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Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Counter-Insurgency Warfare Theory: A Perfect Match?

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ABSTRACT

This study overviews the common requirements for Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and counterinsurgency (COIN) warfare and argues that they should be complementary efforts.

This paper compares COIN theory with PRT guiding principles based upon the factors Government, Population and Insurgents, which are all core aspects of COIN warfare. The conclusions are that the most important common requirement is the support of the government. This is the most important contribution to COIN warfare. The PRT guiding principles focus on facilitating the government and this is in accordance with COIN theory. When the government provides increased service to the population it will link the government and the population closer together and isolate the insurgents from the population.

The PRT guiding principles do not address the insurgents specifically, but the whole PRT concept is based upon an indirect approach to defeat the insurgency – defeat them by isolating them from the people.

This paper also states the obvious – there is no NATO PRT doctrine. Unity of effort is difficult without a common doctrine and NATO should develop a PRT doctrine based upon COIN theory to ensure success in PRT operations in Afghanistan and in future areas of operations.

Furthermore, the study also discusses the relationship between development and security because this relationship is an important part of COIN theory and American

COIN doctrine. Both are based upon the conception that increased development efforts will reduce the level of violence in a conflict area. This paper argues that unprofessionally planned and executed development projects might be counter productive for the security situation and more research is required to properly define the relation between development and security. Military forces must concentrate on security related tasks while executing the role as gap filler, when there is no civilian capacity to solve the non-military tasks.

INTRODUCTION

Military institutions are often criticized for preparing for the last war instead of looking toward the future and analyzing how the next war will be. This is especially true today when most NATO nations are involved in counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan with no concurrent clear and present conventional threat to the western world. Conventional warfare aim is to amass firepower on the battlefield in order to destroy the enemy while counterinsurgency warfare is fought among the populace and aimed to protect the populace from insurgents. Conventional warfare requires military organizations to be able to fight and defeat an equivalent force on a battlefield. The training and exercises done by NATO during the Cold War in preparation for a potential war with the former Soviet Union reflect the demands in a conventional war. The military objective was to defeat the enemy forces on the battlefield.

Counterinsurgency warfare, on the other hand, has no equivalent opposing force to fight. The battlefield is among the local population and the challenge is to separate the insurgents from the population without losing support from the local inhabitants. The military efforts must carefully use its' firepower in order to eliminate or minimize civilian casualties. The local population is often the main focus for military force in counterinsurgency warfare while in conventional warfare it is the enemy forces.

Western military forces have been fighting a counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan since 2001. The Afghan Army and the international military force are not fighting a conventional battle against the resistance. The enemy blends into the population and he could be a Pashtun, motivated by religion, a farmer who wants to

protect his opium production or a power broker who wants to maintain his position. The international community has realized that a comprehensive approach toward achieving peace and stability to a holistic problem in a failed state such as Afghanistan cannot be done by military force alone.

The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) concept was established to improve the difficult situation in Afghanistan and the first PRT was deployed to Afghanistan in late 2002 with the purpose of providing stability by the use of diplomatic, security and development resources.[1] This civil-military entity should be able to operate in unstable areas. The military component should provide sufficient security in order for a wide range of nation building activities to take place.

This paper will try to answer if the PRT concept is aligned with counterinsurgency warfare theory. The main argument is that it requires more than military capacity to defeat an insurgency; efforts must be focused on the population and it must have the capacity to endure a prolonged war. This study will check if PRT concept fulfils these necessities. This study will overview: The common requirements of provincial reconstruction teams and counter-insurgency warfare. This thesis will argue that these should be complementary efforts and that both need to be revised and aligned in support of common objectives.

It will include a study of insurgency/counterinsurgency warfare theory and PRT doctrinal documents. The comparison between COIN warfare theory and the PRT concept will be based on the factors "The Population", "The Insurgents" and "The

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[1]International Security Assistance Force, ISAF PRT Handbook, Edition 4, page 8, available from http://www.unamagroups.org/civil-militaryresourses , accessed 13 April 2010.

Government". The relationship between security and development will also be addressed within the thesis because the COIN theory takes it for granted that lack of development is a source of violence. There is a key flaw in the COIN theory if this relationship does not exist, and therefore it must be addressed.

The aim of the study

There are 26 PRTs in Afghanistan as of January 2009. The PRTs have been a key tool for troop contributing nations to engage on provincial level in the country[2]. The study will try to indicate to what extent the PRT concept is in accordance with warfare theory and how it potentially can increase the alignment. The war in Afghanistan may be at a tipping point and it is of great importance that every effort made in the theatre is made in the most efficient way to ensure victory over the Afghan insurgency. A PRT concept in line with COIN warfare theory would focus the provincial level effort towards the aim of separating the insurgents from the population, and eliminating the insurgents' influence over the local inhabitants. This paper will identify areas for improvements for the PRT concept.

 PRT Related Research

It is a long time since President John F. Kennedy warned about the new type of warfare, but the military and research community lost interest in the COIN topic after the Vietnam War. The Cold War was the theme until the 90s and the last decade of the last

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[2] Barbara Stapleton, J, A Means to What End? Why PRTs are Peripheral to the Bigger Political Challenges in Afghanistan, *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Vol. 10, Issue 1, Fall 2007, 2.

century focused on humanitarian intervention with the experiences in Somalia, Yugoslavia and Rwanda fresh in mind. Today there are a number of different research papers addressing the counterinsurgency topic and there are also numerous studies, which relate to provincial reconstruction teams. The period after 9/11 with wars in Afghanistan and Iraq renewed the interest of how to effectively counter an insurgency and how the military armed forces should contribute to the fight the insurgents.

PRTs in Afghanistan – A Model for Future Nation Building Operations

One author who has addressed the provincial reconstruction team concept is Michael A. Hochwart a colonel in the German Army. He has written a monograph titled "The Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan – A Model for Future Nation Building Operations".[3] Colonel Hochwart is a former PRT Commander and he uses his own experience from Afghanistan to enlighten the reader about the PRT concept. He briefly compares the German, British and American approach to PRT operations and he states in his conclusion that the fight against insurgents must be done in a "Whole of Government" approach and not just from each troop contributing country, but with a multi-national structure. Colonel Hochwart does not discuss the division of labour between military and civilian entities, but indicates that NATO could use the existing command and control structure to facilitate such a multinational structure. Furthermore, the paper does not consider the core competence of military forces or the fact that the

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[3] Michael A. Hochwart. *The Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: A model for future Nation Building Operations*, United States Army Command and General Staff College, (Forth Leavenworth, Kansas, May 2009).

international community already has an overarching coordination institution – The United Nations.

Programming Development Funds to Support a Counterinsurgency

Michelle Parker is another Afghanistan veteran who has done PRT related research. She served for two and a half years in Afghanistan working for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) as a development advisor and she also served for United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Michelle Parker has done a case study called "Programming Development Funds to Support a Counterinsurgency: A Case Study of Nangarhar, Afghanistan in 2006".[4] She has described a way for programming development funds to counter insurgents in the Nangarhar Province in Eastern Afghanistan. The paper illustrates an eight step process for project implementation with the aim of creating maximum stability in an insurgency environment. She defines stability as the government's ability to having monopoly of force and stability can be depicted as a relation between government effectiveness and legitimacy.[5] The eight step process should be a quality control mechanism for ensuring that the resources used by USAID stayed focused on improving stability.

The eight step process was implemented by the American PRT in Nangarhar and Michelle Parker concludes with the importance of understanding the battlespace and the

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[4] Michelle Parker. *Programming Development Funds to Support a Counterinsurgency: A Case Study of Nangarhar, Afghanistan in 2006*, Center for technology and National Security Policy, (Washington DC, 2007).

[5] Ibid, 3.

need for knowledge among the decision makers in order to achieve the greatest effect. She emphases how support from the military part of the PRT, such as the intelligence cell and planning cell, increased her own situational awareness and therefore enabled her to make better decisions. The paper does not address the relation between stability and development and how the different timelines might influence the battlespace and it does not give any good solutions on how to further engage the local and provincial authorities in the process.

