

Canadian
Forces
College

Collège
des
Forces
Canadiennes



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE POPULACE: IRREGULAR WARFARE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Maj G.P. Vander Kloet

JCSP 42

Exercise Solo Flight

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed remain those of the author and do not represent Department of National Defence or Canadian Forces policy. This paper may not be used without written permission.

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of National Defence, 2016.

PCEMI 42

Exercice Solo Flight

Avertissement

Les opinions exprimées n'engagent que leurs auteurs et ne reflètent aucunement des politiques du Ministère de la Défense nationale ou des Forces canadiennes. Ce papier ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation écrite.

© Sa Majesté la Reine du Chef du Canada, représentée par le ministre de la Défense nationale, 2016.

EXERCISE *SOLO FLIGHT* – EXERCICE *SOLO FLIGHT*

**IT'S ALL ABOUT THE POPULACE: IRREGULAR WARFARE PAST,
PRESENT, AND FUTURE**

Maj G.P. Vander Kloet

“This paper was written by a student attending the Canadian Forces College in fulfilment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies. The paper is a scholastic document, and thus contains facts and opinions, which the author alone considered appropriate and correct for the subject. It does not necessarily reflect the policy or the opinion of any agency, including the Government of Canada and the Canadian Department of National Defence. This paper may not be released, quoted or copied, except with the express permission of the Canadian Department of National Defence.”

Word Count: 4927

“La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire à l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du ministère de la Défense nationale.”

Compte de mots: 4927

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE POPULACE: IRREGULAR WARFARE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

This is another type of war, new in its intensity, ancient in its origins—war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins; war by ambush instead of by combat; by infiltration, instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him. It requires in those situations where we must counter it a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of military training.

- Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation...*

War is an extension of political aims and ambitions, and has existed since the beginning of civilization. Typically thought of as conventional force on force clashes, the non-conventional, asymmetric, or irregular form of warfare is also not a new concept. Today, changes due to “rapid global communications, near instantaneous 24-hour world news coverage, increasingly interdependent global commerce, and the proliferation of technologies and weapons of mass destruction, make ensuring security more challenging.”¹ As such, it is not surprising that adversaries unable to compete conventionally with global powers have, and will continue to resort to irregular warfare.

Warfare has been romanticised as being rules or ‘code’ based, and outlines what actions can and cannot be carried out. It dictates that uniforms bearing national flags must be worn, and its actors subscribe to a hierarchal structure. In the irregular context, the question of ‘fairness’ is ever present as combatants do not always wear uniforms, often live among and target civilians,

¹ United States Air Force. *Irregular Warfare*. Washington, D.C: United States Air Force, 2007, 2.

and do not “stand up and fight like men”.² This complex reality has been the most pervasive form of conflict globally since World War II, and will continue to dominate in the future.³

An insurgency and the counterinsurgency efforts required to defeat it are forms of irregular warfare. Although historically there have been cases of successful counterinsurgencies (Croatia 92-95, El Salvador 79-92), the majority of counterinsurgency campaigns have not succeeded in defeating an insurgency. Cases such as Chechnya 94-96, and Afghanistan 78-92 highlight the counterinsurgent failures to understand the problem, account for the human terrain, and implement and follow through with a viable campaign operational design.

This paper will demonstrate that although an extremely difficult and complex form of warfare, counterinsurgency can be successful whilst operating within the confines of present day LOAC and international ROE, Success can be achieved by establishing a clear concept of operations, and a viable campaign plan which places the population as the centre of gravity (COG).

Prior to articulating the required operational design to succeed in a counterinsurgency, this paper will define what irregular warfare is and why it is not only relevant, but prudent to understand in the context of the current and future operating environments. Although many examples of counterinsurgencies could be studied, this paper will examine a successful and a failed example, identifying reasons for their respective outcomes. First, the Malayan Emergency of 1948-1960 will be dissected, demonstrating that the British were successful due to their ability to isolate and eventually win the ‘hearts and minds’ of the population. Next, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan will be examined.

² William Weir, *Guerrilla Warfare: Irregular Warfare in the Twentieth Century*. Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2008, ix.

³ Frank H. Zimmerman. *Why Insurgents Fail: Examining Post-World War II Failed Insurgencies Utilizing the Prerequisites of Successful Insurgencies as a Framework*. Monterey California. Naval Postgraduate School, 2007, 7.

Here it will be argued that although it failed, ISAF was on the right track and would have succeeded if it managed to stop Afghan governmental corruption and found a way to eliminate insurgent ‘safe havens’. Finally, best practices and positive attributes of both case studies will be extrapolated and formulate the key components of a generic counterinsurgency operational design, which will serve as a start state for future conflicts.

