KPRT be lead by a civilian if it was in fact manned by civilians. As shown by the GoC's incapacity to man a dozen positions within the SAT in a benign environment, it is difficult to comprehend how the same OGDs could cover off twenty five times that number, currently filled by CF personnel, in a much more dangerous location. Due to the

fundamental role of the KPRT, the CF was always open to the necessity of civilian oversight. However if the responsibility of the PRT was left to the devices of the OGDs, it is possible that it would have suffered the same fate as the SAT. To put it quite simply, command of a unit should be assigned to the agency that has the capacity to perform its mission and a capability to effectively lead it. It should not be about empire building but rather to achieve the desired end state, or more specifically, the strategic goals of Canada.

From a tactical perspective, the KPRT has a critical role to fill and the CF cannot afford to allow this capability to falter. If there is any hope of success the KPRT must function effectively, hand in hand, with OGDs that have capacity and the capability to act throughout the AO within areas that of strategic importance to the CI campaign.

Although it may be difficult to measure the effectiveness of political will, it could be said that the relatively low percentage of civilian representation, especially before the 2005 spike, is a reflection of inconsistent political focus and will. The assessment put forth by the Manley Panel stating that “Canada’s civilian programs did not achieve the scale or depth of engagement necessary to make a significant impact [and needed to] . . . enhance the civilian content of the KPRT...”⁸⁸ Combining these two factors, it is apparent that the civilian sector must do more and fully commit to advance their lines of operation.

While economics can drive a nation to participate in war or a CI, they can also prove valuable in terms of measuring effectiveness. Based on Canada’s economic contribution to Afghanistan, it is critical to note that in terms of spending on economic, political, and social development by the end of 2006 was a whopping 72% less than what

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 28.

is conventionally accepted.⁸⁹ Despite contributing substantially in terms of military spending the region in 2006, the GoC did little in terms of dedicating the necessary funds to ensure success and enable a WoG approach. The GoC should have been doing more to increase civilian capacity and prepare them for deployment through integration with CF members during training. This did not occur until the summer of 2009. Regardless, the civilians on the ground were increasingly restricted in their movement and largely confined to military installations.⁹⁰ The tragic loss of a diplomat left the GoC paralyzed and unfortunately incapable of effectively continuing with their diplomatic responsibilities. The GoC decision to hide their personnel rather than face threats and mitigate risks appeared content to allow the phenomenon of 'Defence Diplomacy' to flourish.⁹¹

Defence Diplomacy reflects the diplomatic ties formed by the military with foreign governments. This occurs because those civilian agencies traditionally responsible for their creation do not have the capacity, will or perhaps the desire to operate in high threat environments. These same organizations state that there is insufficient civilian oversight over the CF or that the military must stay in their own lane. Yet, they use terms such as Defence Diplomacy to suggest that they are still performing their function, albeit by proxy. The void created by the lack of civilian diplomatic participation forced Defence Diplomacy to occur out of necessity and not for wanting.

⁸⁹Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar* . . . , 266.

⁹⁰Government of Canada, "Canada's Participation in Afghanistan: Civilian Participation in Exercise Maple Guardian," http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/stories-reportages/2009_07_27i.aspx?lang=eng; Internet; accessed 14 February 2010.

⁹¹Phillips, *Afghanistan: Canadian Diplomatic Engagement* . . . , 4.

As discussed during CF Doctrine, Operation MEDUSA was a crucial turning point in the realization that the conflict was representative of a dynamic and intelligent foe, whom would change tactics and evolve doctrinally in order to maximize their tactical, operational and strategic successes. While the CF was focused on fighting a determined enemy, Canadians were starting to take notice of what was happening in Afghanistan and began to gel as a nation in support of those sacrifices suffered by the men and women in uniform. Canadians were again faced with the realities of war, which was once a long lost memory; and were rightly demanding answers from a government who seemed frozen by ongoing events.⁹² While the GoC was slowly reacting to public demands for a more open and better communicated strategic campaign plan, the public support for the CF skyrocketed. Public support was reinforced by the charismatic and media savvy General Hillier. Despite public perceptions of the mission, support for CF personnel was unquestioned.⁹³ Despite the GoCs inaction, Canadians and the CF developed a bond that rejuvenated public support.

The October 2006, National Command Element (NCE) expansion saw the introduction of a distinct Canadian Joint Task Force Afghanistan (JTF-A) Commander. As well, there was also the introduction of two key personnel that would facilitate the integration of Canada's WoG efforts within JTF-A. They came in the form of the Development Advisor (DEVAD) and the Political Advisor (POLAD). They were responsible to the JTF-A Commander, in consultation with the Canadian Ambassador, for

⁹²Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar . . .*, 244-245.

⁹³Hillier, *A Soldier First: Bullets, Bureaucrats and the Politics of War*, 403-404.

advising on the integration of Canadian efforts throughout Kandahar Province. While the civilians at the KPRT were focused primarily on reconstruction, the civilian advisors within the JTF-A Headquarters looked at the integration of all Canadian assets and enablers such as the KPRT, BG, OMLT, POMLT and the SAT from a provincial perspective in order to further Canadian WoG objectives and better enable CF CI doctrine.⁹⁴

STALEMATE: MILITARY SUCCESS AND POLITICAL FAILURE (2/07-PRESENT)

In March 2007, then Foreign Minister Peter MacKay confirmed that Canada would play a leading role in peace and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. This marked at the highest level of the Department of National Defence a marked shift in the prioritization of the mission from a diplomatic and strategic point of view. With the move to make Afghanistan a national priority, Canada would appoint a new but highly experienced Ambassador to Afghanistan and the post would be raised in profile such that it would be considered one of the more senior in diplomatic circles. A second example of a Canadian desire to revamp the bureaucratic level of commitment to Afghanistan was the creation of the Afghanistan Task Force in May 2007. This was led by Associate Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Interdepartmental Coordinator, Mr David Mulroney.⁹⁵ The title alone, which included 'Interdepartmental', highlighted the absolute importance and resolve of the GoC to finally grip Canadian commitment at a

⁹⁴This information was obtained during discussions with LCol C.M. Harding who was employed as the JTF-A J4 on Operation ATHENA Rotation 2 during this time frame.

strategic level from an integrated point of view. More importantly, it established DFAIT as the lead agency, which was designed to alleviate the tensions between DFAIT and DND over the establishment of the SAT-A. The GoC gave the Afghan mission the political attention it so rightly deserved by establishing Mr Mulroney's post within the Privy Council Office. The position had the power and authority to coordinate the efforts of the ministers that made up the Task Force in order to ensure the effective management of the mission.⁹⁶

A critical introduction to the KPRT was the addition of the first Representative of Canada in Kandahar (RoCK), Elissa Golberg, in March 2008. The RoCK reflects the evolution of the senior civilian in Kandahar Province and replaced such predecessor civilian posts as the original Political Director and more recently, the Senior Civilian Coordinator. While working under the Ambassador in Kabul, the senior civilian GoC representative in Kandahar Province would reside within the KPRT and would be responsible for all civilians in the province and for matters related to governance and development. The RoCK, with DFAIT support staff, works very close with the Canadian Task Force Commander to coordinate and implement Canadian military and development objectives while ensuring a WoG approach to all three lines of operation.⁹⁷ The move of the GoC to begin deploying experienced diplomats to the region whom were willing and

⁹⁵Phillips, *Afghanistan: Canadian Diplomatic Engagement* . . . , 5-6.