PRTs: How Do We Know They Work?

The Centre of Naval Analyses deployed two academics to Afghanistan to assess if the PRTs are useful part of the American COIN-strategy in Afghanistan and could another organization replace the PRT? The research paper is named "Provincial Reconstruction Teams: How Do We Know They Work?"[6] Dr Gerald Meyerle and Dr Carter Malkasian went to Afghanistan to do field research in 2007 and in 2008. They visited US PRTs in Khost, Kunar, Ghazni and Nuristan and included interviews with the leadership of 10 other PRTs. The researchers from the Centre of Naval Analyses conclude that the PRTs are making a positive contribution to the COIN efforts in Afghanistan because they have been able to strengthen governance by delivery of public services and reducing corruption.

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[6] Carter Malkasian and Geyerle Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: How do they Work*? Strategic Studies Institute, US Army College, Carlisle, (Pennsylvania, March 2009).

Dr Meyerle and Dr Malkasian produced one particular interesting fact. They studied the relationship between money spent in each province and district with number of attacks from insurgents and determined that the PRTs are not able to reduce the level of violence. The attacks increased and the PRT spending increased dramatically at the same time.[7] This suggests that there may be no relation between security and development. Furthermore, the paper does not specify how the reconstruction efforts of the US Army engineers improve stability. The paper does not question if the leadership of the PRTs have the necessary background and knowledge to engage in large scale nation building activities and if these activities could be considered mission creep.

There is a renewed interest in counterinsurgency warfare after 9/11. There are a number of different COIN related projects published, including PRT related research. This paper has briefly reviewed three of the PRT related research projects. Colonel Hockwart supports the idea of the whole of government approach and that PRT construct is a good way to implement it on the tactical level. He also wants NATO to take on a greater role in the civil-military integration on a higher level. Michelle Parker has studied project implementation in support of the struggle against insurgents. She has developed a project implementation process which ensures that the resources used are directed in support of the COIN battle. The study supported by the Center of Naval Analyses concludes that the PRTs make a positive contribution to the COIN efforts by their focus on good governance. There is a wide range of research covering COIN warfare and provincial reconstruction teams, but there is not a study, which specifically addresses the

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[7] Ibid, 11.

PRT concept in relation to warfare theory. This paper might fill that gap and could potentially support a future development of a PRT doctrine.

Method and Validity

The research method of this paper is a study of warfare theory – insurgency and counterinsurgency warfare and a study of documents related to Provincial Reconstruction Teams. The study will be conducted as comparative analyses in which the theory of counterinsurgency (COIN) warfare will be compared and contrasted to the common requirements of provincial reconstruction teams. This comparison is important because the PRTs are supposed to be a tool to defeat an insurgency and if the requirements of the PRTs do not align with the theory of COIN warfare it might be an indication of a potential need to reorient the PRT operations. The more the PRT requirements side with the theory of warfare the more effective the PRTs' engagement will be in the struggle against the insurgency.

Literature and other sources

The classic insurgency/counterinsurgency literature is used to describe these kinds of warfare. Books written by authors like David Gaula, Robert Taber, Giap Vo and Mao Tse Tung are used to explain warfare. The American author a contemporary counterinsurgent specialist, John Nagl is also used and his thinking is very much based upon the classic literature adapted to the modern battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan. John Nagl is also an important contributor to the US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual.

The chapter speaking to the relationship between security and development is based upon Mary B. Anderson's publications, research by Andrew Wilder and Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief.

There is no official Provincial Reconstruction Team doctrine. The main literature is the US Army PRT Playbook and PRT Handbook published by the International Security Assistance Force HQ in Kabul. Most of the NATO documents addressing PRT issues are unfortunately classified and therefore not part of this paper. However, the NATO unclassified PRT documents are included in the research.

The lack of an official NATO PRT doctrine and limited access to NATO PRT documents are a potential weakness of the research. It is difficult to analyse a doctrine, which does not exist. On the other hand, this paper might point out that the absence of a PRT doctrine can be hindering a successful execution of counterinsurgency warfare.

Vocabulary

Students who study counterinsurgency will come across terms like Stability, Development, Reconstruction and Humanitarian Aid. It is important to clarify the terms in order to reach a higher understanding of the subject.

Stability Operations is defined in US Army Field Manual 3-07 as:

> Various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the
> United States in coordination with other instruments of national power
> to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide
> essential government services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction,
> and humanitarian relief.[8]

This is a broad definition including reconstruction, provision of public services and humanitarian relief. Stability operations will end when following aspects have reached a sufficient level of success, a safe and secure environment, established rule of law, social well-being, stable governance and sustainable economy. This is not a task for military forces alone but a coordinated effort from all instruments of national power. [9]

Development or development aid is defined as aid given by governments or other agencies to support economic, social and political development of Third World Countries.

Humanitarian assistance or humanitarian aid is defined as:

> Aid to an affected population that seeks, as its primary purpose, to save lives and alleviate suffering. Humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality.[10]

Humanitarian aid is the immediate life saving activities provided according to the humanitarian principles. Development differs from humanitarian aid by time perspective. Humanitarian aid will safe lives alleviate suffering and facilitate human dignity in the short term. Development, on the other hand, is focusing on the long term.

Reconstruction is the act or result of reconstructing.[11] The reconstruction can be

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[8] US Army Field Manual 3-07, *Stability Operations*, (Headquarters of the Army, October 2008), iv.

[9] Ibid, 1-16.

[10] ISAF Frage 204-2008, Implementation of Guidelines for the Interaction and Coordination of Humanitarian Actors and Military Actors in Afghanistan, 30 July 2008, available at http://www.unamagroups.org/civil-militaryresourses, Accessed 18 April 2010, 2.

looked upon as a part of the term development, but limited to the physical act of rebuilding. Development includes, in addition to reconstruction, improvement of human resources, governmental processes, and other non-tangible projects.

Stability operations differ from development, reconstruction and humanitarian aid because of the purpose of the activities. Stability operations include all of the above mentioned terms, but the aim is always a safe and secure environment and not to save lives and alleviate human suffering. It is also worth mentioning that military forces in a conflict area such as Afghanistan cannot do humanitarian assistance according to the definition because the military forces are not impartial or neutral.

Outline of the paper

This study is divided into five chapters in addition to the introduction and conclusion. The first chapter will describe important aspects of insurgency and counterinsurgency warfare and explain the selection of factors. A chapter addressing the relationship between security and development will follow first chapter outlining the warfare theory. Chapter three will explain the PRT concept and illustrate essential principles with the PRT model. Chapter four will explore the PRT concept by describing the PRT contribution to the COIN efforts in Afghanistan. The last chapter will assess to what extent the PRT concept overlaps with COIN warfare theory.

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[11] Pocket Oxford English Dictionary, Ninth Edition, New York, 2002.

CHAPTER ONE – INSURGENCY AND COUNTERINSURGENCY WARFARE THEORY

This chapter will introduce the reader to insurgency and counter insurgency warfare theory. It will highlight the features, which characterize these types of warfare, and the chapter will be followed by an overview of the relationship between security and development.

Insurgency warfare

In order to plan a counterinsurgency campaign one must understand insurgency. What are the rules of an insurgency – how can you describe it? Insurgency warfare is a struggle between the insurgents and the government for the support of the population.[12] It is warfare because the insurgents are aiming for a political goal and victory is not achieved before this goal is reached. Insurgency warfare is, in other words, the extension of politics by means of armed conflict or "an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will".[13] The term insurgency is defined by the US military as "an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict."[14] The insurgents will also use non-violent means in their resistance against the government. The insurgents in Afghanistan, as an example, have a reputation of being effective in using information as part of their campaign against the Afghan

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[12] David Gaula. *Counterinsurgency Warfare*.(Westport: Preager Security International, 1964), Viii.

[13] Karl Von Clausewitz, *On War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 75.

[14] US Army*, Counterinsurgency Field Manual*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 2.

government.[15]. However, the two main features describing an insurgency are that it is organized and directed against the government.