Rapidly emerging as a critical component of campaign design in Canadian military thinking is the concept of systematic operational design (SOG). This is a process whereby the problem is viewed, debated, and understood holistically. It is composed of commander-centric vice commander-led working groups, which produce a narrative of complex systems that launches the operational planning process (OPP). Once transition has been made from the ‘understanding’ to the ‘planning’ (OPP) phase, the notion of operational design refers to a product containing a mission end state, COG, lines of operation (LOOs), decisive points etc... This is an overarching guide which essentially leads to course of action (COA) development and the conduct of operations. For the purposes of this paper, operational design will be referred to that which is contained within OPP vice the emerging concept of SOG itself.

DEFINITION AND RELEVANCE

Irregular warfare is complex, multi-faceted and malleable, which makes it difficult to arrive at a universally agreed upon definition for what it constitutes. United States Air Force (USAF) doctrine frames irregular warfare in the context of a violent struggle between state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the population.⁴ It also groups irregular warfare with unconventional warfare, stating that it is a wide range of “military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, and directed by varying degrees by an

⁴ United States Air Force. *Irregular Warfare*, 2.

external source.”⁵ Finally, USAF doctrine speaks to the fact that irregular warfare “favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence and will.”⁶ In 2006, United States Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces defined irregular warfare as:

A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capacities, in order to erode the adversary’s power, influence, and will. It is inherently a protected struggle that will test the resolve of our Nation and its strategic partners.⁷

Regardless of which definition is universally accepted, the characteristics of irregular warfare that differentiate it from regular/conventional warfare are that its threats will always be asymmetric, and success depends on winning the support population vice a kinetic defeat of the adversary. Psychological approaches in an irregular context are central, and the use of violence must be carefully applied to ensure it does not do more harm than good.⁸ Conversely, conventional warfare aims to defeat a military force and/or change political policies, vice influencing the population by undermining the governmental structure, as in the irregular context.⁹

Political violence, terrorism, insurgency, operations other than war, and low intensity conflicts are forms of irregular warfare, characterised as the weaker, sub-state side of war that often includes the mobilization of a portion of the population to support the movement.¹⁰

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁷ Eric V, Larson, United States Army, Rand Corporation, Arroyo Center, and Inc Books 24x7. *Assessing Irregular Warfare: A Framework for Intelligence Analysis*. Vol. MG-668. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corp, 2008, 10.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹ United States Air Force. *Irregular Warfare*, 3.

¹⁰ David G. Paschal. and Army War College (U.S.). "Irregular Warfare: Impact on Future Professional Military Education." U.S. Army War College, 2006, 2.

“Populations carry particular weight as both battleground and object of the conflict. Stealthy adversaries hide among the population, using it as a shield and willing or unwilling helper.”¹¹

The United States has determined the insurgency/counterinsurgency, foreign internal defence, unconventional warfare, stability, counterterrorism, psychological operations, civil-military operations, information operations and intelligence/counter intelligence are all components of irregular warfare.¹² Discussing every aspect of irregular warfare is beyond the scope of this paper. As such, the focus will be on those elements which lie at the core of irregular warfare, insurgency and counterinsurgency. An insurgency seeks to change or reduce the influence of a state’s political regime, while counterinsurgency attempts to protect against an insurgency by keeping and protecting the current political system.¹³ The most comprehensive, encompassing definition of insurgency is what which was produced by the United States Army, contained in field manual 3-24, where an insurgency is described as an “organized, protracted political-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control.”¹⁴ This is achieved using all available tools including diplomatic, informational, military, and economic (DIME).

It is important to understand the concept of irregular warfare, specifically the nature of an insurgency, as conflicts fought in this manner have shaped much of the world we live in today. Insurgencies have been fought for centuries, and are chronicled in a plethora of scholarly texts, to include the Bible. In 1917, the Russian Revolution began as an insurgency and upset much of

¹¹ United States Dept. of Defense. *Irregular Warfare: Countering Irregular Threats: Joint Operating Concept*. Washington, DC: Dept. of Defense, 2010, 13.

¹² Larson. *Assessing Irregular Warfare*, 13.

¹³ United States Air Force. *Irregular Warfare*, 4.

¹⁴ United States Dept. of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 15 December 2006, 1-1.

twentieth century Europe. This event, among others, gave rise to important figures such as Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin.¹⁵ Although not the most common form of warfare throughout history, changes in the global military landscape since World War II have made it the most common since, particularly for Western forces.¹⁶

There are various notions as to why irregular forms of warfare have been on the rise. These range from changing attitudes and technical advances which have enhanced the ability to influence masses, to a need for adversaries to adapt due to their inability to compete against vastly superior forces.¹⁷ This in turn has changed how Western forces have responded. Using conventional military superiority against an irregular adversary is often politically unacceptable to Western democracies due to excessive collateral damage. Further, as defined earlier, an irregular force's military capability is not their weak point, rendering pure kinetic action ineffective against an irregular force.¹⁸

In 1962, British historian and strategist B.H. Liddell Hart aptly identified the impact of the changing attitudes of populaces on insurgencies and predicted their struggle when he claimed "campaigns of this kind are more likely to continue because it is the only kind of war that fits the conditions of the modern age, while being at the same time well suited to take advantage of social discontent, racial ferment and nationalist fervours."¹⁹ Due to being the most prevalent form of warfare in the future, it is thus prudent to continue to learn from past irregular warfare lessons and apply them to both the current and future operating environments.