⁹⁶Government of Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Year-End Interviews with Canada's Representatives in Afghanistan," <http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/speeches-discours/yir-index.aspx?lang=eng>; Internet; accessed 21 March 2010

⁹⁷Government of Canada, "Representative of Canada in Kandahar," <http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/kandahar/represent.aspx>; Internet; accessed 27 February 2010.

capable of operating in a war like environment with other counter insurgents was a positive advancement.

The evolution of the civilian role in Afghanistan has certainly moved in the right direction. If we are to achieve effects that demand an interagency approach it is therefore logical that these missions also demand integrated units, such as the PRT, to achieve them. The leadership of such units demands collaborative personalities in order to ensure that all partners work together in a cohesive, mutually dependent and focused manner.⁹⁸ Perhaps culturally difficult, this would demand that the military work hard to function as a partner in some areas rather than the leader. In order to assimilate military personnel into integrated units, it is normal and certainly an effective practice to assign civilian counterparts with rank equivalencies. This facilitates command and control within the establishment vice attempting to balance or manage a parallel civilian-military chain.⁹⁹

The necessity for Canada to recognize and revitalize their efforts in Afghanistan can be marked by the publication of the Manley Report. Although many would say that GoC commitment was slow in coming, the report initiated the Parliamentary resolution and the subsequent changes to the manner in which the GoC managed their Afghan commitment. This gave the OGDs the onus to adjust their methodologies and act. Just as insurgencies evolve it is necessary for the counterinsurgencies to evolve as well. The GoC had slowly implemented mechanisms to deal with the demands of Afghanistan. The report was the trigger that saw the GoC make a more honest and concerted contribution. The Canadian campaign plan, just as CI theorists suggest, had to permit dialog between

⁹⁸Andy Tamas, *Warriors and Nation Builders: Development and the Military in Afghanistan* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2009), 196.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 193-194.

the military commander and members of the interagency team in order to develop a coherent design to deal with the difficult and multifaceted problems of the insurgency.¹⁰⁰

Clausewitz notes that;

The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish by that test the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive.¹⁰¹

In essence this means that the GoC and the CF must first come to terms with what type of conflict they are committed to. Earlier in the paper it was highlighted how the GoC and the CF were in disagreement and therefore had approached the engagement in disjointed manners. The CF was on a war footing while the GoC simply considered Afghanistan as another agenda item in their foreign affairs portfolio. An excellent example of the merging of Canadian will and CF CI doctrine on the ground in Southern Afghanistan was the work done by Canadian partners in the village of Deh-e Bagh in Dand District which lies just outside Kandahar City. It was and remains widely recognized that one of the critical resources needed to combat an insurgency is troops, specifically a large number of troops to saturate the AO. Due to a finite number of troops in the Canadian AO, the ability to saturate and secure the battle space to a sufficient degree to allow the other lines of operations to operate effectively was often strained or impossible. The Canadian Task Force therefore mitigated the troop shortage

¹⁰⁰US Department of the Army, *The US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual . . .*, 140.

¹⁰¹Clausewitz, *On War . . .*, 88.

by focusing WoG efforts on one “model village” at a time.¹⁰² After succeeding in developing one village, the same process would be applied to another.

WoG development efforts reinforced successful CI operations in the District and ultimately high troop density, allowed security to prosper. It was therefore proven that through a concerted and integrated GoC approach, development can occur within an environment that affords sufficient security to permit it. More importantly, CF CI doctrine as it is written is sound and functions effectively with the necessary political will within the ongoing Afghan insurgency. Despite the successes of CI tactics in Deh-e Bagh and other parts of Kandahar Province, the only manner in which the insurgency can be fully defeated in Southern Afghanistan is to continue employing these same principles else where. Unfortunately, for the same reasons as why the Model Village approach was applied, insufficient troop density prevents ISAF from applying CI doctrine to all areas that are critical to enemy operations, or perhaps strategically more important.¹⁰³

The key civilian GoC representatives responsible for Afghanistan and Foreign affairs are also promoting successes in theatre in 2008 post Parliamentary Resolution as a result of the very effective Manley Report. Ron Hoffman, Canadian Ambassador, Elissa Golberg, RoCK, and David Mulroney, Deputy Minister Afghan Task Force, all highlighted the success of this integrated effort. Specifically, these successes were improved civilian-military capacity, integration and cooperation towards the achievement of clearly articulated strategic objectives. The strategic will of the GoC gave all departments the capacity and the leadership necessary to move forward from a military

¹⁰²Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar* . . . , 51-52.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, 53.

centric mission to one which demonstrated Canadian resolve through an integrated and joint civilian-military partnership with a focus on reconstruction.¹⁰⁴

PM Harper once forbade officials from DFAIT and CIDA to speak to the public about their successes or challenges in Afghanistan. As such, it should not be surprising that there was, and remains, a lack of non-military media attention or strategic awareness of all that was occurring as part of Canada's commitment abroad.¹⁰⁵ If the GoC promotes a WoG approach then they must empower all agencies to do their part, to include a strategic communication plan. Important issues of Canadian diplomacy and aid in Afghanistan should be communicated by those key agencies that are responsible for their execution.¹⁰⁶ If DND is the only department that presents accounts of ongoing activities in theatre, Canada is communicating only part of the strategic message and is therefore failing to provide the awareness rightfully demanded by Canadian citizens. Just as the failure to communicate our successes internationally to our citizens, developmental progress must also be communicated locally such that Afghans connect positive progress to the GoIRA and Canada. Failure to make such a connection will afford the TB with the opportunity to take credit for development work that is not publically claimed.¹⁰⁷

While Canadian representatives rightly promote success from a WoG and multi-line of operations perspective, there are some that argue that a preoccupation with development may have in fact hindered our progress within the CI environment. Canada

¹⁰⁴Government of Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Year-End Interviews with Canada's Representatives in Afghanistan," . . . 21 March 2010.

¹⁰⁵Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar* . . . , 282.

¹⁰⁶Manley and others, *The Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan* . . . , 20.

¹⁰⁷Sean M. Maloney, "Taliban Governance: Can Canada Compete?" *Policy Options* (June 2009), 67.

should be proud of her past and ongoing accomplishments. However, it is suggested that the emphasis on the cabinet mandated 'signature projects' is a distraction from the real nature of the insurgency.¹⁰⁸ Long term projects such as the costly DAHLA DAM water irrigation project in southern Shah Wali Kowt District is one of the signature projects that will have a very positive impact on many Afghans along the Arghandab River network. Yet, the success of its implementation will depend on a positive security environment. While the GoC works hard to push the project forward within a challenging environment, it is clear that CI considerations are far from the top of CIDA's or DFAIT's agenda. Despite the potential benefit of the DAHLA DAM project, it has not been effectively promoted on the ground or strategically within Canada.