The insurgents and the population

The population plays a critical part of insurgency warfare because the insurgents are dependent upon the support of the population to defeat the government. There is always a two-way relationship between the government and the people: the support of the population is a prerequisite for governance. The alternative is chaos. The population must support the government by free will or it will be impossible to exercise political control over the nation.   Furthermore, the insurgents cannot operate without support from the population; it needs their assistance for sanctuaries, supplies and information.   The insurgents will hide among the population and they will be a part of the population. Without such support, the insurgents would be considered as criminals. The importance of the population is well described by Mao Tse Tung in the code of conduct for the communist insurgents regulating how they should relate to the local population.[16] The code of conduct should facilitate the relation between the population and the insurgents. Mao realized that it would be difficult to wage a guerrilla war without the support from the people.

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[15] Washington Post, "*Commander ISAF's Initial Assessment*", 30 August, 2009, available from http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/Assessment_Redacted_092109.pdf, 15, accessed 14 April 2010.

[16] Mao Tse-Tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare*. (Champaign, University of Illinois Press, 1961), 92.

The insurgents and the military force

There is often an asymmetry between the insurgents and the military forces supporting the government. Insurgents will use their less equipped fighters to strike where the government forces are weak. One example is when General Giap attacked the French forces vulnerable spots in Vietnam and made the French disperse their strengths throughout the country.[17] The final outcome was that the French were defeated in the battle of Dien Bien Phu and the French military engagement ended in Vietnam.[18] This asymmetry might also lead to wars of long duration.

The insurgents are normally not strong enough to defeat the government forces in a decisive battle and will therefore use attrition of forces to weaken the government militarily and morally. Mao believed in "trading space for time" and established five guidelines for insurgent warfare:

> 1. When the enemy is in overextended defence, and sufficient force can not be concentrated against him, guerrillas must disperse, harass him, and demoralize him.
> 2 When encircled by the enemy, guerrillas disperse to withdraw.
> 3 When the nature of the ground limits action, they disperse.
> 4 When the availability of supplies limits action, they disperse.
> 5 Guerrillas disperse in order to promote mass movements over wide area.[19]

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[17] Vo, Nguyen Giap. *People's War, People's Army: The Viet Cong Insurrection Manual forUnderdeveloped Countries.* (New York: Preager, 1962), 25.

[18] Bernard Fall, Hell *in a Very Small Place: The Siege of Dien Bien Phu,* (New York, J.B. Lippincott Company, 1967), 460.

[19] Mao Tse-Tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare…* 102.

The principle of live to fight another day was important to Mao. He understood that insurgents had to use time in order to achieve the final victory. When the insurgents are not strong enough militarily to defeat the government forces they must avoid a decisive battle and use the population as a cover and attack the opponent's weaknesses. The idea is that it is easier for the insurgents to chose time and space for attack than for the government forces to defend the whole country and at the same time find and neutralize the insurgents. It takes fewer resources for the party who can decide when and where to attack while the other party must secure all the potential targets all the time. Therefore, the insurgents can use time to slowly weaken the opponent while promoting his ideas among the population.

The insurgents will use the attacks to disperse the government security forces and the attacks might be perceived as an indication of limited government control, which would be in the insurgents' favour.[20] In insurgency theory, according to Robert Taber, the insurgents will benefit from a protracted war because it will be expensive for the government to battle an enemy which can choose time and space for attack. The attacks will further decrease the support of the government by the population. This is also in accordance with General Giap's view on insurgency warfare. He advocates for "the strategy of the long-term war" when the insurgents are fighting a better trained and equipped force. The Vietnamese insurgents had not initially the capacity to beat the

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[20] Robert Taber. *War of the Flea: The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare*. (Dulles: Potomac Books Inc, 2002), 40.

French forces in a swift battle, but had to use time to build their own capacity and wear down the French forces.[21]

Armed insurgency is warfare. It is organized and it has a political aim and uses the sources of power available to the insurgents. This includes subversion, violent and non-violent means like propaganda. The population is source of operational freedom for the insurgents. They are dependent upon the population for support in order to operate. Furthermore, the insurgency is directed against a government and the asymmetry between the government forces and the insurgents often leads to a protracted war. The response to insurgency warfare is counterinsurgency warfare.

Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory

This chapter will introduce the reader to counterinsurgency (COIN) warfare theory. It will highlight the features, which characterize counterinsurgency. COIN warfare differs from conventional warfare mainly in its dependence upon a high level of civilian contribution and cooperation as essential to its success. This combination invites more complexity in a COIN campaign than in more conventional ones. For example, Gaula states that a COIN campaign includes 80 % political power and 20% military power.[22] Essentially, military forces have the choice between the direct or indirect approach in fighting insurgents in a COIN campaign.

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[21] Giap. *People's War, People's Arm...* 46.

[22] David Gaula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*. (Westport: Preager Security International, 1964), 63.

The direct approach

The direct approach in COIN warfare focuses on the annihilation of the insurgents. The military forces search for the enemy and use military power to neutralize the insurgents. For example, the American strategy in Vietnam was based upon its advantages in superior firepower and technology.[23] The "search and destroy" strategy, which was supported by General Westmoreland, sought out Vietnamese insurgents and engaged them with superior firepower.[24]

The indirect approach

However, such direct approaches do not go without their problems and opponents. For example, US Marine General Victor H. Krulak criticized the American direct approach to insurgency in Vietnam in 1965. He states that when the act of killing insurgents results in destroying friendly areas, the actions could lead to more damage than good. Furthermore, the number of dead enemies is not a good indicator of success.[25]

The American war effort in Vietnam highlighted the limitations of pure military power in COIN warfare. The use of military force will not necessarily separate insurgents from the local population. The direct approach in COIN warfare does not consider the power and the significant role that the population plays in COIN warfare.

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[23] John Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam.* (Westport: Preager, 2002), 115.

[24] Ibid, 156.

[25] Neil Sheehan. *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam.*(New York, Random House, 1988), 636.

The indirect approach to COIN warfare focuses on the population and not the insurgents. The aim is to turn the loyalty of the people from support of the insurgents to support of the government. The support of the people is critical to both the insurgents and to the government. The insurgents need their support in order to operate and the government needs it to govern.

The indirect approach in COIN warfare places more focus on the population instead of the insurgents. [26] The aim is to turn the people's loyalty toward the insurgents into a support of a functioning government. The support of the people is critical to the success of the insurgents or of the government. Insurgencies need the support of the people as much as the government does in order to survive and operate.

The protection of the populace becomes the core task in the indirect approach and COIN forces must fight the insurgents while still protecting the overall population. The forces fighting the insurgents must apply a high level of caution when using force because an excessive use might be counterproductive to the population's approval of them.

Clear, hold, build operations

The Counterinsurgency Field Manual No. 3-24 describes the typical COIN operation in three different phases. The initial phase protects the population, stops the insurgent activities and sets conditions for future activities. The second phase will start

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[26] US Army, *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 152.

prioritising long-term recovery projects once security is established and conditions for development are set. The long process of building local capacity then begins and intelligence gathering continues in order to hinder the return of insurgents to the area. The last phase includes the transfer of security responsibilities to the state's police forces in which the local authorities are then able to function at a satisfactory level according to local standards.[27]

The above-mentioned COIN operation is called a "Clear-Hold-Build" Operation in accordance with the US Army COIN field manual.[28] A Clear-Hold-Build operation is a combination of the direct and indirect approach to counterinsurgency. The Clear Phase of the operation aims to remove the insurgents by using military force with minimal impact on the local population. In this phase, the use of firepower must be very prudent in order to avoid collateral damage and to ensure support from the populace.

The Hold Phase focuses on securing the population and enabling the state's authorities to implement visible projects in order to increase the level of service to the inhabitants.   Finally, the Build Phase reduces the presence of COIN forces and the security responsibility is handed over to the state's armed forces and police. By this stage, local authorities should have initiated long-term development projects with or without the

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[27] Ibid, 153.

