



National Defence University
Department of Military History

Winds of Change

On Irregular Warfare

Nils Marius Rekkedal et al.

Publication series 2 | N:o 18



WINDS OF CHANGE
ON IRREGULAR WARFARE

NILS MARIUS REKKEDAL ET AL.

National Defence University of Finland,
Department of Military History 2012

Publication series 2
N:o 18

Cover: A Finnish patrol in Afghanistan.
Photo Finnish Defence Forces.

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ISBN 978-951-25-2271-2
ISSN 1456-4874

Juvenes Print, Tampere 2012

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FOREWORD

This book consists of studies of the different forms of so-called *irregular war*, based on unclassified sources.

The various forms of irregular war today, such as insurgency, counterinsurgency and guerrilla war, are normally characterised by the distinctive features of a geographical area. The so-called wars of national liberation between 1945 and the late 1970s were disproportionately associated with terms like insurgency, guerrilla war and (internal) terrorism. Use of such methods signals revolutionary intentions, but also says something about the revolutionaries' military weakness. Use of insurgency, guerrilla war and terrorism may be looked upon as typical of the many Communist-led revolutionary movements during this period, but the use of such methods on their own rarely produced decisive results, and these methods were chosen only by groupings that were too weak to reach their revolutionary aims by conventional means. The term revolutionary war is hardly in use today, as it has been replaced by terms that more aptly describe contemporary conflicts/wars.

In this book, we provide some explanations for the ongoing conflicts. The book also deals, to a lesser extent, with causes that are of importance in many ongoing conflicts – such as ethnicity, religious beliefs, ideology and control over areas and resources. The book also contains historical examples and presents some of the common thoughts and theories concerning different forms of irregular warfare, insurgencies and terrorism. Included are also a number of presentations of today's definitions of military terms for the different forms of warfare, and the book offers some information on the international military-theoretical debate about military terms.

Fighting the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan has dominated the focus of the American military after 2003. The war in Afghanistan has also been very important for the military development of the NATO countries after 2002. Military thinking about insurgency and counterinsurgency has undergone a 'renaissance' after a 'long dip' following the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. The development between 2004 and 2009 may be looked upon as a 'New Counterinsurgency Era', to paraphrase Douglas S. Blaufarb's book about the Vietnam War, *The Counterinsurgency Era* (1977). Blaufarb wrote:

The fundamental lesson to draw from our misadventures of the counterinsurgency era is (...) the lesson of the limits of American power. It is also of

*importance that we should understand in what way our power (...) can be challenged by a few thousand ragged jungle fighters armed with a dedicated leadership, a tested theory, and great patience (...)*¹

Perhaps in a few years' time we can draw more or less the same conclusions regarding the U.S.-led operations in Iraq and the NATO (ISAF)/U.S.-led operations in Afghanistan?²

One of the goals of this book is to seek to demonstrate that the many insurgencies and acts of terrorism from 1945 to the present day do not have just *one* cause, but are due to a combination of several local or regional causes. Ideology, ethnicity and religion have all acted as important catalysts for the many (mostly local) 'small wars' that have taken place during this period. The leaders of a successful insurgency will often analyse and exploit local displeasure with, for example, economic conditions, the country's political leadership or other ethnic groups in the actual area. Based on the insurgent leadership's strategy, people may be mobilised without necessarily understanding all the consequences of taking part in an insurgency.

The following is a short overview of the themes dealt with in the individual chapters:

Foreword

1. Introduction (incl. evaluation of sources)
2. Irregular warfare – its different forms
3. Asymmetric warfare, compound warfare and hybrid warfare
4. Counterinsurgency, COIN
5. Stabilisation operations
6. Terrorism
7. Conclusion

Appendix: A Swedish view on irregular warfare.

Selected Bibliography and Index.

The longest section of this book is devoted to counterinsurgency (see Chapter 4), as this is a very complicated form of warfare; that said, this text is strongly supported by descriptions of irregular warfare, insurgency and terrorism. As the chapters were written by different authors, it has been difficult to avoid the appearance of certain themes in more than one chapter. As editor, I have nevertheless decided to accept this, and

1 Douglas S. Blaufarb, Foreword by William P. Bundy, *The Counterinsurgency Era. U.S. Doctrine and Performance 1950 to the Present* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), pp. 310–311.