During initial work on some of the periphery components of the project, neither one of these Canadian agencies made any efforts to coordinate with the BG unit, specifically the Recce Squadron, which was located in the District and had the tactical knowledge of the security situation on the ground. From the relative comfort of the KPRT, contacts were being let to Private Security Companies with known links to the insurgency and were proven to have conducted questionable actions against the CF in the region. Without true regard for coalition CI efforts in the area, Canadian representatives essentially hired hundreds of unlicensed gun carrying civilians. These 'civilians' had questionable or unconfirmed background, yet were being hired to secure one of Canada's three 'developmental' signature projects.¹⁰⁹ Despite the absolute necessity for Canada's signature projects, the manner in which they are implemented must take into

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, 68.

consideration the impact on the local population, to include the insurgents as well as the counterinsurgents. Development can not occur in isolation because it alone will not defeat the insurgency. When project implementation is done without the necessary CI considerations, the strategic 'war winning' effects will be lost or marginalized.

From the onset of the Afghan engagement, the GoC was indecisive. Canada's commitment to Afghanistan was extended on three different occasions and none of them resulted from renewed political will or a clearly articulated and enduring campaign plan. Instead, Canada's commitment was very much reactionary and appeared to evolve from indecisiveness on behalf of the GoC.¹¹⁰ Canada's commitment ranged from short term combat missions, to short term stabilization missions, to provincial reconstruction and then finally, in 2006, to CI warfare. All the while, each phase was marked by short term thought, a lack of a strategic campaign plan and no clearly articulated exit strategy. The Canadian approach to Afghanistan was not remotely solidified until the parliamentary resolution post Manly Report in 2008, a two full years and numerous casualties after the CF moved to Kandahar Province. Modern CI doctrine demands that those governments who contribute counterinsurgents must have the strategic patience and enduring political will if an insurgency is to be defeated or if there is any hope of conflict termination and resolution.¹¹¹ Without complete political and strategic commitment, it is not possible to maximize on the gains of military and tactical WoG successes.

¹⁰⁹ The Author was the Officer Commanding Reconnaissance Squadron as part of Canada's contribution to Operation Athena Rotation Six from September 2008 to May 2009 and was responsible security within Arghandab and Lower Shah Wali Kowt Districts.

¹¹⁰ Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar . . .*, 244-245.

CONCLUSION

The will of the GoC has perhaps waivered over the course of the past five years. The political objectives of the successive governments have certainly challenged the creation of a solid, enduring, well communicated, strategic plan for Afghanistan. Without political ownership, it is doubtful, if not impossible, that sufficient attention will be given to an international commitment that has morphed and has become a political hot potato. Canadian political will is always influenced by external factors such as Canada-US relations or the efficiency and credibility of such organizations as NATO. Our national desire to fully commit to something may shift over time and regardless of the lack of a natural affinity to one form of international engagement over another, we may be politically tied and bound to act. When action, such as what has occurred in Afghanistan, is initially outside our strategic comfort zone it is perhaps understandable that insufficient effort or focus is applied. However, the reality on the ground dictates that strategic action and evolution is critically necessary, especially when it is emphasized by increasing casualties sustained from combat. As such, it is of paramount importance that the government takes immediate and unyielding action.

It is not acceptable that a democratically elected government plead ignorance about an ongoing international crisis in which they have committed military forces. The hesitation to take appropriate action and commit the necessary resources to combat the insurgency early in the deployment was a critical error that took a long time to correct; an error that the GoC has just finally begun to overcome since issuing the parliamentary

¹¹¹Director of Army Doctrine, *B-GL-323-004/FP-003, Counter-Insurgency Operations . . .*, 1-14.

resolution post Manley report. Without sufficient political involvement that enables and directs the required WoG response it is impossible for proven CI doctrine, military or otherwise, to succeed in terminating and resolving the Afghan insurgency.

From a political will point of view, a measure of effectiveness can be drawn from the successes achieved from the eventual build-up and participation of civilians on the ground in Afghanistan. Although low in number and limited in capacity, the personnel deployed to theater worked hard to represent the interests of Canada and achieve their mandated objectives in an extremely professional manner with the goal of integrating WoG efforts within the KPRT, the SAT and the JTF-A. It could also be argued that even though these personnel were deployed in insufficient numbers, which demonstrated the lack of political will, their efforts reinforced that they were critical to the overall success of the mission. Without the increased civilian commitment and a revitalized WoG approach, the CF would have been forced to continue with a military centric approach to dealing with Southern Afghanistan, which over the course of Canada's commitment had proven ineffective.

CHAPTER FIVE INSURGENT STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

*I'm not interested in preserving the **status quo**; I want to overthrow it*

Niccolo Machiavelli

*Bureaucracy defends the **status quo** long past the time when the **quo** has lost its **status**.*

Dr. Laurence J. Peter

***Status quo**, you know, that is Latin for "the mess we're in"*

Ronald Reagan

In order for a CI to be effective, one must understand what prompts an insurgency to occur. It is impossible to categorize all insurgencies under one label and there are many military thinkers whom have attempted to label the various forms in an attempt to understand this complex issue. This chapter will discuss two different perspectives on the forms of an insurgency which essentially outline the major camps of insurgent theory.

The CF CI Operations Manual defines six main forms, which are detailed in the table below (Table 5.1).¹¹² The TB's desire to regain control from a political and values based perspective, the evolution of the insurgency of Southern Afghanistan indicates that they could be closely linked to Traditionalist. More to an extreme, though, it could be argued that the TB has the goal of evolving to a modified form of Egalitarian due to their desire to centrally control structures and institutions. For the purpose of this analysis, while the actions of the TB definitively follow the Traditionalist path in Southern Afghanistan, their end state remains the return to power and the control of the entire

¹¹²Director of Army Doctrine, B-GL-323-004/FP-003, *Counter-Insurgency Operations . . .*, 2-6.

country, marking their insurgency as Egalitarian. This is reinforced by the TB having publically communicated their vital ground and strategic objective of regaining control of Kandahar City in order to re-establish their values and use this foothold to influence the remainder of the country.¹¹³

Form	Description	Comment
Anarchist	Intent is to destroy the system. There are normally no plans to replace any form of government with another system. The most potentially dangerous form of insurrection is that of the anarchist group which sets out to eliminate all political structures and the social fabric associated with them	Being very secretive, such groups remain small and lacking public support. Given the rising threat of terrorism based on weapons of mass destruction, their potential destructiveness to society can not be overlooked.
Egalitarian	Seeks to impose centrally controlled structures and institutions by mobilizing the people (masses) to provide equality in the distribution of all state resources	This has been seen recently in two variants: Communist (Malaya, Vietnam) and contained in Ba'athist ideology
Traditionalist	Seeks to revert back to national/original values rooted in the previous, often mythologized, history of the region	This type of insurgency often incites similar movements elsewhere. Seen recently as Islamic Jihad (Egypt) or Hezbollah (Lebanon)
Separatist	Seeks to remove themselves, and the area in which they live, from the control of the remainder of the state	The form of political system adopted by successful insurgents varies enormously. Amongst the examples are the Tamils (LTTE) in Sri Lanka
Reformist	The form of insurgency is similar to the separatist type but more moderate, in that insurgent groups fight for political, economic or social reforms and possibly some form of autonomy, without dramatically altering the political status quo	Some insurgencies in Central and South America that have sought reforms to corrupt governments

Table 5.1 – Forms of An Insurgency

Source: Director Army Doctrine, *Forms of An Insurgency*, 2-6.