[28] Ibid, 174.

cooperation of other civilian actors. A Clear-Hold-Build operation has the greatest effect when it begins in a secure area and spreads out like ink from the starting point.[29]

The indirect approach emphasis the non-military aspects of the conflict such as governance, economic development and basic public services.[30] The COIN theory is based upon the notion that there is a correlation between development and security. The more the nation develops in terms of infrastructure and human capacity, the less influence the insurgents will have and the more secure the society will be. This relationship will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Division of labour

In COIN warfare there is division of labour between the military forces and the civilian actors in the theatre of war. History provides examples of military forces being used as gap fillers in the absence of civilian functions when there is no alternative. For example the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) was established in 1966 in South Vietnam as an alternative to the conventional fight against the Vietnamese insurgents. This was a civil-military organization with the aim of undermining the insurgency by protecting the population and implementing nation-building programs to facilitate the South Vietnamese government.[31] The civilian component was responsible for community development and the military component was

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[29] Ibid, 174.

[30] Ibid, 156.

[31] Neil Sheehan,. *A Bright Shining Lie*,… 657.

responsible for security issues. The CORDS was in many ways the forerunner of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams

Another example of the division of labour among military and civilian actors is currently taking place in Afghanistan in the field of humanitarian assistance. In Afghanistan there is an agreed upon guideline between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA), United Nation Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA), Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the military forces deployed in the country.[32] The agreement states that the military forces should only provide humanitarian assistance in exceptional circumstances and ultimately as a last resort. This clear division of labour is done to protect the security and neutrality of humanitarian personnel and to ensure implementation of the principle of humanity.

In summation, there are two distinct different approaches to COIN warfare: the direct approach and the indirect approach. The direct approach has a weakness because it does not address the local population in fight against the insurgents. The American main strategy in Vietnam used the direct approach philosophy with no success. The indirect approach focuses on the population and it aims to win the loyalty from the local population and thereby hinder the insurgents' ability to operate. The main effort in the indirect approach is non-military and the division of labour between civilian and military actors is of critical importance to such a COIN campaign. The US established civil-

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[32] HQ ISAF FRAGO 204-2008, Implementation of Guidelines for the Interaction and Coordination of Humanitarian Actors and Military Actors in Afghanistan, 30 July 2008, available at http://www.unamagroups.org/civil-militaryresourses, accessed 14 April 2010.

military entities to coordinate the civilian and military efforts in Vietnam and these organizations could be looked upon as the forefather of today's Provincial Reconstruction Teams. Furthermore, the US COIN doctrine has established a COIN operation type called Clear-Hold-Build, which is a combination of the direct approach and the indirect approach to COIN warfare. The US COIN doctrine is based upon the notion that there is a relationship between security and development.

CHAPTER TWO - THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY

This chapter will discuss the relationship between development activities and security. The US COIN doctrine is based upon the assumption that military means alone cannot solve a conflict, and that all instruments of national power must contribute to victory.[33] The fundamental question is if development activities can support the peace effort or if they provide more incentives for the insurgents cause? Taylor McNeil has explored this question and he maintains that it is an assumption that development activities support the COIN effort and if they are not applied with care they can be counter productive. [34]

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[33] US Army, *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007, 53.

[34] McNeil, Taylor, The Real Problem in Afghanistan, *Tufts Journal*, 23 September 2009.

Local effects of development activities

Although large-scale development activities can bring much needed resources to a given area, such an influx of money could promote corruption among local officials. Not only will corrupt officials create antipathy among the populace, they will be counter-productive in a fight against any insurgency.

Development activities can influence the local market for goods and services. While most businesses will benefit from the increased circulation of money in the local economy, some businesses might face challenges due to the increased presence of international development. For example, business that can offer wages above the local standard will naturally attract more employees, and international development actors have the ability to induce higher wages in crises areas.[35] Therefore, development actors must act carefully in order to ensure that their activities do not inflate cost of living to exceptionally high levels. This might undermine the long-term development in an area and cause resentment among people who are negatively affected by development activities.

Distribution of aid

Another example of potential challenges with development activities is to place uneven priorities among stable and unstable areas of a country. If the least secure areas

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[35] Mary B.Anderson, Mary B. *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – or War*. (Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 1999), 46.

receive a disproportionate share of the development resources, the more stable areas could see at as unfair treatment and not see the incentives to further develop the stability since the resources are directed against the unstable areas. The study done by Dr Meyerle and Dr Malkasian discovered that during a time of increased spending on PRT projects the number of security related incidents increased.[36] This indicates that development activities should be based purely upon development goals and not be subjected to security considerations.

Humanitarian aid

A parallel to development aid is humanitarian aid. Humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality.[37] Many humanitarian organizations promote the protection of the so-called "Humanitarian Space". Doctors Without Borders define Humanitarian Space as "a space of freedom in which we are free to evaluate needs, free to monitor the distribution and use of relief goods, and free to have a dialogue with the people". The philosophy of humanitarian work is that it should be based upon the principles of

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[36] Carter Malkasian and Geyerle Meyerle, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams: How do they Work*? Strategic Studies Institute, US Army College, (Carlisle, Pennsylvania, March 2009), 11.

[37] Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defense Assets in Disaster Relief -–"Oslo Guidelines" Rev. I, November 2006, Homepage Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, available at http://www.wpro.who.int/internet/files/eha/toolkit/web/Technical%20References/Security/Guidelines%20on%20the%20use%20of%20military%20and%20civil%20defence%20assets%20i.pdf , accessed 14 April 2010.

neutrality and impartiality. Its primary action and aim is to reduce human suffering in a crisis area. [38]

Military forces in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan are by nature not neutral or impartial and therefore do not perform humanitarian work according to the given definition. Most humanitarian organizations want to have a clearer distinction between military tasks and humanitarian relief tasks. The argument made by the humanitarian community is that the military forces are legal targets according to laws of armed conflicts and when they engage in relief efforts the lines between military functions and humanitarian functions become blurred. Furthermore, if humanitarian assistance is provided on basis of security consideration it would violate the humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality, in addition to the principle of need-based distribution.

Another aspect of development versus security is that the two phenomena move with very different speed. The insurgents can move quickly from one area of the country to another and dramatically influence security in a short time period, while development projects are not as fluid and cannot move as rapidly. Development activities cannot be moved from one area to another like a mobile quick reaction force. Development takes months and years to plan and implement and cannot be used as a mobile COIN weapon.

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[38] Johanna Grombach Wagner, An IHL/ICRC perspective on 'humanitarian space, *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine,* available at http://www.odihpn.org/report.asp?ID=2765, accessed 14 April 2010.

Military involvement in development related activities

While the humanitarian community maintains valid arguments for a clear distinction between military and humanitarian functions, it is also important to recognize that without representatives from the humanitarian community, the military must be the gap filler. For example, the US Forces have spent more than three billion dollars in the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) since 2003.[39] CERP is "designed to enable local military commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements within their areas of responsibility by carrying out programs that will immediately assist the indigenous population."[40] The CERP is not a long-term development program. Its goal is to create stability by implementing quick impact projects for the local population. The CERP is meant to shape the battlefield with non-military means by creating an immediate effect for the local population.

While programs focusing on humanitarian needs enable military commanders to create stability in their area of operations, combat commanders must possess adequate knowledge to appropriately apply resources without causing harm. Since humanitarian aid workers and development workers are professionals who provide relief and development, it might be too optimistic to believe that combat commanders can be masters in these fields as well as in the field of war fighting.

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[39] Andy Borsman, The Commander's Emergency Response Program in Counterinsurgency Warfare: Identifying Problems and Interagency Solutions, Harvard Kennedy School, April 1, 2008, 3.

[40] Ibid, 11.