2 ISAF is the International Security Assistance Force. Since NATO took command of ISAF in 2003, the Alliance has gradually expanded the reach of its mission. It was originally limited to Kabul, but by 2010 it covered all of Afghanistan's territory. The number of ISAF soldiers grew from the initial 5,000 to, in December 2010, around 130,400 troops from 48 countries, including all 28 NATO member nations.

have included some cross-references between the chapters in order to indicate where a theme may also appear in another chapter.

This book has been written primarily for officers. The emphasis is on describing the development of trends, concepts and modern terms. Historical and military experiences taken from the literature will, together with the authors' points of view and analysis, form the basis for the assessment.

This book was written during my research contract with Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu [in English, the Finnish National Defence University (FNDU), Helsinki], and I have acted as editor of all chapters of the book. Doctor, Professor and Colonel Pasi Keseli, Chief of the Department of Military History (FNDU) was instrumental in this research. I will also thank the co-writers of this book: Senior Scientist Anders Kjølberg (Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, NDRE), Research Professor (Cand. Philol.; Dr. Philos) Brynjar Lia (NDRE), Captain (Finnish Army) Kari-Petri Huovinen and Commander (N) Michael Gustafsson (Swedish National Defence College). Special thanks go to Cand Scient Magne Haugseng for his comments concerning developments in Northern Ireland.³

The bibliography provides a summary of literature.

Helsinki, September 2011.

Nils Marius Rekkedal, Professor

3 Magne Haugseng is an Associate of the International Centre for Regional Regeneration and Development Studies at Durham University, England.

'Full-blown insurgencies are messy affairs. External sponsors sometimes back winning causes but rarely emerge with a clear victory...'

Quote from a RAND Corporation report

1 INTRODUCTION CHAPTER

Nils Marius Rekkedal

1.1. Explaining insurgency

International security development after the year 2001 has been problematic for the Western states, especially for the USA.⁴ The U.S. main effort has been the 'war after the war' in Iraq, i.e. from the autumn 2003 until summer 2010. The long war in Afghanistan has also involved NATO – so far with limited success.

The Western leading military powers still have a military and technological advantage in *conventional* warfare, but most Western forces have been slow to develop forces specialised in fighting different forms of insurgencies, including so-called global *jihadist* insurgencies. When describing different forms of insurgencies, some authors, especially the British, point out that the UK has often been successful in countering insurgencies in their former colonies, including in Northern Ireland.

A report published in December 2004 on the future of the United Nations is still of some interest for studies of irregular warfare/civil wars. Interpreted freely, the authors of the report wrote that poverty, infectious diseases, war and destruction of the environment reinforce each other in what they called 'a deadly spiral'. The authors also described how poverty is often associated with the outbreak of civil war, while diseases such as AIDS and malaria claim many lives each year. This, in turn, intensifies poverty. Diseases and poverty are often associated with the destruction of the environment and many researchers assert that climate changes can aggravate the situation.

The destruction of environments as a result of overpopulation and a lack of available land and other natural resources may, in turn, lead to troubles within a country's

⁴ The acts of terrorism in the United States on 11 September 2001 had a huge psychological impact on the American people and the Bush administration. The following so-called 'War on Terror' or 'War on Global Terrorism' was the Bush administration's answer to this massive act of terrorism.

borders. This can possibly be looked upon as a ‘circular argument’ where factors directly influence each other and a negative development may be difficult to stop. But poverty alone does not explain rebellions.⁵

The different UK governments after 1945 had to deal with many rebellions or insurgencies during the long decolonisation period in Africa and Asia. True, the British forces were able to defeat some rebellions, but these numerous rebellions were all part of the termination process of the British Empire. However, the Brits were usually able to ‘manage’ the rebellions rising in their colonies so that they could withdraw in good order. The British operations that are probably best known today are the long-lasting insurgencies in Malaya and in Northern Ireland, both of which may be looked upon as a success for the counterinsurgents.