¹¹³Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar* . . . , 44.

Similar to CF CI doctrine, the US Marine Field Manual suggests that insurgencies are either national insurgencies or resistance movements.¹¹⁴ Resistance movements, also known as Liberation, have the goal of expelling or overthrowing foreign occupation or rule. Resistance movements could be likened to the Traditionalist model such that both demand a move back to a previous state. In Afghanistan, there is a belief among insurgents that the post-TB government was essentially a puppet of the Western world. Thus the TB push for central control may also be, at given periods of time, described as Liberation. This form however, is also marked by the temporary cohesion of groups with different motivations and objectives in order to remove the occupier. Upon their departure, it is common to witness an increase in infighting leading to potential civil war. When considering the extensive modern communications and transportation networks throughout the world, the concept of national or localized insurgencies have been extended to encompass the transnational or international domain. The latter simply indicates that insurgencies today, due to modern communications and transportation networks, are able to rapidly transit the globe. This enables them to target strategic objectives while instantaneously influencing the world's public opinion through rapid access to worldwide media resources. Technology has therefore allowed insurgencies to expand its influence around the world both physically and psychologically.

The CF initially borrowed US CI doctrine in 2007, nevertheless, there remains a degree of separation with respect to terminology pertaining to CI. When translated to application on the ground within a multinational military campaign, the meshing of

¹¹⁴US Department of the Army, *The US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual . . .*, 102.

various doctrines and terminology would certainly challenge or cloud the determination of a common understanding of the insurgency.

In the other camp, retired French Army Lieutenant-Colonel David Galula provides a very comprehensive dissertation on the subject and suggested that history has revealed two general patterns that describe the emergence of an insurgency. They can be described as Orthodox and the Bourgeois-Nationalist (BN) patterns. The first is based primarily on the theory and experience of the Chinese Communist Revolution from 1939 to 1945 while the second pattern is fundamentally a shortened variation of the preceding, focused more on securing power. The Orthodox pattern can be further broken down into five distinct steps: the creation of a party, the creation of a united front, guerrilla warfare, movement warfare and, finally, an annihilation campaign.¹¹⁵ Initially, when considering the ongoing insurgency in Southern Afghanistan one can see many similarities with the Orthodox pattern, however when one looks at the evolution of the Afghan insurgency it is more closely aligned with the BN pattern, specifically the desire to seize power. The BN pattern is broken down into two distinct steps which include Blind Terrorism and Selective Terrorism.¹¹⁶

The first step is to quite simply gain the support of a portion of the population which is large enough to achieve their goals, be that the majority or a powerful minority.¹¹⁷ The insurgent demands only the indifference or the latent support of the population in order to operate. The method of gaining publicity can come in the form of

¹¹⁵David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2006), 29-40.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, 39-40.

¹¹⁷Director of Army Doctrine, *B-GL-323-004/FP-003, Counter-Insurgency Operations . . .*, 1-10.

random terrorism often conducted in a spectacular fashion. The second step that defines the BN pattern comes quickly in that the insurgents move to separate the counter-insurgents from the population. They achieve this by involving the population in the insurgency with the goal of gaining support or at a minimum, passive complicity.¹¹⁸ Examples of this can include the assassination of low ranking government officials whom work closely with the population or closely with the counter-insurgents.

Once the insurgent has created an atmosphere whereby they can operated freely they may also, ideally, mobilize the population in support of their cause. This is essentially the point where the BN pattern of insurgency rejoins the third step of the Orthodox pattern - Guerrilla warfare - whereby it is exemplified by an armed struggle to gain power without compromise as well as the eventual complicity of the population. In Afghanistan, it can be argued that because of the protracted nature of the insurgency the population has made concessions and compromises with the TB in order to have a degree of peace. In some parts of Afghanistan, the insurgency has evolved beyond selective terrorism to the guerrilla warfare aspect of the Orthodox model. Specifically in Southern Afghanistan, this gradual evolution from BN to Orthodox can be exemplified by the growth of TB courts in Kandahar Province in an effort to seize power by political play and subversion.¹¹⁹ Although this phenomenon is not widespread and the TB generally operates along the lines of the BN pattern, it is important to note that insurgents will adopt tactics that yield success. Therefore, it makes it virtually impossible to labeling them as one form of insurgency or another.

¹¹⁸Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* . . . , 40.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, 32-36.

After a quick analysis of the different theories, the similarities by form or by phase are readily apparent. The critical take away is that regardless of pattern or form of an insurgency, it can be argued that their strategic centre of gravity (CoG) is the population. This holds true for the population within the host nation as well as those of the contributing nations who are providing the counter insurgents. A common and fully understandable concern of the Canadian public is the number of casualties sustained by the CF in Afghanistan. In a democracy such as Canada, the people have a powerful voice that can influence the political will of the GoC on this issue and, ultimately, the decision to retain military forces engaged in operations. The insurgents will therefore use whatever means they can, be it tactical or operational, to achieve a strategic effect. The most common weapon used by insurgents is the Improvised Explosive Device (IED). Regardless of the fact that it is a tactical weapon system, specifically that their use sometimes results in casualties or tactical successes, they can also achieve strategic level effects through its use. The insurgents therefore do not only attempt to influence the local population, but they also attempt to influence the strategic population (Figure 5.1 below).

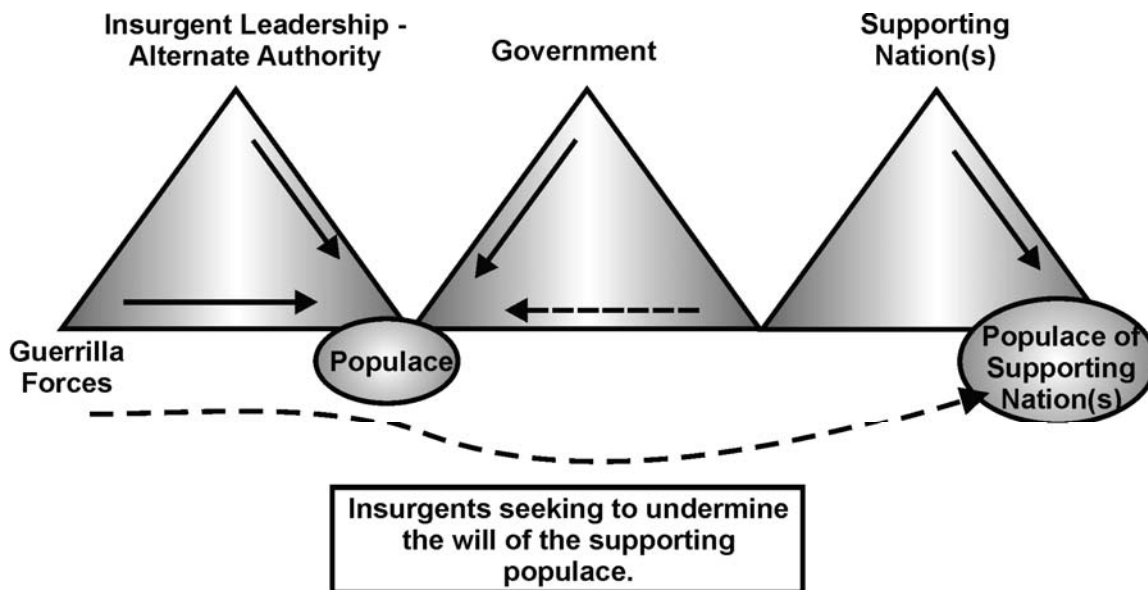


Figure 5.1 – Competition over the Strategic Centres of Gravity - Populations

Source: Director Army Doctrine, *Forms of An Insurgency*, 2-4.