Andy Brosman's paper on CERP indicates that military use of resources for non-military purposes is not always efficient and misuse could alienate the local population. [41] Brosman suggests improved training in economic development concepts for the soldiers involved in the CERP process in order to counteract the potential for negative consequences. Furthermore, one could also suggest that civilian professionals should even review decisions with advice from military commanders in regard to the non-military aspects of the battlefield. This would also be in accordance with the "Oslo Guidelines." The guidelines state that military resources should only be used in exceptional circumstances and as a last resort.[42]

It is important to recognise that the relationship between development and security is unevenly defined. There is limited research describing this essential link, which the US COIN doctrine is partly based upon. There is no doubt that development and humanitarian activities in conflict areas have an impact on the overall security situation. For example, a sudden influx of money in an area might destabilize local markets and lead to a potential increase in corruption among state officials, reducing the level of security in the area. If development resources are predominantly used in areas characterized by a low level of security, the population in more secure parts of the state

[41] Ibid, 45.

[42] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Home page, Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defense Assets in Disaster Relief -–"Oslo Guidelines" Rev. I, November 2006, Homepage Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, available at http://www.wpro.who.int/internet/files/eha/toolkit/web/Technical%20References/Security/Guidelines%20on%20the%20use%20of%20military%20and%20civil%20defence%20assets%20i.pdf , accessed 14 April 2010, 4.

might feel left out even though they are able to provide security. Although the Commanders Emergency Response Program has given the American military a tool to address the imbalance between security and development, and influence the battlefield with non-military means, successful handling of the program requires knowledge about development and humanitarian work in order to avoid negative impacts on the local population. Military commanders must also consider how they should relate to humanitarian organizations in regard to the protection of Humanitarian Space. Military forces should be gap fillers only when there are not any civilian alternatives and further ensure that no harm is done in engaging in non-military tasks.

CHAPTER THREE - PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM "DOCTRINE"

This chapter will describe the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) "doctrine". It will describe the purpose of such an organization and the concept of PRT operations. This chapter will give an overview of unclassified publications and sources to define PRTs and give guidance to how PRTs should operate.

Description

A PRT is a civil-military organization whose primary aim is to increase the stability of a government in a semi-permissive environment and to overcome any challenges created by insurgents.[43] A PRT must not be confused with a military combat

unit or a civilian development agency. It is a temporary, ad-hoc organization focusing on stabilizing and supporting state authorities whose goal is to gradually transfer its activities to the local government. This civil-military entity can be looked upon as a source for projection of all elements of a nation's power. While the PRT structure has dedicated personnel to assist the host nation with good governance, rule of law, economic development, public infrastructure and security, the emphasis given to each department is dependant upon the situation and the balance between the civilian and military components of the PRT is set by the security situation. [44] In a stable and secure situation, more weight will be placed on the civilian part of the organization. For example, the PRT assigned to the Wardak, one of the more stable provinces in Afghanistan, is entirely civilian led, except for guards protecting the facilities.[45]

PRT Publications

Although there is no official NATO or American PRT doctrine, this chapter will outline the most important characteristics of PRTs based upon the 4th edition of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) PRT Handbook and the 2007 PRT Playbook, published by the Center for US Army Lessons Learned. Both publications are considered the two main sources of PRT doctrine-like information.

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[43] International Security Assistance Force, *ISAF PRT Handbook*, Edition 4, available from http://www.unamagroups.org/civil-militaryresourses accessed 18 April 2010.

[44] Ibid, 69.

[45] NATO Community, Turkish PRT in Afghanistan, available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYdVH0qT5po, accessed 14 April 2010.

The PRT Handbook is a document which is published and updated on a regular bases by ISAF HQ in Kabul. The purpose of the handbook is to provide guidance to the PRT contributing nations in order to enhance unity of effort.[46] The handbook is divided into three sections: PRT Concept and Intent, Implementing PRT Strategy and PRT Management and Structure.

The ISAF PRT Handbook lists a number of guiding principles for PRTs.[47] The handbook emphasises that the PRT should increase the stability in its area of operation by eliminating the causes for the insurgency while simultaneously improving the quality of local institutions. The PRT is a constructed concept aimed at fighting insurgencies with a combination of military and civilian means. Another principle is that the organization should be a fully civilian – military organization, and should work towards a shared end state with a unity of effort. The PRT should connect the host nation government with the people and isolate the insurgents form the population. Furthermore, the PRTs must contribute to make the local government more visible and effective. The military component should facilitate the local security forces by conducting joint patrols and all mentoring and guidance must be done in a discreet way to ensure a positive public perception of the local governmental organizations.

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[46] ISAF PRT Handbok, 1.

[47] Ibid, 4.

The US Army PRT Playbook's intent is to share knowledge and support discussion about PRT operations.[48] Furthermore, Annex LL to NATO Joint Force Command Brunssum Head Quarters' Operational Plan for Afghanistan gives guidance and direction to how PRTs should operate in Afghanistan. Appendix 1 to Annex LL describes the pre-deployment requirements. The lack of a safe working environment can limit nation building efforts taking place and can prolong hostilities.

Coordination

The PRTs should also coordinate with development actors the overall nation building activities in an attempt to achieve a greater unity of effort and increased support to the host nation. This coordination is to be done in order to avoid duplication in effort. The guiding principles listed in the PRT Handbook states also that the PRTs must ensure political acceptance for all projects in order to secure a long-term solution supported by local government and population. All nation-building project must take sustainability into consideration in the planning phase of the projects. The PRTs are requested to assist in the coordination between the local and central government in the host nation.

Furthermore, the PRTs should respect civil-military sensitivities. In other words, respect the humanitarian space and obey the humanitarian guidelines. The PRTs should also contribute to an even distribution of development across the host nation.

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[48] US Army, Provincial *Reconstruction Team Playbook*. (:Fort Leavenworth: Centrer for Army Lessons Learned, 2007), backside of front cover.

Command and Control might be difficult in civil-military institutions. There is not a tradition of the military being in charge of civilians who represent ministries other than ministry of defence. One solution is that the senior officer is in charge of the security related issues and the civilian is responsible for the nation-building activities. The civilian elements in the PRTs in Afghanistan report to their respective embassies or capitals and not the military chain of command. This could be problematic from a coordination and integration of civilian-military effort point of view. On the other hand, the military chain of command should not be the main coordinator of the nation-building efforts in a COIN war.

There is no NATO PRT concept at this stage, but a PRT can be portrayed as a Civil-Military ad hoc organization with the aim of creating stability and assisting the host nation on a provincial level as a part of a COIN campaign. The balance between the civil and military part of the PRT depends on the security situation. Command and Control, unity of effort and the overall coordination are unresolved issues from a "doctrinal" point of view. The PRT documents have illustrated a number of guiding principles and the next chapter will depict how the PRTs in Afghanistan apply them.

CHAPTER FOUR - PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM CONCEPT IN AFGHANISTAN

This chapter will describe how the ISAF mission uses the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) as a tool in the support of the Afghan population and the Afghan authorities and how the ISAF attempts to solve the challenge of coordinating and

aligning the activities of 26 different PRTs with Afghan development goals and NATO operational objectives.[49]

ISAF mission

The International Security Assistance Mission (ISAF) is based upon the United Nation Security Council Resolution SC/9450, 22 September 2008 and ISAF has defined the military mission as:

> ISAF, in support of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, conducts operations in Afghanistan to reduce the capability and will of the insurgency, support the growth in capacity and capability of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), and facilitate improvements in governance and socio-economic development, in order to provide a secure environment for sustainable stability that is observable to the population.

Security

> In accordance with all the relevant Security Council Resolutions, ISAF's main role is to assist the Afghan government in the establishment of a secure and stable environment. To this end, ISAF forces are conducting security and stability operations throughout the country together with the Afghan National Security Forces and are directly involved in the development of the Afghan National Army through mentoring, training and equipping.

Reconstruction and development

> Through its Provincial Reconstruction Teams, ISAF is supporting reconstruction and development (R&D) in Afghanistan, securing areas in which reconstruction work is conducted by other national and international actors.
> Where appropriate, and in close cooperation and coordination with GIROA and UNAMA representatives on the ground, ISAF is also providing practical support for R&D efforts, as well as support for

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[49] International Security Assistance Force Afghanistan homepage, available at http://www.isaf.nato.int/en/our-mission/, accessed 13 April 2010.

humanitarian assistance efforts conducted by Afghan government
organizations, international organizations, and NGOs.