MALAYA

¹⁵ Weir. *Guerrilla Warfare...*, xi.

¹⁶ Bart Schuurman. "Trinitarian Troubles: Governmental, Military, and Societal Explanations for Post-1945 Western Failures in Asymmetric Conflicts." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, no. 1 (2011), 40.

¹⁷ Zimmerman. *Why Insurgents Fail*, 2.

¹⁸ Schuurman. "Trinitarian Troubles..." , 41.

¹⁹ Zimmerman. *Why Insurgents Fail*, 3.

In order to glean points to sustain from a counterinsurgency campaign, with a view to establishing viable criteria for how a campaign ought to be designed and executed in the future, there are many examples throughout history that could be used. The author of this paper chose the Malayan example as it is behaving to examine what is widely recognized among irregular warfare scholars as a successful example. The British form of counterinsurgency carried out during the Malaya Emergency was successful despite its violation of the populace's human rights. This was due to the fact that they recognized the key role the population played in empowering the insurgency, and took the appropriate steps toward severing that link.

One of the first actions taken by the British forces to weaken the Malayan Communist Party's (MCP) insurgency was to isolate the Malayan population (a mix of ethnic Malayan, Indian, and Chinese) from the communist insurgency. This was initially attempted through the use of propaganda which discouraged the population from lending support to the communists. In 1949, over 50 million leaflets were distributed throughout Malaya preaching anti-insurgent messages. Propaganda was quickly followed by a rewards policy, offering payment as reward for divulging information pertaining insurgent locations and intent. These initiatives were not widely popular both politically and militarily.²⁰

Recognizing the need for a more effective means of driving a wedge between the population from the insurgency, the British constructed approximately 423 internment camps, "systematically concentrating the Chinese squatter population, roughly 500,000 of Malaya's 1950s population of approximately 5,000,000, into fortified tightly controlled 'new villages'."²¹ These fortified villages were designed to make the population inaccessible to the communist

²⁰ Andrew Mumford. *The Counter-Insurgency Myth: The British Experience of Irregular Warfare*. Vol. 45. N.Y: Routledge, 2011, 41.

²¹ Wade Markel. "Draining the Swamp: The British Strategy of Population Control." *Parameters* 36, no. 1 (2006), 37.

guerillas, which was the source of their strength and a vital conduit for the provision of recruits and critical supplies. This denial essentially broke the back of the insurgency.²²

By way of maintaining a tight grip on the ‘screwed down’ population, the British instituted a series of brutal actions ranging from mass arrests and detention without trial for up to two years, to the death penalty for carrying arms and mass deportations.²³ These were all conducted to strictly enforce the isolation of the insurgents from the population.

Another tactic used by the British to bring a successful end to the Malayan Emergency was to shift its brutal tactics toward the population from that of coercion to winning the ‘hearts and minds’, and by extension, the support of the people. Hearts and minds are defined as: Hearts – winning the emotional support of the people, and Minds – the people as pursuing their own self-interest.²⁴ Hearts and minds are generally associated with less coercive methods, and the need for using minimal force, vice the more coercive tactics used in conventional warfare where civilian casualties are more acceptable.²⁵ In order to win the support of the population, the population needs to believe that the government will succeed. This is achieved through good governance, capacity building and the use of psychological operations.²⁶

The ‘new villages’ provided clean water, schools, community centres, basic medical care, agricultural land and other basic essentials.²⁷ These efforts met the basic needs (minds) of the population, to which their emotional support (hearts) followed. While ‘hearts and minds’ became a central tenet of the British approach to counterinsurgency in Malaya, the final act that ensured

²² *Ibid.*, 36.

²³ Paul Dixon. *The British Approach to Counterinsurgency: From Malaya and Northern Ireland to Iraq and Afghanistan*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 368.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 363.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 354.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 357.