One of the ‘soldier-academics’ who have brought forward some interesting thoughts about the development of insurgencies is John Mackinlay.⁶ He has published (2009) a description of the earlier UK expertise in what we today call counterinsurgency:

Although the campaigns in Malaya and North Borneo were different, the Maoist adversary in both cases followed a tough, labour-intensive approach towards the organisation and conduct of their insurgency. Their tactics required them to move over long distances through the rainforest to meet and subvert their target populations. Our response reflected the Maoist imperative: we understood the importance of gaining popular support and securing a foothold in sympathetic communities. In Malaysia, we saw ourselves restoring a monopoly of violence into the hands of the government and during the long tropical evenings we theorised about the phase we had reached in the Maoist interpretation of people’s war. Our tactics also reflected a political process: the campaign was politically led, and each week our commanding officer flew in to district headquarters to attend the Security Executive Committee meeting, chaired by our Malaysian district officer, his civil administrators and local police. Their efforts were essentially political and our job was to win and then maintain a level of security that allowed them to restore their writ and win the support of the population.⁷

5 United Nations General Assembly, Fifty-ninth session, A/59/565, Agenda item 55, *Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, Note by the Secretary-General*, 2 December 2004, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/59/565.

6 Mackinlay is a former officer and belonged to the United Kingdom’s 6th Gurkha Rifles Regiment. (6th Queen Elizabeth’s Own Gurkha Rifles.) After 1947 the regiment was one of four Gurkha regiments transferred to the British Army and remained part of it until 1994, when it was amalgamated with other Gurkha regiments to form today’s Royal Gurkha Rifles.

7 John Mackinlay, *The Insurgent Archipelago* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), pp.1–2. (But in the first few years after Second World War, even the UK used National Service conscript soldiers.)

An important point, according to Mackinlay, is that the soldiers taking part in these British counterinsurgencies were usually experienced and had through their practices learnt the 'trade in the field'.⁸ Mackinlay also wrote in his book:

Up to 1996 very few doctrine writers or conflict analysts had convincingly linked the counter-insurgent experience of Southeast Asia with Northern Ireland and the peace support operations in the Balkans and sub-Sahara Africa'.⁹

When seeking to explain the successes of Third World revolutionary warfare after the Second World War, we must take account of the different motives that drove the antagonists. As Daniel Moran wrote in his book *Wars of National Liberation*:

Not all parties to the wars of national liberation counted the costs the same way, and those that counted them most closely often felt themselves at a psychological disadvantage that material superiority could not offset. Such considerations obviously apply only in circumstances where the limited interests of one side are apparent. It would be fatuous to characterize the outcome of the fighting between Chinese Communists and Nationalists, or between the Jews and Arabs in Palestine, as mere failures of nerve. The major defeats of Western forces in our period, however – especially of France in Indo-China and Algeria, and of the United States in Vietnam – are commonly viewed in precisely this light, and it is worth emphasizing that this is less illuminating than it may seem. The easy Western triumphs of earlier times had been accomplished despite an identical disadvantage: there has never been a moment since the European Age of Discovery when the fate of Indo-China did not matter more to the people of Hué than to those of Paris, much less New York. In the old days, however, this sort of asymmetry made no difference. A passionate desire for freedom counts for little if it cannot be translated into effective military, political and diplomatic strategies. It is because the non-European world had learned to employ such strategies, not least by virtue of contact with the West, that the conflicts attending the dissolution of European empires proved so different from those that created them.¹⁰

Both military leaders and academics have for some time recognised that violent conflicts/wars have played an important role not only in the formation and development of new states, but also in the impoverishment and collapse of national states. It is im-

8 Leslie Thomas, *The Virgin Soldiers* (London: Pan Books, 1966/1969). This was his bestselling novel about the war in Malaya, describing the use of UK conscript soldiers.

9 Mackinlay (2009), p. 2.

10 Daniel Moran, *Wars of National Liberation* (London: Cassell, paperback edition, 2002), pp. 31–32.

portant to point at the fact that the protagonists of these struggles have included not only (national) armies, but also police forces, guerrillas, paramilitaries, warlords, local criminal gangs and different kinds of terrorist networks. It is important, as I see it, to stress the importance of the different kinds of 'irregular warriors'.

The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq – both strongly connected to the events following 9/11 in the USA – have awakened more people to the historical importance of so-called 'irregular armed forces', forces what are not directly controlled or directed by states/governments. This text addresses some of the military and political consequences of these irregular forces and the insurgencies in which they play an important part.