Fully recognizing CF CI doctrine, the knowledge behind forms of insurgency is not sufficient in detail to conduct an in-depth analysis to determine the nature of the Afghan insurgency. However, the rationale behind attempting to define the insurgency is twofold: determining how to counter it and, more importantly, affirming a conflict, termination and resolution strategy that is relevant to the specific nature of the CI being fought. From a counter insurgent perspective, the discussion surrounding termination and resolution can be very much linked to the strategic will of the contributing nation as well as their domestic will. This is not to be confused with the publically announced, if and when it is communicated, end state of the mission. The two can differ greatly and the end state can evolve throughout while the actions needed to terminate and resolve the conflict could remain constant. The fundamental variable separating the two is the strategic patience of the counter insurgents to sacrifice the personnel, time, resources and

money to see termination, and then resolution, through to the end. One thing that is not lacking from an insurgents strategy however, is time and absolute commitment. These factors afford the insurgent unbounded tactical, operational and strategic options in the achievement of their objectives.

During these time frames being discussed, while there are obvious inferences that can be made from the events that occurred, it is extremely challenging to expand upon them due to security classifications. The unclassified nature of this paper will unfortunately preclude the detailed analysis of some material and prevent the inclusion of examples that could better illustrate successes and failures of insurgent strategies and tactics.

KANDAHAR BOUND: THE MOVE FROM KABUL (8/05-8/06)

The move of the Canadian BG to Kandahar Province occurred at time when the TB were also shifting their focus and establishing a second front into Kandahar City in the summer of 2006. ISAF focus prior to this time frame within the province of Kandahar was fundamentally in the areas north of Kandahar City. The lack of ISAF focus in the areas South West of Kandahar City essentially left an open approach into the city from Zhari and Panjwai Districts available to the TB. Due to the relative freedom, public support, and historic ties in Zhari and Panjwai Districts, the TB would move to monopolize on a strategic opportunity to open a line of operation into Kandahar City.¹²⁰ Operation MEDUSA, which occurred during the fall of 2006 in Panjwai District,

¹²⁰Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar* . . . , 24.

highlights how Canadian troops fought, force on force, in a conventional battle against the TB who employed a classic Soviet tactical defence.¹²¹ This will be further discussed in the next section.

An interesting twist on TB tactics in 2005 was that the TB leadership, known for previously condoning gruesome public beheadings, were polarized and uncomfortable with Mullah Dadullah Akhund's suicide bombing campaign. Akhund eventually appeased his leaders by selecting only non-Afghan as bombers.¹²² By using non-Afghan bombers, the TB leadership was preventing 'bad press' and therefore ensuring that they would not give locals additional reason to pull away from the TB. In effect, the TB was applying an equivalency to the 'globe and mail test' so often referred to in military circles. In their own way, they were proactively reinforcing their media and Information Operations (IO) campaign in efforts to maintain influence over local Afghans. The CF realized the importance of IO and media awareness during this same period however there were limited resources deployed and employed to effect a truly cohesive IO campaign.

Subsequent examples of the TB IO machine can be linked to the transition from US Forces to the CF in Kandahar Province, in particular the arrival of Canadian TF 1-06. The visible pull out of US Forces from the region gave the TB a strategic opportunity to promote their causes for departure and potentially put the CF on their back foot with more aggressive operations soon after their arrival. The first spike of casualties in early 2006, to include the death of Canadian Diplomat Mr. Glynn Berry, had significant IO impact for the TB. The TB, just as they have done in recent years, openly promoted the

¹²¹Day, *Operation Medusa: The Battle for Panjwai* . . . 12 January 2010.

fact that they will continue to target coalition forces, diplomats, and officials of the GoIRA.¹²³ The trend for TB to target or claim to have targeted civilian internationals to include diplomats and NGOs was common and matches the tactics descriptive of Galula's BN Insurgency Model. Regardless of the whether or not Mr. Berry was a member of a convoy that was targeted or if he was targeted directly, the TB had spun the story to gain the most out of their IO campaign. This, at the time, had reinforced the effect of driving most NGOs out of Kandahar City and delayed Canada from committing more civilian personnel to the mission area.¹²⁴

By driving out the NGOs, the KPRT did not have those critical international and local partners whom were necessary for the furtherance of reconstruction and development in the region. The TB, through the execution of one successful attack, could achieve multiple but yet complementary tactical, operational and strategic effects. They could reinforce fear among the local Afghans whom may support or consider supporting coalition forces or the GoIRA and reinforce fear among local Afghan government officials for the jobs that they are performing. As well, they could force a reduction in commitment among contributing nations or individual organizations. This could result in a strategic impact on the resolve of those citizens internationally who have diplomatically allowed their military personnel to go into harms way. Each effect goes to reinforce the TB's efforts to reduce the legitimacy of the GoIRA and further distance

¹²²*Ibid.*, 24.

¹²³*Ibid.*, 44.

¹²⁴The Senlis Council, *Canada in Kandahar: No Peace to Keep; A Case Study of the Military Coalitions in Southern Afghanistan* (London: The Senlis Council Security and Development Policy Group, 2006), 17.

them from their population base. This iterates the behavior and tactics that are illustrative of the BN insurgency model.

THE LEARNING GAME: THE EVOLVING INSURGENCY (8/06-2/07)

With the TB move to irregular or insurgent operations, they quickly adopted new tactics and weapons systems that were more effective against the conventionally equipped ISAF forces as well as against supporters of the GoIRA. In particular, the TB used a combination of kinetic action, information operations, and governance in their attempts to defeat the counter insurgents. Just as ISAF evolved, the TB evolved quickly and were very willing to maximize strategic opportunities created by political instability or ISAF error. ISAF dispersion, a preoccupation with the Northern Districts, and a limited coalition presence in Zhari and Panjwai created the conditions whereby the TB believed that they could open a new line of operations into Kandahar City. The TB would slowly increase their presence, in their traditional homeland, in preparation for increased operations. The CF reacted to their increase with a series of tactical battles that achieved local success but due to limited numbers, they were unable to hold these gains after initial clearing operations. Surprisingly, the GoIRA also made attempts with their largely Achakzi National Border Police under command of Abdul Razik to clear the TB from Zhari and Panjwai. The attempt to send in a tribally different force proved to be a complete failure and resulted in the local people supporting the TB in their fight against the police.