²⁷ Kumar Ramakrishna. *Emergency Propaganda: The Winning of Malayan Hearts and Minds, 1948-1958*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2002, 11.

popular support was the promise, and subsequent follow through, to relinquish sovereignty and control to ethnic Malaysians once the insurgency was defeated.²⁸ At the core of winning ‘hearts and minds’ is the need to change the mindset of the population. Sometimes, this necessitates “tough measures and a hard approach i.e., mass movement of the population, curfews, small acts of support (i.e., medical and veterinary support) and the way in which government security forces interact with the population...wins over their hearts.”²⁹

The final tactic used by the British to bring a successful end to the Malayan Emergency was to use a multi-faceted, ‘whole of government’ approach to counterinsurgency. The introduction of civil-military communities effectively united military, police and civil administration branches, with a unified purpose.³⁰ Political will vice military action, was the key to victory, and the responsibility for the defeat lied with the efforts of the British backed Malayan government.³¹ Within the government, police were integral, and were used for local enforcement, law and order, and they had possessed an excellent ability to “penetrate the Chinese squatter communities and gather intelligence...critical to counterinsurgent operations.”³²

Paired with the illusion of economic growth within the post-World War II impoverished state, this combined approach to combatting the communist insurgency within Malaya proved extremely successful. The government defeated the insurgency because it created an overall plan, and co-ordinated administration, police, and military measures at all levels. It also secured its own base areas before embarking on a military campaign against the insurgency.³³

²⁸ Fernando Gentilini. *Afghan Lessons: Culture, Diplomacy, and Counterinsurgency*. Rome: Scuola Superiore della Pubblica Amministrazione (SSPA), 2013, 43.

²⁹ Dixon. *The British Approach to Counterinsurgency*, 364.

³⁰ Karl Hack. "The Malayan Emergency as Counter-Insurgency Paradigm." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 3 (2009), 388.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 357.

³² Zimmerman. *Why Insurgents Fail*, 80.

³³ Ramakrishna. *Emergency Propaganda...*, 11.

Although the British practice of counterinsurgency in Malaya ultimately defeated the insurgency by focusing on populace isolation, winning of ‘hearts and minds’, and a ‘whole of government’ approach, it is clear that it also involved a violation of human rights through its forced resettlement and ruthless acts (initially) toward the population. Christopher Paul of the United States National Defense Research Institute coined these acts as damaging factors and practices in a counterinsurgency campaign.³⁴ As a counter to the Malayan Emergency being an example of a successful counterinsurgency, the 1952 *Freedom News* (MCP newspaper), called the British “devils that suck the blood of the Malayan people, by offering low wages and taking out high profits from rubber and tin enterprises...The British kept their ‘iron claws on Malaya’, using ‘white terror’ to corral people into ‘concentration camps’.”³⁵ Essentially the *Freedom News* argued that the British were simply exploiting and brutalizing the Malayan population, vice attempting to win over the population. Additionally, in 2012 Chinese relatives of 24 civilians killed by the British at Batag Kali in December 1948 pressured the British courts for a formal inquiry due to brutal and oppressive acts conducted by the British in Malaya.³⁶

Counterinsurgency as practiced by the British in Malaya between 1948-1960 certainly contained elements of human rights violations. Owing to this, it cannot be employed as a textbook example of how to conduct counterinsurgency in both the present and future operating environments. Regardless, it entailed much more than simply coercing or exploiting the Malayan population as it offered valuable lessons worth repeating. Isolating a population, although extremely difficult, will clearly prevent its use and manipulation by the insurgency. Additionally,

³⁴ Christopher Paul. National Defense Research Institute (U.S.), and Rand Corporation. *Counterinsurgency Scorecard: Afghanistan in Early 2011 Relative to the Insurgencies of the Past 30 Years*. Vol. OP-337. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2011, 2.

³⁵ Matthew Hughes. *British Ways of Counter-Insurgency: A Historical Perspective*. New York: Routledge, 2013, 103.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

winning the support of the population through good governance, security and development is a key tenet toward de-legitimizing the insurgency, ultimately leading to a counterinsurgency success.

AFGHANISTAN

ISAF's form of counterinsurgency conducted in Afghanistan post-9/11 was certainly riddled with inconsistencies and errors, as will be shown. In the post-2009 years of the campaign, Commanders such as Generals Stanley McChrystal and David Petraeus recognized the problem and took the proper steps toward campaign success. Despite these latter successes, counterinsurgency in Afghanistan failed for reasons beyond the control of ISAF.

The first area leading to the failure of counterinsurgency was the manner in which it was conducted early on, under General David McKiernan (Comd ISAF 3 Jun 08 - 15 Jun 09). McKiernan adopted a 'winning' mentality, and disseminated it throughout the campaign. "ISAF had focused on defeating the insurgency, and this resulted in a fairly conventional [read failed] military campaign."³⁷ One of McKiernan's key failures was that ISAF neglected to articulate a clear intent, coupled with an end state, for the campaign in Afghanistan.³⁸ Further, rather than developing a comprehensive strategy that effectively blended high-intensity combat operations (conventional) with stability and reconstruction operations, which is required for a counterinsurgency campaign, under McKiernan, the campaign was uncoordinated and ad hoc.³⁹ The concept of 'winning' was precisely the problem faced by ISAF in the early years of the campaign. Winning means to acquire, be victorious, or triumph as a result of a fight. Succeed, on

³⁷ Rudra Chaudhuri, and Theo Farrell. "Campaign Disconnect: Operational Progress and Strategic Obstacles in Afghanistan, 2009-2011." *International Affairs* 87, no. 2 (2011), 273.