Governance

ISAF, through its Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTS), is helping
the Afghan Authorities strengthen the institutions required to fully
establish good governance and rule of law and to promote human
rights. PRTs' principal mission in this respect consists of building
capacity, supporting the growth of governance structures and
promoting an environment within which governance can improve. [50]

ISAF has one main military mission, which is to fight the insurgents.
Furthermore, they have two other missions, which are to support the development of the
Afghan National Security Forces (police and military forces) and to facilitate the nation
building processes in the country. The mission statement indicates that ISAF has two
military tasks one main and one secondary – to fight the insurgency and to support to the
Afghan security forces. The PRTs are given a major responsibility to fulfil the non-
military tasks given in the ISAF mission statement. These tasks are divided into
"Reconstruction and Development" and "Governance" and not closely related to
traditional military competency but the PRTs are civil-military entities and not a military
combat unit. The PRT mission is defined in the PRT handbook in the following way:

PRTs seek to establish an environment that is stable enough for the
local GIRoA authorities, international agencies, non-government
agencies and civil society to engage in reconstruction, political
transition and social and economic development.[51]

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[50] Ibid

[51] PRT Handbook, 4.

The PRT mission is to create a stable environment by engaging in improvement of the local authorities and facilitating reconstruction and development efforts, and in some cases implement stability and development projects. The broad spectre of PRT responsibilities creates a need for coordination and alignment of activities, which are very important when different organizations are involved in the same field in order to avoid duplications and misuse of resources. This aspect is of utmost importance for PRTs since they are engaged in variety of activities from security issues to humanitarian assistance.

PRT guiding principles

The PRT guiding principles are described in the ISAF HQ PRT Handbook and in the US Army PRT Playbook. The principle of the PRT itself should focus on stability, using instruments of national power to establish a safe and secure environment. [52] A PRT will use more than military power to create stability and therefore it must be an integrated civil-military organization.

The PRT will contribute to the establishment of a situation in which the government and the people connect and at the same time separate the insurgents from the population. All the activities of the PRT should be focused on stability and to influence the triangle between the people, government and the insurgents. The PRT guiding

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[52] US Army Field Manual 3-07, *Stability Operations*, (Headquarters of the Army, October 2008), iv.

principles in regard to the government are to promote its partnership and leadership, develop governmental capacities in concert with other actors, facilitate and visualize governmental programs. The guiding principles in relation to the local population are to be the gap filler when no other actor can provide the service, identify and implement projects and coordinate these activities with other actors in the theatre. The PRT should also establish good relations with the indigenous security forces, including executing joint patrols with them, in order to develop the capacity of the local forces and to fight the insurgents.[53]

Unity of effort

The PRTs are unable to solve all the nation-building challenges alone and therefore the PRTs play an important role as a coordinator. The PRTs have no authority over civilian organizations in area of operation, but they will try to create a healthy working relationship with all relevant partners. Unity of effort is a principle of war according to Clausewitz and the meaning is that an organization or a group of organizations are applying all their efforts against a common objective. Coordination among all actors in Afghanistan is of great importance in the attempt to achieve unity of effort. The coordination in regard to the PRTs and the greater development endeavour takes place on three different levels, the strategic level represented by the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, the operational level represented by the PRT

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[53] PRT Handbook,.. 5.

Executive Steering Committee and the tactical level represented by ISAF/NATO internal coordination.

The coordinating structure on the strategic level is the Joint Coordinating and Monitoring Board (JCMB). The Board consist of seven ministerial representatives from the Afghan government and 21 representatives from the international community. The JCMB is co-chaired by a senior representative of the President and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (UNSRSG) for Afghanistan.[54] The board's goal is to coordinate all efforts in regard to the implementation of the Afghan National Development Strategy and provide high level oversight into the overall development of Afghanistan. However, the JCMB has been criticized for lack of vision, infrequent meetings and decisive decisions.[55]

Another important entity for coordination is the PRT Executive Steering Committee[56]. The PRT Executive Steering Committee has the authority to give guidance to all PRTs in Afghanistan and to assist troop contributing nations in finding suitable locations for future PRT sites. The PRT Executive Steering Committee is responsible for giving guidance and coordinating PRT operations to ensure that the operations align with

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[54]JOINT COORDINATION AND MONITORING BOARD (JCMB), Terms of Reference http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/IMG/pdf/JCMB_TOR_-_English.pdf, accessed 13 April 2010.

[55] William C Butcher, The Incomprehensible approach: Adding Structure to International Cooperation in Afghanistan, NATO Staff College, 165.

[56] PRT Executive Steering Committee, the Charter, http://www.unamagroups.org/PRTESCCharterandPRTWGCharter3Aug06en.pdf, accessed 13 April 2010.

the goals of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) and NATO's operational objectives. The members of the executive steering committee include several Afghan ministers, the UNSRSG, the NATO commander, ambassadors from PRT nations and representative from the international community, such as the World Bank and EU. The Independent Directorate for Local Governance leads the committee.

The PRT Executive Steering Committee has a very important coordinating function, but it has only produced and distributed three policy statements, two in 2006 and one in 2007.[57] The numerous challenges in Afghanistan, such as police training, army mentoring and local governance and development of local economy call for specific coordination of the PRTs' role and contribution to the different initiatives. The number of policy statements indicates that the PRT Executive Steering Committee is a dysfunctional organization.

NATO and ISAF implement the tactical level coordination of the PRTs. There are PRTs from 14 different troop-contributing countries with various foreign policy goals.[58]In other words, ISAF must coordinate and integrate the PRT effort internally before they can coordinate with other actors in their respective province. NATO and ISAF HQ have put several different PRT coherence mechanisms in place in an attempt to coordinate the efforts. The most important mechanisms are the three different military

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[57] William C Butcher, The Incomprehensible approach: Adding Structure to International Cooperation in Afghanistan, NATO Staff College, 167.

[58] Ibid,

operational plans, which address the PRTs responsibilities. In addition, NATO is providing different pre-deployment training such as the PRT Course at the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany and an exercise for ISAF HQ officer at the NATO Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger, Norway. ISAF HQ organizes a PRT Conference every three months in Afghanistan.[59] These activities are aiming to coordinate the effort of the PRTs in Afghanistan.

ISAF is fighting a counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan and the focus is on the Afghan population and to win hearts and minds of the Afghan people. It will be insufficient to succeed in the security field of the operation, but success is required in the Governance and Reconstruction and Development fields as well. Success in the non-military fields is dependent upon unity of effort and the ability of the PRTs and military forces to create a stable environment for the civilian actors to implement their programs. The PRT related coordination could be divided into three levels represented by the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, the PRT Executive Steering Committee and internal NATO/ISAF coordinating measures. The two JCMB and the PRT Executive Steering Committee are important coordinating structures, but both of them have serous flaws reducing their efficiency.

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[59] PRT Handbook, ..31.

CHAPTER FIVE – COMPARISON BETWEEN COUNTERINSURGENCY THEORY AND PRT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This chapter will compare the requirement for PRTs, given in PRT Playbook and the PRT Handbook, with the COIN theory using the three factors government, the people and the insurgents. The core of the COIN theory describes the relation between the government, the people and the insurgents and it goes hand in hand with the PRT Triangle depicted in Chapter Two in this paper. These factors are chosen because they are the most important aspects of COIN warfare. The military forces will always try to influence the relation between the government and the people, the people and the insurgents and they will enhance the indigenous forces in their fight against the insurgents. This chapter will also discuss how the relationship between security and development affects the COIN campaign.

The Government – COIN theory and PRT guiding principles

"The primary objective of any COIN operation is to foster development of effective governance by a legitimate government."[60] This is a quote from American Counterinsurgency Field Manual and it indicates that support of the national authorities is an important part of the campaign against the insurgents. The insurgents will always try to undermine the government by violence and other means. The insurgents' efforts will be directed against the government and the COIN forces must shield and enforce the host nation government to oppose the insurgent activities. The insurgents will normally also

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[60] US Army COIN Field Manual… 37.

try to distance the population from the government by using propaganda to discredit the government. It is impossible for a government to govern without support of the people. The insurgents will use armed attacks and propaganda to weaken the government in the conflict area. The question is how do the PRT guiding principles address the task of developing effective governance and how do the PRTs protect the legitimate government?