The battle not only resulted in renewed TB influence, confidence but also increased their numbers. At that time, the TB had the perception that they had sufficient

resources, the belief and political support to apply direct force and defeat a conventional Western military. This TB sentiment eventually led to increased fighting with CF troops in the area and resulted in Operation MEDUSA which occurred in September 2006. The battle that ensued was hard fought and saw the Taliban arrayed in successive defensive positions, similar to that of traditional Soviet doctrine.¹²⁵ Although the TB were often known to put up a good fight, the magnitude of this Battle along with their conventional approach, marked the TB's ability to rapidly change tactics and consolidate troop strength if the strategic opportunity and potential gains presented itself. Although the TB were decisively destroyed by the CF and coalition forces, a TB success in this type of warfare would have certainly led to irreparable losses to the coalition campaign.

It was only upon defeat that they shifted back to their indirect approach, and only a viable alternative of CI linked, with an extremely effective terror and IO campaign. The TB would move to operate in small groups and would begin living among the local populations. They would scatter weapons about the country side in small caches and would therefore have the freedom to move about unhindered and then launch attacks when necessary to again melt into the population.¹²⁶

In order to counter these tactics, the CF began to dedicate the personnel to perform psychological operations tasks along with the traditional public affairs role. Such communications media as radio was soon exploited in order to communicate key messages, where technologically possible, to Afghans. These messages encompassed ongoing GoIRA and ISAF efforts to better their lives as well as to communicate the evil being performed by the TB. It is doctrinally recognized and accepted that control of the

¹²⁵Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar* . . . , 44.

media and the effective passage of critical messages, locally or strategically, is a powerful enabler for both the insurgent and counter insurgent alike.¹²⁷

Commencing in late 2006 and after achieving dramatic success against ISAF and Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), the TB began to use Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) at a staggering rate. IEDs were quickly increasing in size, complexity, quantity and lethality such that CF equipment and armored vehicles were incapable of consistently defeating the devices. Methods of employment also varied such that they would either target vehicles, search teams, or even first responders that were on route to or returning from an initial IED strike. Incidents could also be compounded by being combined with ambushes, a tactic that was once used so successfully against the Soviets during their occupation in the 1980s, and very much in line with BN tactics. The success of IED use against ANSF and ISAF forces resulted in distinct operational and strategic fallouts from a Canadian standpoint.

The first was a shift in the focus of the CF on the ground. It moved from a CI fight and protecting the local population to that of being preoccupied by force protection issues and a strategically critical Counter IED (CIED) campaign in hopes of reducing the rise in casualties. The TB had therefore used a tactical weapon to take the initiative from a militarily superior force on the ground while yielding strategic success in terms of the detrimental effect on the Canadian population resulting from the seemingly unstoppable rise in casualties. The TB essentially put the CF in a situation where they could not, due to their limited forces, focus entirely on CI throughout their AO. This forced them to

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, 27.

¹²⁷Director of Army Doctrine, *B-GL-323-004/FP-003, Counter-Insurgency Operations . . .*, Ch 8.

make a choice to target their primary threat which was the insurgent IED campaign in order to protect themselves.¹²⁸ In a short period of less than two years, and despite President's Karzai's claim in June 2005 that Afghans do not do suicide bombings and that they were isolated incidents, TB's tactics and weapons of choice were evolving and had morphed in a dynamic and fluid manner.¹²⁹

While coalition experience facilitated the evolution of doctrine in a manner that reflects the complexities of CI operations, the coalition was less adept at solidifying their understanding of who their adversaries were. While the models outlined in this chapter detail various characteristics of insurgent models, they do not go into the depth necessary to truly 'understand' the enemy or what makes the individual an enemy. Every insurgency is unique and the characteristics of those who make up the nation's population will also influence the evolution of the insurgency itself. It is certainly not justified to label all personnel who take up arms against a counterinsurgent in Afghanistan as a TB. In this era of the Global War on Terror, Western governments will often, quite mistakenly, connect all combatants on the ground to a suggested transnational network that supports Islamic militants across the globe. The blanket use of a given term, perhaps as was done with the use of TB in this paper, does not clearly articulate the reality on the ground. In effect, the use of the wrong term to describe a combatant may effectively promote or justify the cause of legitimate TB and artificially strengthen the cause of other local insurgencies across the globe. Stein suggests that many insurgencies in Muslim societies tend to be locally motivated and are inflamed by local grievances with local political agendas. Without a connection to al-Qaeda, the TB is a local Afghan

¹²⁸Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar* . . . , 29.

phenomenon.¹³⁰ Within Afghanistan and neighboring nations, nomenclature used to identify insurgent groups remains a powerful consideration that usually has historical and religious connotations.

STALEMATE: MILITARY SUCCESS AND POLITICAL FAILURE (2/07-PRESENT)

The TB was extremely effective at diversionary tactics throughout the campaign but at no time were they more successful than during the period of international indifference. This period can be underlined by the lack of resolve demonstrated by many NATO contributing nations as they failed to commit combat troops to the CI fight in Kandahar Province. Canada would continue to hold the lion's share of responsibility, with critical US enablers, throughout the province. Initiated by the Manley Report, Canada's request for an additional 1000 troops to support ongoing operations in Kandahar Province highlighted how the Army was tapped out and could not sustain the same tempo of operations into the future.¹³¹ Before the US commitment to deploy two additional brigades to Kandahar Province in the spring of 2009, Canada would continue to operate with what they had.

With the coalition forces essentially fixed and primarily focused on force protection, the TB were relatively free to conduct operations that would gain control the population by distancing them from their own national security forces, ISAF and the GiROA. A permissive or compliant population, is the TB's CoG and in line with the

¹²⁹Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar . . .*, 201.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*, 227-228.

theory behind both Egalitarian and BN insurgency. This would permit the TB to operate with relative freedom throughout the province in attempts of gaining control of Kandahar City. The TB would achieve this through a focused intimidation campaign that included assassinations, targeted killings and terrorism to frighten the population into submission. Moreover, the establishment of TB governance where there was no GoIRA presence in an effort to gain legitimacy and an effective information operations campaign also contributed to their success.¹³²

Targeted killing or the TB assassination campaign is a powerful example of selective terrorism. The TB were known to kill public figures or local people known to have cooperated with GiROA or ISAF. They would ensure that their deaths served as an example for others and would often perform the executions in public such that they would not go unnoticed. The TB, in their view, ensured the legitimacy of these killings by holding court and after trying an individual would sentence them to a given punishment. These same courts would, aside from deciding the fate of a 'traitor', would also be instrumental in the community for regulating taxation, land disputes, family disputes, loan disputes, robbery, killing and fighting as well as performing other traditional governance duties incapable of being done by a weak and insipid provincial government.¹³³

By the summer of 2009, Kandahar Province only had eight Judges that were only capable of providing localized services within Kandahar City while the TB had capacity

¹³¹Manley and others, *The Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan* . . . , 35.

¹³²Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar* . . . , 31-32.