³⁸ LtCol Robert R. Scott, "Operational Design for Afghanistan." *Marine Corps Gazette* 93, no. 10 (Oct 2009), 32.

³⁹ Jens Ringsmose. "NATO's Counterinsurgency Campaign in Afghanistan: Are Classical Doctrines Suitable for Alliances?" *UNISCI Discussion Papers* no. 22 (2010), 65.

the other hand, implies a more prosperous, thriving aim or outcome, which is what a successful counterinsurgency campaign requires.⁴⁰

Conducting kinetic, conventional warfare, with a ‘winning’ vice ‘succeeding’ attitude, without clear intent, was what led to campaign failure in the early years, as it resulted in high levels of collateral damage. Under McKiernan, the population perceived the collateral damage caused by the counterinsurgent force to be an area of conflict worse than the insurgents themselves.⁴¹ McKiernan’s style of counterinsurgency warfare was best captured in the message he often conveyed during press briefings, “we don’t doubt the final victory will be ours for the simple fact that the enemy can’t complete with our forces.”⁴²

Looking at a host nation (HN) holistically, and understanding the human terrain is the critical first step to counterinsurgency operational design. Once one understands the populace, and places their support as the COG, one will then be equipped to address their needs and begin to influence their support.⁴³ This is called ‘shaping’, which is “the ability to influence and inform the perceptions, allegiances, attitudes, actions and behaviours of all players...they are human activities which require personal contact.”⁴⁴

General Stanley McChrystal (Comd ISAF 15 Jun 09 - 23 Jun 10) represented the turning point in the campaign, which began an era of counterinsurgency success. According to McChrystal, the key to success was to treat the people as the COG, thus protect and provide for them. With an Afghan lead, this would demonstrate their government’s ability and ensure their support.⁴⁵ You can kill thousands of insurgents (McKiernan style) but fail if you do not have the

⁴⁰ Col Julian D. Alford, and Capt Scott A. Cuomo. “Operational Design for ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) in Afghanistan: A Primer.” *Joint Force Quarterly* 53 (2009), 93.

⁴¹ Paul. *Counterinsurgency Scorecard...*, 2.

⁴² Gentilini. *Afghan Lessons...*, 33.

⁴³ Col Brad Booth. “Winning in Afghanistan: A NATO Operational Design.” USAWC Student Paper, 2008, 6.

⁴⁴ Alford and Cuomo, “Operational Design for ISAF...”, 94.

⁴⁵ Chaudhiri and Farrell, “Campaign Disconnect...”, 274.

support of the HN populace. Conversely, by winning public support (McChrystal style), you may never have to fire a shot and insurgent numbers will dwindle.⁴⁶ McChrystal also created unity of effort by issuing a clear concept of operations, restructured ISAF forming an Integrated Joint Command (IJC), and fostering important civilian development partnerships.⁴⁷

Despite his success, Afghan governmental corruption was rampant at all levels. Regardless of the astronomical amount of assistance provided to Afghanistan by NATO, there was only so much that could be done to combat governmental corruption. Afghanistan is a sovereign state, and NATO operated there at the request of the Afghan government.⁴⁸ At the local level, assistance was controlled by provincial governors, militia and village elders. At the national level, it was estimated that approximately 50% of all aid money never reached the target population, as it was pilfered by the Afghan government.⁴⁹ The problem with corruption in a weak state gripped by insurgency, is the damage it does to governmental legitimacy. In an environment where popular support for the government is paramount in order to discredit an insurgency, corruption only serves to turn the populace toward an insurgency vice toward the government.

In addition to not being able to combat Afghan governmental corruption, ISAF also could not combat the existence of insurgent 'safe havens' external to Afghanistan. Neighboring countries, particularly Pakistan, provided safe areas for insurgent forces to rest, recruit and train. These camps were free of ISAF interdiction or control. According to United Nations Researcher John Mackinlay, the existence of foreign safe havens are exactly what enabled the attack on the

⁴⁶ Alford and Cuomo, "Operational Design for ISAF...", 93.

⁴⁷ Chaudhiri and Farrell, "Campaign Disconnect...", 276.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 294.