The manner in which insurgencies are organised and conducted evolves over time. In the 1990s, the theories about the then-growing 'Peace Support Operations' were faced with a number of 'explanatory problems'. What was the real difference between old-fashioned Maoist rebellions and the 'new' operations going on? Was this maybe only an evolution of 'traditional' rebellions and guerrilla warfare – not something really new? In the literature describing peacekeeping (later referred to with the newer term *peace support*), it was 'politically correct' at that time to look on peace support as a development of the earlier UN peacekeeping efforts. Mackinlay has put forward some interesting thoughts on this question:

Were these so-called peace support operations in fact better explained by an evolutionary understanding of insurgency? Was it right to go on thinking of insurgency as irrelevant to complex humanitarian emergencies, as an inert technique, something that was immutable and was therefore only useful to a few particularly disaffected and underdeveloped societies? The evidence of the practitioners at the frontlines of the 1990s emergencies was that the art of insurgency was something more animated and versatile, something that evolved and adapted itself with the societies from which it arose and therefore in its most modern form had to associate with its previous manifestations. Instead of dismissing insurgency as a static concept, should we not have understood it as something that was rapidly evolving and could be utilised in any society, even post-industrial societies such as the NATO states? And if this was a possibility, instead of constantly putting aside the knowledge that we had gained about insurgency in favour of developing new and fashionable doctrines for peace-building, peace support, countering super-terrorism and so forth, was it not more sensible to husband our existing knowledge, to build on it and be more alive to the notion that insurgent energy could take on many forms and arise in any society?¹¹

11 Mackinlay (2009), p. 3.

In this book our primary focus will be on describing the terms and problems connected with the different modern forms of insurgencies and the possible counter-measures.

The insurgencies in Malaya in the 1950s and later in Northern Ireland were probably less complex and sophisticated than today's *jihadist* insurgencies. But this view does of course depend on the observer. The development of insurgencies will be described in Chapter 2, and some of today's counter-measures will be presented in Chapter 4.

The peasant rebellions or tribal/clan-led rebellions in colonial times were normally of local (or regional) character, and could be taken care of locally. Some writers have also used the military term 'small wars' to describe these local rebellions. Colonel Charles Edward Callwell published the book *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice* in 1896, and later republished his book with revisions in 1899 and 1906. It quickly established itself as a 'standard' British military manual. The U.S. Marine Corps published the *Small Wars Manual* in 1935. An updated edition was published in 1940 (second edition). It is still an interesting document about fighting insurgencies. For the 1940 revision, it was renamed *The Small Wars Manual* (or SWM). This U.S. document may be regarded as a 'classic' of military writing; it remains remarkably relevant even today for much of the current thinking on COIN doctrine, etc.¹²

The many so-called *revolutionary wars* after the Second World War were normally based on Marxist-Leninist or Maoist theories/ideologies. This development gained momentum in the late 1950s, and also involved the emergence of *nationalism* and the local elites' visions of their own nation state ruled by the indigenous people. Some of the ideas behind revolutionary war became very popular, even in some segments of Western societies, but these anti-colonial and/or Communist-led insurgent movements were all working for specific *local* goals, i.e. the overthrow of the local government. These insurgencies normally got their power from their own ethnic group(s), and usually wanted to create a state controlled by the (dominant) local population. The people themselves were the power base, and both insurgents and the threatened regime did what they could to control the local population. But such a centralised powerbase relying on control over the population in an area also made these earlier insurgencies vulnerable to strong military responses. Throughout the 1950s and until the early 1960s, the British demonstrated time after time how they were able to respond to this form of insurgency.¹³

12 Charles Edward Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice*, with an Introduction by R. Douglas Porch (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1996). The U.S. Marine Corps' *The Small Wars Manual* was an official U.S. document. U.S. Marines Corps, *Small Wars Manual* (Washington D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940; a new printing of the original U.S. Marine Corps manual by Sunflower Univ Press, 1996 Pavilion Press, 2004 and Cosimo Reports, 2010) also <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/swm/index.htm>.

13 One example of the relatively many books written by Western participants in this kind of anti-revolutionary war operations, the early modern counterinsurgency operations, is Sir Robert Thompson's *Defeating Communist Insurgency. The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam* (St. Petersburg, Florida: Hailer Publishing, 2005, original publication New York: F. A. Praeger 1966).