¹³³*Ibid.*, 34.

throughout the province.¹³⁴ During routine conversations with members of the Shura of both Arghandab and Shah Wali Kowt Districts in Kandahar Province, the author was informed on many occasions, that the existing TB court system was more effective than that of the GoIRA. Furthermore, despite their methods, they brought more stability to the region.¹³⁵

Following TB court sentencing or on a routine basis, the TB would communicate their beliefs and key messages through a well coordinated information operations campaign. The parallel TB court system proved extremely effective in terms of population control, dispute resolution and building TB legitimacy throughout the province. The TB court efficiency and transparency combined with their presence throughout the region made them more accessible than government funded judges. By providing a capacity that the GoIRA is incapable of generating within rural areas, the TB are, as Sean Maloney describes, implementing ‘competitive governance’ and moving away from ‘negative governance’.¹³⁶

The parallel courts, either static in TB controlled areas or provided by mobile judges, therefore further enabled the TB of usurping the GoIRA span of control. This influence, therefore, formed a critical component of the insurgent’s population manipulation campaign. Despite the darker sides of the TB justice system, the fact that they can provide something that the government cannot is sufficient to gain public

¹³⁴*Ibid.*, 34.

¹³⁵The Author was the Officer Commanding Reconnaissance Squadron as part of Canada’s contribution to Operation Athena Rotation Six from September 2008 to May 2009 and was responsible security within Arghandab and Lower Shah Wali Kowt Districts.

¹³⁶Maloney, *Taliban Governance: Can Canada Compete . . .*, 68.

support.¹³⁷ Moving beyond the parallel justice system, the TB also establishes parallel governmental positions within the District as well as the province to include key positions as mayors and chiefs of police.¹³⁸ Due to the powerful influence and fear associated with such parallel positions, the TB have ensured a degree of control over GoIRA activities in Kandahar Province.

The TB would often initiate warnings to groups or individuals for their potential cooperation with ISAF or members of the GoIRA. This component of their information operations campaign would come in the form of what is known as a *Night Letter*, or *shabnameh* in Dari or Pashtun, which was used to reinforce fear and exert control over the population.¹³⁹ An example of a Night Letter shown below (Figure 5.2) was found nailed to the door of a resident's home in Arghandab District in the fall of 2008 for apparently speaking to ISAF forces or essentially supporting the counter insurgents. The letter was collected immediately following a period of intense military operations that resulted from TB attempts to gain control of key villages in Arghandab District following the Sarposa Prison break, in Kandahar City.

¹³⁷Soraya Sarhaddi Nelson, "Taliban Courts Filling Justice Vacuum in Afghanistan," <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=98261034>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2010.

¹³⁸Tom Blackwell, "Taliban Rule Returning to Kandahar Province," National Post, <http://www.nationalpost.com/news/world/afghanistan/story.html?id=910866>; Internet; accessed 27 February 2010.

¹³⁹Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar*, 22.

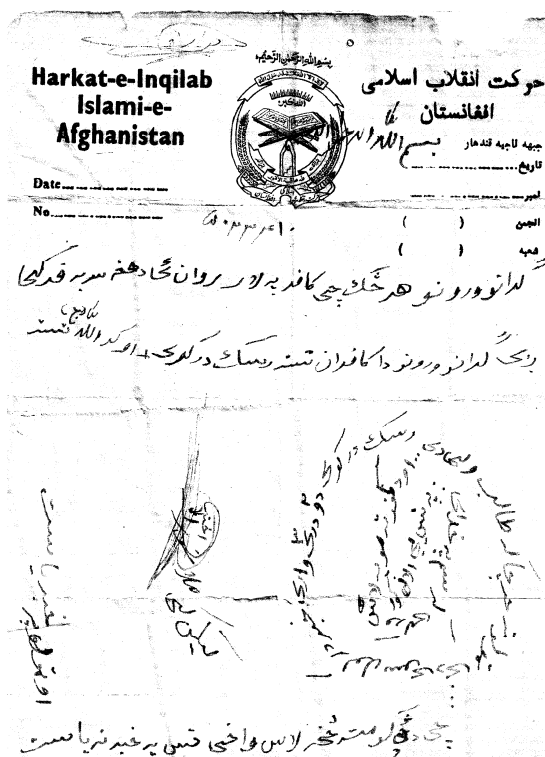


Figure 5.2 – Taliban Night Letter

Source: Tremblay, *Arghandab District, Kandahar Province*, 30 October 2008

When fully translated, the letter goes into excruciating detail on what would happen to the resident if they continued to support ISAF and the GoIRA. The resident was even fearful to destroy the letter because they usually depict symbols linked to the Koran and their destruction would be considered a sin.¹⁴⁰ The TB information operations campaign, or propaganda, has always been powerful. Originally, the purpose of public executions was to reinforce TB policy and law to locals such that there was no question to the repercussion of not following them. Due to the capabilities and instant nature of

¹⁴⁰Night Letter provided to Author on 30 October 2008 in Arghandab District, Kandahar Province. The Author was the Officer Commanding Reconnaissance Squadron as part of Canada's contribution to Operation Athena Rotation Six from September 2008 to May 2009 and was responsible security within Arghandab and Lower Shah Wali Kowt Districts.

the modern media, their messaging complemented by gruesome executions quickly highlighted across the globe what they were all about.

As previously discussed, the CF was focused primarily on Force Protection and CIED operations in Zhari and Panjwai and while effective in that area, they had essentially been contained by the TB. CF preoccupation with the area allowed the TB to again shift their focus in the 2007-2009 time frame back to gaining access to Kandahar City via Arghandab District in the North.¹⁴¹ During the summer and early fall in 2007, 2008 and 2009, the TB made three separate attempts to solidify gains in this District.¹⁴² Despite the effectiveness of the reactionary clearing operations conducted by the ANSF and ISAF, the CF never had an enduring presence of sufficient strength and density to prevent TB re-infiltration. As such, it allowed them to continue operations in Arghandab, to include the flourishing of TB courts in the district, which ultimately allowed for an increase in TB presence within Kandahar City.

Due to the CF preoccupation with operations in Zhari and Panjwai, the coalition enablers that were necessary for intelligence gathering and to facilitate planning for future operations in Arghandab District were not available. This allowed the TB to increase their hold on the northern approach to Kandahar City and achieve their operational objectives of destroying GoIRA legitimacy and establishing a foot hold in Kandahar City. Prior to the arrival of US forces in the summer of 2009, the CF, who were responsible for security in Arghandab and Lower Shah Wali Kowt Districts, had only committed enough forces to project approximately 100 troops in an area of 1500

¹⁴¹Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar* . . . , 36.

¹⁴²*Ibid.*, 37-54.

square kilometers.¹⁴³ Even after the US arrival and a troop concentration increase of approximately 200%, ISAF had only committed 5% of its fighting forces to operations in Arghandab while reinforcing or expanding into areas of less strategic value to the TB. The trend of ISAF perhaps not deploying troops to areas of strategic importance to the TB appears not to be a new phenomenon. In 2006, ISAF had approximately three Brigades of International combat troops in Southern Afghanistan and almost none were present in Kandahar City, the publically proclaimed objective of the TB.¹⁴⁴ Due the coalition's inability to accurately understand TB objectives and CoGs, the insurgency was able to operate in relative freedom while ISAF facilitated their own containment by ineffective troop deployments.