⁴⁹ John W. Warnock. *Creating a Failed State: The US and Canada in Afghanistan*. Halifax, N.S: Fernwood Pub. Co, 2008, 27.

twin towers in 2001.⁵⁰ Acting as a proverbial thorn in the side of the Americans, secure sanctuaries with ample material resources provided the insurgency the critical component of sustainment. President Obama eventually began to look at the problem regionally and gave billions to Pakistan and India, all with the intent to prevent the facilitation of safe havens in the region. This regional aid initiative was indicative of the fact that NATO viewed the situation holistically and understood the entirety of the problem. Unfortunately aid did not prove successful as insurgents continued to benefit from safe havens to rest and refit prior to crossing back into Afghanistan and interacting with the population.⁵¹

As a counter argument to Afghanistan failing for reasons beyond ISAF's control (corruption and safe havens), what ultimately led to ISAF's failed mission was a lack of NATO contributing nation's support in the later years. By 2011, Western nations had succumbed to casualty phobia and began to falter in their support due to fear of more death.⁵² Politically, the prolonged nature of counterinsurgency warfare "makes significant demands on the policymakers who are supporting and taking responsibility for the campaign. This holds particularly true for democratically elected governments confronted with war weary public."⁵³

By 2011, the campaign in Afghanistan was on the right track. Civilian casualty rates were down, Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) growth and competency was healthy, the Taliban appeared to have been worn down, and ISAF was gaining momentum.⁵⁴ Although a lack of popular support for the democratically elected NATO contributing nations was a significant problem for the campaign to ultimately succeed, the inability of ISAF to combat the deep rooted

⁵⁰ John Mackinlay. *The Insurgent Archipelago: From Mao to Bin Laden*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009, 167.

⁵¹ Chaudhiri and Farrell, "Campaign Disconnect...", 293.

⁵² Schuurman. "Trinitarian Troubles...", 37.

⁵³ Jens Ringsmose. "NATO's Counterinsurgency Campaign in Afghanistan...", 61.

⁵⁴ Chaudhiri and Farrell, "Campaign Disconnect...", 294.

governmental corruption, consistently worked to undermine campaign efforts and delegitimize the Afghan government. Further, although the United States government understood the problem regionally and holistically, the billions of aid dollars, although helpful, could not prevent the region from offering 'safe havens' within which the insurgents could thrive.

FUTURE

As has been clearly demonstrated through an examination of both the Malayan and Afghanistan examples, counterinsurgency is an extremely difficult and complex form of warfare. Given that in the Malayan example, the British treated the population inhumanely, although there was never a formal investigation, its repetition today would certainly be viewed as in violation of the LOAC and international ROE. Counterinsurgency can be successful if coalition forces are prepared to commit for the required extended time periods and implement a clear concept of operations and campaign plan, placing the population as the COG.

The future operating environment will be one marked by constant change. Economics, demographics, climate change and competition for scarce resources will breed competition. Paired with globalism, religious integration and state fragmentation, asymmetric conflict in these fluid environments will continue.⁵⁵ Prior to conducting a counterinsurgency campaign, the critical first step of operation design is to understand the operating environment holistically. This includes the population and its "complex historical, political, socio-cultural, religious, economic and other causes of violent conflict. The joint force must adopt collaborative frameworks to understand, plan, act, assess and adapt in concert with interagency and multinational partners."⁵⁶ Campaigns within these environments cannot be successful through military efforts alone, as

⁵⁵ United States. Dept of Defense. *Irregular Warfare: Countering Irregular Threats...*, 11.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

they require unity of effort through a comprehensive or full-spectrum approach, encompassing the integration of political, military, economic, multi-national and HN agencies.⁵⁷

With a clear understanding of the situation, and employment of a full-spectrum approach, operational design must be built focusing on the population as the COG for both the insurgency and the counterinsurgency. “The people are the centre of gravity of an insurgency not only because the government and the military need their support in implementing counterinsurgency measures, but also because insurgents emerge from the people as well.”⁵⁸ For a counterinsurgency campaign to be successful, a crucial component is to influence and win the perceptions, allegiances, attitudes, actions and behaviors of the population. This is known as ‘shaping’ and winning the ‘hearts and minds’.⁵⁹ The operational design with a population centric focus must be communicated to the counterinsurgent force through the creation of a clear concept of operations, which will drive the unified efforts of all coalition members.

Within a counterinsurgency operational design, HN governance is a key LOO. In order to maintain the support of the people, the HN government must be seen as legitimate in the eyes of the population. This means they must “operate humanely under the rule of law, and can effectively protect local communities against insurgents.”⁶⁰ Due to tribal dynamics, insurgents are easily able to infiltrate the populace at low levels, often utilizing quasi political cells to mobilize support. Therefore, establishing effective governance is arguably more important at local or municipal levels than it is nationally.⁶¹

⁵⁷ David Kilcullen. *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, 112.

⁵⁸ Ramakrishna. *Emergency Propaganda...*, 17.

⁵⁹ Alford and Cuomo, “Operational Design for ISAF...”, 94.

⁶⁰ David Kilcullen. *The Accidental Guerrilla...*, 112.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 113.