But is the earlier military thinking about insurgency and counterinsurgency still viable? Will the traditional British anti-insurgency strategy work against the challenges created by modern jihadist insurgencies? Modern insurgencies are normally more complex, and are not necessarily based on clans or tribes, but we must accept that the local power structures are still important for the development of an insurgency. What is new is the emergence of 'global' insurgencies, like the jihadist fractions. Such insurgents aspire to shape more than national politics. Today the jihadists probably can be compared with the development of ideology-based communist and socialist movements after 1900 in Europe and later in Asia. The heyday of ideological so-called revolutionary wars was during the period from the 1950s to the 1980s; today, such wars are 'history'.

Today's insurgencies may be regarded as a combination of religious fervour, ideology and power struggle, and their theorists talk about overthrowing today's 'global order'. The leaders often speak of a global struggle, not of the (traditional) national state as the common good. Jihadist movements, like the earlier Leninist/Marxist-Leninist based revolutionaries, have their preferred recruiting grounds. Jihadists look upon Muslims in every country as a 'target group' for their political ambitions, and are therefore willing to operate across traditional borders. The jihadists are supported politically and economically through both Arab and Iranian populations, but probably more important over time is the growing support from Muslim minorities in the Western states. Muslims living in Western countries who feel a sense of cultural and religious solidarity with radical Muslim activists may become a security problem.

Western states, including the U.S. and UK, have been struggling with how to respond to this. Until now the Western states have engaged in counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, aiming their COIN efforts at so-called terrorist activists in specific geographical areas. The term counter-terrorism (CT) has also been used when the security forces are battling terrorist groups.¹⁴ The latest definition of counterinsurgency is from 2009, quoted from U.S. Joint Publication 3-24, *Counterinsurgency Operations*, published in 2009:

14 According to the American FBI definition: 'Counterterrorism has always been a top priority for the FBI, but today, it is the Bureau's overriding mission to prevent acts of terrorism before they happen. This effort is managed by the Counterterrorism Division at Headquarters and carried out by every individual field office, resident agency, and Legat. Headquarters provides a team of analysts who work to put together bits of information gathered by the field offices.' Counterterrorism' in 'Investigative Programs', Facts and Figures, *The FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation*, <http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/facts-and-figures-2010-2011/investigative-programs>. Another definition is taken from 'Counter-terrorism', *Wikipedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counter-terrorism>: 'Counter-terrorism (also spelled counterterrorism) is the practices, tactics, techniques, and strategies that governments, militaries, police departments and corporations adopt to prevent or in response to terrorist threats and/or acts, both real and imputed.' [And the term *terrorism* may again be used to refer to subgroups like anarchist, communist, eco-terrorism, ethnic, nationalist and religious terrorism (like Islamic, Christian and Jewish, etc.).]

Counterinsurgency: *Comprehensive civilian and military efforts taken to defeat an insurgency and to address any core grievances. Also called COIN. (This term and its definition modify the existing term and its definition and are approved for inclusion in JP 1-02.)*¹⁵

If we look historically at this development, we have seen that this type of response may quell a certain level of violence/unrest in one area, but it does not quell the overarching insurgency. Western forces normally win all battles, but these local successes may be overshadowed by the growing strength and intensity of the *global* insurgency. After the year 2001 and the two clearly connected campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, doctrine writers and the commanders involved have recognised that the most important task is to control *the population* – for both the insurgents and the involved governments and their security forces.¹⁶

According to David Ucko, we have seen reforms and restructuring within the U.S. Department of Defense and the armed services after 2005. In his book about what he calls *The New Counterinsurgency Era* (2009), he depicts the institutional obstacles to reforming a big defence organisation. His research and analysis have brought forward much new information about the problems connected to the Iraq war in particular. Ucko wrote about the current situation:

*Counterinsurgency and stability operations share certain characteristics that make them particularly problematic and that explain to a large degree why the U.S. military has sought to avoid such missions. In these campaigns, the military effort is but a subset to the much more complex task of building and strengthening a new political compact, an objective that can require years if not decades, is prone to setbacks, and depends as much on local conditions as on the actions of the intervening force. Stability operations will also typically involve reconstruction activities, the provision of basic services, and the establishment of governance. Although these tasks are best conducted by civilian and humanitarian agencies, the frequent inability of the latter to operate in insecure conditions has and will yet force military troops to assume responsibility for these areas as well, alongside the provision of security.*¹⁷

15 U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Counterinsurgency Operations*, Joint Publication JP 3-24, 05 October 2009, p. GL-5. See also: 'The military contribution to countering insurgency, while vital, is not as important as political efforts for long-term success. Military efforts are especially important initially to gain security,' p. III-3.