The PRTs main focus is on stability operations in an effort to create a safe and secure environment.[61] The focus on stability will enable to government to focus on providing services to the populace and thereby establishing a positive relation between the government and the population. Without stability good governance is difficult. The resources would be directed to counter the situation and not for increased service level to the populace. Stability is a pre-requisite for development and good governance. The PRT stability focus supports the local government in the battle against the insurgents and in the process of binding the population to the government and this focus is according to the COIN theory of supporting the host government's legitimacy.

Another principle is that the PRTs should, in concert with other development actors, develop the capacity of the local government.[62] The key words are "in concert with" because PRTs are not operating alone in the conflict areas and the nation-building effort must be coordinated with the host nation and all other important actors. The coordinating effort for Afghanistan takes place on different levels. The Joint

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[61] PRT Playbook,… 3.

[62] PRT Handbook,… 5.

Coordinating and Monitoring Board, the PRT Executive Steering Committee and the

PRTs play an important coordinating role on the provincial and local level in

Afghanistan. The PRTs role in the coordination on the sub-national level is to attempt to

synchronize the overall development activity in the area and to engage and facilitate the

Afghan governmental structures such as the Governor, Provincial Councils and

Provincial Development Committees. These activities support the host nation government

and line up with COIN theory.

Another guiding principle is to ensure governmental leadership and ownership

over nation-building activities.[63] This principle is important in two ways. The more

visible the government is in regard to developing the country, the more support it will

receive from the population. Secondly, it is vital that the government takes the lead over

projects because the local officials will be responsible to sustain the projects after

completion. There are a number of examples of the opposite in Afghanistan.[64] Failed

projects might undermine the government and therefore be counterproductive.

Furthermore, if the population only observes the COIN forces implement projects it

might also be negative for the government. It could lead to a perception that the local

government is incapable of doing anything without assistance. On the other hand, when

the population experience visible and sound development it will probably strengthen the

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[63] PRT Handbook, ..5.

[64] Andy Brosnan, The Commander's Emergency Response Program in Counterinsurgency Warfare: Identifying Problems and Interagency Solutions, April 2008, 9.

connection between the government and the people, as long as the government gets the credit for the progress.

PRTs are to facilitate reconstruction in their area of operation according to the concept and intent given in the US Army PRT Playbook.[65] This will include planning and execution of projects in order to strengthen stability. As noted, the COIN theory states that the military force must be gap filler when there is no civilian actor present in the area of operation to conduct civilian tasks.

> "The soldier must then be prepared to become a propagandist, a social worker, a civil engineer, a school teacher, a boy scout. But only as long as he cannot be replaced, for it is better to entrust civilian tasks to civilians."[66]

David Galula also states that a revolutionary war is 20% military action and 80% political.[67] The fight against the insurgents is much more a political struggle than a military fight. It is clear that the military forces must perform civilian tasks when there are no civilians to do the task, but the American forces have taken this principle a step further. The American commanders are given funding to implement projects in order to achieve stability in their respective area of operations as described in the introduction. The question is if this is to take the military responsibility outside of the core business of the military

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[65] PRT Playbook,… 3.

[66] David Gaula, Counterinsurgency Warfare,…62.

[67] Ibid, 63.

profession, which is war fighting, and if it is outside of the common knowledge for military leaders. There is knowledge gap among military decision makers according to research done by Andy Brosman.[68] Researchers at the Norwegian Atlantic Committee have reached the same conclusion. They criticize the lack of project implementation know-how and the use of military or political goals as factors for who will benefit from the aid. Humanitarian needs should be the basis for aid. [69]

When PRTs take on stability or development projects they act according to COIN theory as long as they there is no civilian actor present to do it. Development is not for amateurs and there is a distinct chance of doing harm when military officers are given resources and authority to engage in the development part of the battlefield. Civilian professionals should do the non-military part of stabilization operations to ensure that projects and other activities are in concert with the rest of the nation-building activities.

Support of the host nation government is one of the cornerstones in COIN theory. The PRT guiding principles are following to a great extent the theory in regard to support of the host nation government. The PRTs are focusing on stability in order to create an environment in which the government can execute its service to the population. The PRTs take on a coordinating role among the actors in the area of engagement to ensure support to all

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[68] Andy Brosman, CERP, 5.

[69] Marit Glad and Stephan Cornish, Norwegian Atlantic Council, Civil-Military Relations: No Room for Humanitarianism in Comprehensive Approaches, 5-2008,

governmental structures and avoid duplication of efforts. Furthermore, the PRTs

guiding principles dictate that all nation-building activities should have local

ownership. Independent implementation of development/stability projects might

be counter productive and undermine the local government. The guiding

principles are also totally in line with COIN theory in regard to the gap filler

role PRTs have in the area of operation. However, it is contrary to the traditional

COIN theory when military forces and PRTs continue being involved in stability

projects after the gap filler role is fulfilled. Civilian tasks should be done by

civilians and military personnel generally do not have the necessary knowledge

to implement nation-building projects without doing harm. The military part of

the PRT must focus on their core capacity – security related issues and avoid

mission creep.

The People – COIN theory and PRT guiding principles

> "It is only the undisciplined troops who make the people their enemies
> and who, like the fish out of its element, cannot live.[70]

Insurgency warfare is a war engaging a civilian population against military forces

or governmental authorities.[71] Mao realized the importance of support from the local

population and he published a "Code of Conduct" order named "The Three Rules and

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[70] Mao, On Guerrilla Warfare,.. 93.

[71] Taber, The War on the Flea, ..4.

Eight Remarks". One of the rules is "Do not steal from the people" and another one is

"be neither selfish nor unjust". Examples of the remarks are "Be courteous", "Be honest

in your transactions", and "Replace what you break".[72] Mao's "Three Rules and Eight

Remarks" shows that he understood the importance of the population in insurgency

warfare. The people are the source of camouflage, recruitment of new fighters,

communication network, logistics and information and intelligence. The quote above

states that without the support of the people the insurgents would die like a fish on land.

The insurgents will be unable to operate for longer periods without some support

from the population in the conflict area. The indirect approach to COIN operations takes

this aspect into consideration. The operations are directed against heart and minds of the

population and not directly against the insurgent forces. The PRT guiding principles are

not addressing the relation to the population directly. The PRT Handbook states that the

PRT should "Link the people and their government and separate the spoilers/insurgents

from the people…"[73] The PRTs are more centered on facilitating the governmental

structures rather than addressing the population directly. It is the host nation authorities

who must win the battle of influence and not the international COIN forces. The PRTs

are approaching the population via the governmental entities in order to link the

government and the people and try to isolate the insurgents from the population.

The Commander of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan,

General Stanley MacChrystal released his initial assessment document at the end of

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[72] Ibid, 92.

[73] PRT Handbook, ..4.

August in 2009. He concluded with that the fight had to be redirected from a

conventional approach to a more population centric approach. He stated; "...Our objective

must be the population."[74] The new strategy focuses on the population and the military

forces should operate more closely to the population and protect people who are

vulnerable for insurgent attacks or influence.[75] Furthermore, there must be a shift from

protecting your own forces to protecting the public.

The population is a very important aspect of COIN theory. The insurgents cannot

operate without support from the people. Without the people the insurgents will only be

pirates on land unable to achieve their objectives. On the other hand, the PRT guiding

principles are not addressing the relation to the local population in any great detail. It

addresses the need to link the government and the people together and the chosen

approach is to strengthen the governmental structures and thereby facilitate the relation

between the population and the government. General MacChystal has ordered a more

population centric way to wage the COIN campaign in Afghanistan. The PRTs are not

mentioned specifically in the initial assessment document but it is not unrealistic to

expect a more population focused engagement from the PRTs in Afghanistan.