Another key LOO is security, which seeks to gain possession of an area, with or without force, to prevent its destruction or loss by the enemy. In a counterinsurgency context, it must be accompanied by a detailed plan which would see such actions as the establishment of the rule of law, and the creation of lasting links with the people and the government.⁶² As a LOO in a counterinsurgency campaign, security is synonymous with ‘holding’, which implies remaining in place for extended periods of time. Essentially it requires coalition and HN forces to live and interact with the population 24 hours per day. This, rather than destroying the enemy, is a critical task. It demands protection of population centres, local alliances and partnerships with community leaders, developing persuasive situational awareness, rapid response times and unpredictable operating patterns. These tasks are designed to keep the enemy dislocated from the population.⁶³ Providing security for a population in an insurgent environment works to prevent the enemy from influencing the population, thus maintaining their support for HN governance. Effective population security will take steps toward HN autonomy and insurgent de-legitimization.

A third and final LOO is capacity building. In conjunction with winning the ‘hearts and minds’ or support of the population, establishing responsible governance seen as legitimate in the eyes of the population, and providing for the security of the populace, focus also needs to be placed on HN self-sufficiency. With the HN in control of its sovereignty and the insurgency defeated, efforts need to be put towards preventing the return, or, re-establishment of another insurgency after coalition forces leave. Capacity building is about increasing the capability and professionalism of the HN security force and governance. It requires attention throughout the

⁶² Alford and Cuomo, “Operational Design for ISAF...”, 94.

⁶³ David Kilcullen. *The Accidental Guerrilla...*, 111.

campaign and is achieved through adequate training and partnerships with counterinsurgent interagency and coalition force professionals.⁶⁴

The operational design for employment in a future counterinsurgency campaign, proposed above, involves a comprehensive approach with kinetic, conventional warfare taking a supporting role to the comprehensive population centric approach. Admittedly this line of thinking is contentious as many, such as British political and international relations professor Andrew Mumford, disagree. Mumford claims that despite the highly politicised nature of counterinsurgency warfare, “the efficacy of the military aspect of the counterinsurgent dimension remains paramount to operational and strategic success. If the military cannot succeed in reducing insurgent violence, then no manner of political measures will.”⁶⁵

Although a well published author of British counterinsurgency campaigns, Mumford’s conventional, military-centric approach is antiquated and short sighted as it does not account for the benefits a comprehensive, inter-agency approach brings. The General McChrystal style of population-centric counterinsurgency has proven that partnering with HN security forces and building legitimacy, reduces the need for kinetic action which will inevitably result in minimized collateral damage and civilian casualties. Further, by winning the support of the population, you effectively isolate them from the insurgency and its support base. Conducted properly, this ‘could’ negate the need to ever fire a shot.

CONCLUSION

Irregular, asymmetric or unconventional warfare is not a new concept. Insurgency, being one facet of irregular warfare, has been around since biblical times and has been on the rise in frequency since World War II. As it is likely to be the most dominant form of warfare in the

⁶⁴ Schuurman. "Trinitarian Troubles...", 41.

⁶⁵ Mumford. *The Counter-Insurgency Myth...*, 151.

future operating environment, it is prudent to study those examples from the past and present to determine the most suitable counterinsurgency campaign design to employ in future conflicts.

Regardless of where or when the next insurgency presents itself, should NATO be requested to lead the counterinsurgency effort, the critical first step is to take the time required to understand the problem in its regional, historical, holistic entirety, prior to committing to a course of action. In current Canadian military thinking, this is known as systematic operational design. The proper course of action must be one encompassing a comprehensive inter-agency, joint and coalition based approach, in support of the HN. LOOs must be built around the population as the COG. All action taken must be carried out with the need for populace support at the centre, the loss of which will result in failure. Finally, the critical LOOs to include in the operational design are HN governance, security, and capacity building. These will see the HN gain legitimacy by providing for the needs of the population and being able to protect its sovereignty.

There are two key challenges to success in a counterinsurgency. First is the possible existence of governmental corruption, which must be clearly understood and built into the governance LOO. Ignoring this reality will rapidly de-legitimize HN government and sway popular support toward the insurgency. Second, will be the loss of support from NATO contributing nation's home front. This will be minimized by providing a clear and enduring concept of operations which Western troop contributing nations can both understand and identify with. Moreover, the employment of this author's proposed operational design will also minimize coalition casualty rates, which will ensure support does not dwindle.