CONCLUSION

It is commonly accepted that although the counter insurgents have the military force, the insurgents have the time. It is certainly understood that a CI demands much more than conflict termination and that true success can only be measured by conflict resolution. Unfortunately, there is a lack of strategic patience among counter insurgents and are therefore less likely to be committed to a protracted conflict. This lack of commitment clearly favors the insurgent in their goal of achieving a strategic stalemate or the culmination of the counter insurgent. This phenomenon is also widely characteristic

¹⁴³The Author was the Officer Commanding Reconnaissance Squadron as part of Canada's contribution to Operation Athena Rotation Six from September 2008 to May 2009 and was responsible security within Arghandab and Lower Shah Wali Kowt Districts.

¹⁴⁴Forsberg, *The Taliban's Campaign for Kandahar* . . . , 25.

of the local population of the host nation as well. If they begin to feel that the conflict will be protracted and resolution will not come quickly from CI operations, they would rather make concessions and opt for TB rule. A prolonged campaign is usually a necessity in CI operations, however, time gives the advantage to the insurgent.

The TB consistently took advantage of strategic opportunities throughout their campaign plan to advance their objectives in attempts to regain control of Kandahar City. While coalition forces attempted to learn the CI fight and deal with insufficient troop density to effect sound doctrine, the TB were able to utilize dispersed asymmetric tactics to achieve tactical, operational and strategic impact. Compounding the challenges of inadequate force numbers, coalition forces became tied to expensive and dispersed tactical infrastructure. While attempting to hold ground with the coalition and contained in the far corners of the province, the TB were free to isolate the locals and begin the process of legitimizing their actions through the establishment of services not provided by the GoIRA. It was only when the coalition fully applied their CI doctrine did they have any true effect on the insurgency. However, this effect was limited because it was very much focused and had insufficient impact on the insurgency that spread over the entire province and country. Although CF CI doctrine is sound, the lack of resources, patience and consistent political will to apply all WoG and military enablers throughout the province and country will lead to a challenging and very long road to defeating the insurgency. If one considers the TB as the primary adversary of the insurgency, their actions and evolution in terms of tactics and strategy remain largely consistent since 2005 and continue to mirror the characteristics of the BN insurgency model.

While this paper will not discuss in detail the impact of terminology specific to describing an insurgent or their motives, it is important to quickly introduce several terms

that could potentially form the foundation for future research. Robert Crews and Amin Tarzi introduce evolutionary terms such as 'Moderate' and 'Neo-Taliban' to better describe the current day insurgent of Afghanistan. The belief is that after the defeat of the TB in 2001, the TB was completely destroyed and that whatever new form of insurgent followed suit could not be referred to by the same term. In their opinion, doing so would not effectively describe any new movement or manifestation of the former. They also go on to discuss how the TB have labeled themselves differently, such as Mujahedin, in order to legitimize themselves and foster closer connections with the local population.¹⁴⁵ While the TB may align themselves with other groups to gain credibility, locals and other regional militaries will utilize labels such as 'miscreant' to nullify TB intentions and actions. By removing any reference to religion or a historical tie to fighting for the people, the TB was unable to justify their existence or their criminal methods of attempting to regain control of the region.

¹⁴⁵Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi, *The Taliban and the Crisis in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 238-310.

CHAPTER SIX - CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Know the war you're in.

Carl von Clausewitz

This paper has argued that CF doctrine for CI warfare could only be successful at the strategic level if there was unwavering political will to succeed. By focussing on the mission in Southern Afghanistan since 2005, and specifically Kandahar Province, the most relevant experiences of the CF could be utilized in the development of this argument. The evolution of CF CI doctrine in relation to political will and insurgent objectives was examined. The analysis of these points reinforced that the catalyst for success was a committed, fully integrated WoG approach supported by a clearly articulated campaign plan that extended from the strategic to the tactical level. Democratic nations will always maintain civil control over their militaries, which are essentially a strategic arm or extension of the government. It is therefore understandable how political will can directly influence the manner in which military forces are equipped, manned and operate during operations. These factors will impact tactical action and ultimately strategic mission success.

The historic reliance on military forces alone, even through the execution of sound and proven CI doctrine, is no longer a viable option to defeat modern insurgencies. Success demands that both military and civilian agencies, be they focused on security, governance, reconstruction or developmental efforts, work in close cooperation to achieve national objectives. It is only through a willingness to evolve doctrinally and through close cooperation that Canada can ensure war winning effects on the ground. These effects must be synergized such that they will directly influence and affect those

areas that are of strategic significance to the TB, which will effectively dislocate them from their power and influence in the region allowing the people of Afghanistan to reclaim their country.

Since first establishing the KPRT in 2005, the concept has evolved. It can now, in partnership with its civilian colleagues whom have increased in number and capacity, provide directed and valuable reconstruction assistance and facilitate capacity building throughout Kandahar Province. While operating in a dangerous environment, the KPRT has the integral capacity to force project where needed to provide assistance and protect their personnel without becoming reliant on other security forces in the execution of Canada's WoG objectives. Some academic writings have suggested that the PRT construct could form the building blocks for future Brigade or BG structures. Based on current successes, such a structure with the necessary GoC and OGD commitment could provide essential support to all lines of operations to include governance, reconstruction and development as well as security.

CI operations tend to become protracted in nature and demand long term commitment to achieve conflict termination and resolution. Many objectives may require a generation to complete and therefore demand that contributing nations exercise a degree of strategic patience. Nations that have democratically elected governments, traditionally the countries who contribute to international operations, must therefore balance their foreign policy commitments with public opinion such that they do not commit political suicide. With commitments such as Afghanistan, the mission may very well extend through several governments, all of whom have their own opinions specific to the commitment. A variance in opinion will obviously impact political will and will influence military action in order to meet refined strategic objectives. Within the context

of a long term CI campaign, governments who change strategic objectives or create arbitrary timelines to achieve them will constrain counter insurgents and promote the embellishment of strategic successes. In reality, they have only increased the probability of mission failure. CF CI doctrine and the Canadian WoG approach in international commitments such as Afghanistan are sound and practically proven methods of operation. However, their implementation must be done in an integrated manner such that all lines of operation are addressed collectively in the achievement of all strategic objectives.

The issue of nomenclature was briefly introduced in chapter five and while superficial in nature, it did highlight the potential impact, positive or negative, of labeling the insurgent. Labeling is a powerful method of communicating what an organization represents and can portray an image that will yield additional influence or support for their purpose. From an insurgent's perspective, Western forces and agencies often assign labels that, due to historical connotations or translation, often reinforce insurgent efforts and do more harm than good. Counter insurgents from nations with similar regional or religious backgrounds are more in tune with terminology. From a Canadian perspective, we too must learn from them and further evolve our doctrine and TTPs to portray insurgents as they should be and not what they pretend to be. This area is certainly worth additional study and could be easily included within CF CI doctrine and training systems in order to better prepare CF personnel for CI operations of today and tomorrow.

The successful execution of CF CI doctrine and WoG operations therefore demands enduring political commitment with a long term, well communicated strategic campaign plan that is enabled by strong political leadership. Anything less than full commitment will only marginalize the efforts of those counter insurgents, military and

civilian alike, who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in achieving Canada's strategic objectives.

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