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[74] Washington Post, COMISAF Initial Assessment, ..1-1.

[75] Ibid, 1-3.

The Insurgents– COIN theory and PRT guiding principles

> When the situation is serious, the guerrillas must move with the fluidity
> of water and ease of the blowing wind.[76]

This part of the chapter will compare COIN theory related to insurgents and compare it with the requirements of PRTs in order to see if the PRT requirements align with the theory.

The quote from Mao illustrates one of the great difficulties in COIN warfare; the insurgents can decide to disappear from the battlefield when the military forces want to engage them. Mao established five guidelines for insurgent warfare, as quoted in chapter one, and his main principle is to preserve the force. The insurgents should always disperse into the population when the situation is favourable for the COIN forces.[77] As Mao wrote, "The enemy advances, we retreat, the enemy camps, we harass, the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue."[78] The insurgents should never fight when they are surrounded, low on supplies or when the terrain is hindering their operations. The main principle is to trade space for time and make sure that the insurgents live to fight another day.

The concept of trading space for time makes it difficult for COIN forces to achieve a decisive military victory over the insurgents. The COIN forces will struggle when the insurgents seldom mass and when they easily can disperse into the population if

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[76] Mao, On Guerrilla Warfare, ..103.

[77] Ibid, 102.

[78] Taber, The War of the Flea, ..48.

the situation is unfavourable. The insurgents' ideas of time space and are hard to defeat

with the COIN forces' firepower, territory, manpower and technology. The long war will

normally favour the insurgents because it will give them time to increase their strengths

and gather support from the local population, while the COIN efforts are expensive and

dependent upon public support from within various troop contributing countries.[79] The

insurgent's ability to trade time for space indicates that the direct approach alone against

the insurgents might not be sufficient to prevail in an insurgency scenario.

Another aspect of time is that the population will probably have limited patience

with collateral damage caused by COIN forces in fighting with the insurgents. The use of

superior firepower might be counterproductive if it causes lost lives and damaged

properties to third parties.[80] All actions must be balanced in respect to the opinion of the

local populace.

The American COIN doctrine emphasis the "Clear, Hold, Build" concept in the

fight against the insurgents and it is the "Clear" phase which focuses on the insurgents.[81]

The COIN forces will attempt to remove all insurgents in a given area in the Clear phase

of the operation and there will be a greater focus on facilitating local governance and re-

establish public services in the Hold and Build phase.

The PRTs are not combat units, but integrated civil-military organizations with a

primary focus on establishing stability in the area of engagement. The PRTs in

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[79] Ibid.

[80] US COIN Field Manual, ..48.

[81] Ibid, 174.

Afghanistan are only given responsibility within the areas of security, governance and development.[82] Since the PRTs are mainly focused on supporting local governance they will not be significantly hampered by the insurgents ability to hide among the population. The PRTs are using an indirect approach to defeat the insurgents by facilitating governance and development. The PRTs are expensive institutions but they can be an effective tool in a long term struggle against the insurgents. All the PRT – contributing nations are dependent upon public support for their engagement in the conflict zone and the time factor will always be to the insurgents' advantage.

The requirement most related to insurgents is the one of joint patrolling and mentoring of local security forces.[83] When PRTs do significant patrolling together with local forces they increase their situational awareness and make it more difficult for insurgents to disperse into the local population. When the PRTs have good knowledge about the environment they operate in the more they counter the advantage the insurgents have to hide and receive support from the populace.

The mentoring part of the requirement is also important. It is of utmost importance that the local police and armed forces understand the limitation of fire power in COIN campaigns and the PRTs have a responsibility to teach it. General MacChystal has ordered the troops in Afghanistan to use the superior firepower with caution to avoid alienating the Afghan population. This is especially important to employment of close air

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[82] PRT Handbook,.. 4.

[83] Ibid, 5.

support and indirect fire from the ground.[84] The outcome of the battle is irrelevant if

the COIN forces are losing the support of the population.

The indirect approach to fight the insurgency is better than the direct approach

mainly because of the insurgents' ability to hide in the population. This ability enables

the insurgents to fight and endure a long war. The PRT, as an institution, is guided by the

indirect approach. The PRT requirements are focused on establishing stability and

enabling of governmental structures. It is not an organization for searching and fighting

insurgent forces. The PRT requirements do not address insurgents specifically, but the

whole PRT concept is in line with COIN theory and the indirect approach to fighting an

insurgency.

CHAPTER SIX – CONCLUSIONS

This study has overviewed the common requirements for provincial

reconstruction teams and counterinsurgency warfare. This is an area, which has not been

specifically addressed in other research projects, and it will be a supplement to all the

other recent research on counterinsurgency warfare, including provincial reconstruction

teams.

The lack of a NATO PRT doctrine has limited the study. The requirements for

PRTs are basically laid out in two different publications; the US Army PRT Playbook

and the ISAF HQ PRT Handbook. The first and most obvious finding in this paper is the

requirement for NATO to publish an official PRT doctrine in order to ensure unity of

effort in Afghanistan and future areas of engagement for NATO forces. It will be

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[84] Washington Post, COMISAF Initial Assessment Initial Assement,.. E-2.

challenging to achieve a synchronized approach to PRT operations without a common doctrine.

The PRTs operate in an environment dominated by the population, the host nation government and the insurgents. The role of the PRTs is to establish stability by facilitating the governmental structures, linking the government and the people and at the same time isolating the insurgents. This study has examined COIN theory based on the factors Government, Population and Insurgents and compared it with the common requirements of the PRTs.

The American doctrine states that primary objective of any COIN campaign is to develop good governance by a legitimate government. In other words, the government and the governmental structures are the core of the campaign against insurgents. The PRTs guiding principles are strictly adhering to the idea of supporting, developing and facilitating the host nation's governmental structures. The PRTs aim to establish stability in order for the government to perform its service to the population. The better the government is working, the closer the link between the population and the government will be. The PRT requirements emphasize the coordination role, which facilitates the government by ensuring local ownership and avoiding duplication of efforts. The PRTs are also given a gap filler role when there are no other actors to execute the tasks, which is totally in line with COIN theory. The problems occur when military forces continue being involved in non-military activities after gap filler role has been completed. There must be a prudent division of responsibility in a conflict area and the military

contribution should be limited to security related issues and qualified civilian professionals must carry the responsibilities of the non-military areas.

The population plays a key role in COIN theory. There cannot be any insurgency without some support from the local population. The PRT requirements are supporting the COIN theory in an indirect way; improving governance will link the people to the government and at the same time isolate the insurgents.

The PRT requirements do not address the relation to the insurgents specifically. The COIN theory states that the indirect approach is the most effective way to fight the insurgents. The PRT guiding principles indicate the use of stability, improved governance and development as tools to isolate the insurgents and hamper their ability to operate. The PRT requirements are following the COIN theory's idea of beating the insurgency via the indirect approach. Good governance and less support in the population will end an insurgency.

The main argument is that it requires more than military capacity to defeat an insurgency; efforts must be focused on the population and it must have the capacity to endure a prolonged war. This study has shown that the PRT requirements and requirements for counterinsurgency warfare are complementary and the PRT concept is a valid tool in a COIN environment. The civil-military structure gives the contributing nations an organization which can address all aspects of a counterinsurgency campaign, but they must ensure that civilian part of the PRTs are well represented and not give non-

military tasks to the military. The military must concentrate on their core business and avoid mission creep.

Recommendations for future action

NATO should start work on an official PRT Doctrine to ensure a common approach to PRT operations in Afghanistan and future areas of engagement for NATO. The doctrine should reflect that a COIN campaign is 80% political and 20 % military actions and more clearly delineate the military and non-military responsibilities in an area of engagement.

The relation between development and security must be explored further in future studies. The current American COIN doctrine and COIN theory in general take it for granted that development and security are interrelated. This might be true but more scientific studies are required to remove the uncertainty, and if development and security are not interrelated it would demand a change of direction of the military and civilian engagement in Afghanistan.

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