If irregular warfare is indeed the most dominant form of conflict today and into the future, is there still a requirement for Western nations to possess conventional military forces in

both construct and equipment, or would efforts better be served in training for asymmetric conflict?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alford, Julian D. and Scott A Cuomo. "Operational Design for ISAF in Afghanistan: A Primer." *Joint Force Quarterly: JFQ* no. 53 (2009): 92.
- Betz, David. "The Virtual Dimension of Contemporary Insurgency and Counterinsurgency." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 19, no. 4 (2008): 510-540.
- Bird, Tim and Alex Marshall. *Afghanistan: How the West Lost its Way*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.
- Booth, Col Brad. "Winning in Afghanistan: A NATO Operational Design." USAWC Student Paper, 2008.
- Chaudhuri, Rudra and Theo Farrell. "Campaign Disconnect: Operational Progress and Strategic Obstacles in Afghanistan, 2009–2011." *International Affairs* 87, no. 2 (2011): 271-296.
- Collins, Joseph J. *Understanding War in Afghanistan*. Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2011.
- Cordesman, Anthony H. *Irregular Warfare: Learning the Lessons of "Worst Case" Wars*. Center for Strategic & International Studies, June 11 2014.
- Dixon, Paul. *The British Approach to Counterinsurgency: From Malaya and Northern Ireland to Iraq and Afghanistan*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- . "Hearts and Minds'? British Counter-Insurgency from Malaya to Iraq." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 3 (2009): 353-381.
- Fitzgerald, David. *Learning to Forget: US Army Counterinsurgency Doctrine and Practice from Vietnam to Iraq*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2013.
- Gentilini, Fernando. *Afghan Lessons: Culture, Diplomacy, and Counterinsurgency*. Rome: Scuola Superiore della Pubblica Amministrazione (SSPA), 2013.
- Hack, Karl. "The Malayan Emergency as Counter-Insurgency Paradigm." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 3 (2009): 383-414.
- Hughes, Matthew. *British Ways of Counter-Insurgency: A Historical Perspective*. New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Jones, Seth G. *In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010.
- Kilcullen, David. *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

- Larson, Eric V., United States. Army, Rand Corporation, Arroyo Center, and Inc Books24x7. *Assessing Irregular Warfare: A Framework for Intelligence Analysis*. Vol. MG-668. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corp, 2008.
- Mackinlay, John. *The Insurgent Archipelago: From Mao to Bin Laden*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.
- Markel, Wade. "Draining the Swamp: The British Strategy of Population Control." *Parameters* 36, no. 1 (2006): 35.
- Marshall, Alex. "Imperial Nostalgia, the Liberal Lie, and the Perils of Postmodern Counterinsurgency." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 21, no. 2 (2010): 233-258.
- McGrath, John J. and U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Combat Studies Institute. *Boots on the Ground: Troop Density in Contingency Operations*. Fort Leavenworth, Kan: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006.
- Mumford, Andrew. *The Counter-Insurgency Myth: The British Experience of Irregular Warfare*. Vol. 45. N.Y: Routledge, 2011.
- Mumford, Andrew and Bruno C. Reis. *The Theory and Practice of Irregular Warfare: Warrior-Scholarship in Counter-Insurgency*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014.
- Paschal, David G. and Army War College (U.S.). "Irregular Warfare: Impact on Future Professional Military Education." U.S. Army War College, 2006.
- Paul, Christopher, National Defense Research Institute (U.S.), and Rand Corporation. *Counterinsurgency Scorecard: Afghanistan in Early 2011 Relative to the Insurgencies of the Past 30 Years*. Vol. OP-337. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2011.
- Porch, Douglas. "The Dangerous Myths and Dubious Promise of COIN." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, no. 2 (2011): 239-257.
- Ramakrishna, Kumar. *Emergency Propaganda: The Winning of Malayan Hearts and Minds, 1948-1958*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2002.
- Ringsmose, Jens. "NATO's Counterinsurgency Campaign in Afghanistan: Are Classical Doctrines Suitable for Alliances?" *UNISCI Discussion Papers* no. 22 (2010): 56-77.
- Schuurman, Bart. "Trinitarian Troubles: Governmental, Military, and Societal Explanations for Post-1945 Western Failures in Asymmetric Conflicts." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, no. 1 (2011): 32-54.
- Scott, Lt Col Robert R. "Operational Design for Afghanistan." *Marine Corps Gazette* 93, no. 10 (Oct 2009): 32-34.

Simpson, Jay Gordon. "Not by Bombs Alone: Lessons from Malaya." *Joint Force Quarterly: JFQ* no. 22 (1999): 91.

Taber, Robert. *War of the Flea: The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare*. Washington, D.C: Brassey's, 2002.

United States Air Force. *Irregular Warfare*. Washington, D.C: United States Air Force, 2007.

United States. Dept of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 15 December 2006.

United States. Dept of Defense. *Irregular Warfare: Countering Irregular Threats: Joint Operating Concept*. Washington, DC: Dept. of Defense, 2010.

Warnock, John W. *Creating a Failed State: The US and Canada in Afghanistan*. Halifax, N.S: Fernwood Pub. Co, 2008.

Weir, William. *Guerrilla Warfare: Irregular Warfare in the Twentieth Century*. Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2008.

Zimmerman, Frank H. *Why Insurgents Fail: Examining Post-World War II Failed Insurgencies Utilizing the Prerequisites of Successful Insurgencies as a Framework*. Monterey California. Naval Postgraduate School, 2007.