16 This 9/11 attack also created a new American interest in studies/research about terrorism and insurgency/counterinsurgency. From June 2005, some members of the Bush administration started using the phrase 'global struggle against violent extremists'. In early 2006, another new term was introduced: 'The Long War'. However, in this book we find it more correct to use the term 'war on terror', as this has been the best-established term.

17 Ucko (2009), pp. 1–2.

When Mao Zedong back in 1927 began to practise his at that time new theories about rebellion and Communist-led insurgency, what Mao called ‘support from the people’ was mainly based on support from Chinese peasants and labourers.¹⁸ His theories have later become important principles for how to organise revolutions and are used in modern forms of insurgency/revolts. The execution of his theories has always been very dependent on a trained political and military cadre – and this cadre thinking is normally important even in today’s revolutionary movements. Insurgent movements without a competent leadership and well-organised cadre training will normally fail. This cadre was the ‘vanguard’ of the following revolutionary war – a war he characterised in this way:

There are three additional matters that must be considered under the broad question of political activities. These are political activities, first, as applied to the troops; second, as applied to the people; and, third, as applied to the enemy. The fundamental problems are: first, spiritual unification of officers and men within the army; second, spiritual unification of the army and the people; and, last, destruction of the unity of the enemy....

*A revolutionary army must have discipline that is established on a limited democratic basis. In all armies, obedience of the subordinates to their superiors must be exacted. This is true in the case of guerrilla discipline, but the basis for guerrilla discipline must be the individual conscience. (...)*¹⁹

Mao Zedong also wrote about the need for ‘a unity of spirit’ that should exist between the revolutionary forces and the local population. It was important that the revolutionaries behaved in a proper way towards the local population, and he introduced some simple rules for good behaviour.²⁰ But Mao himself may be accused of becoming an *extreme leader* after the Communists had captured mainland China. Between 1958 and 1962, Mao Zedong threw his country into the so-called *Great Leap Forward*, an attempt to catch up and overtake Britain in less than 15 years. The experiment ended in the greatest catastrophe known in modern times for the Chinese society – resulting in the loss of probably tens of millions of lives. Access to Communist Party archives was for a long time denied to all but the most loyal Chinese historians, but a new law has declassified/ provided access to thousands of central and provincial documents that fundamentally change the way one can study the Maoist era. New studies

18 Mao Tse-tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, translated and with an Introduction by Samuel B. Griffith (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications 2005, originally written in 1937), pp. 41–50.

19 Mao (1937/2005), p. 90. But Mao himself ‘revised’ his theories on revolutionary warfare, based on the Vietnamese experiences in Indochina. He saw that in most modern insurgencies the insurgents could not keep/stay on in the ‘hinterland’ and hope to win. Most countries were simply not big enough – the war must be expanded to urban areas.

20 Mao (1937/2005), p. 92.

have revealed that instead of lifting the country up into the ranks of the world's great powers, and proving the power of Communism as Mao had hoped for, in reality the *Great Leap Forward* was a giant and almost disastrous step in the opposite direction for Communist China.²¹

It is often still not well understood that these different kinds of insurgencies normally need to develop over many years if they are to succeed against the security forces of a functioning state. 'Winning the hearts and minds of the population', the slogan often cited in the COIN literature, is in fact very difficult to achieve. Mao understood this, and much of his writing was on how the revolutionary cadres should behave towards the population.

But do those of us born and educated in the West really understand Mao Zedong and the world he lived in? Does the Western way of thinking about, for example, democracy, human rights and the preference for a minimum use of military violence have anything in common with the thinking promoted by Mao and later revolutionaries? This kind of thinking is still important in today's political reality. What is probably needed if we want to contribute in countering insurgencies and local wars in the Third World is a cultural change in the way the leading Western states look upon COIN warfare. Furthermore, we probably should rethink how we look upon and usually describe the term 'success in war'. We should therefore ask ourselves: is use of long lasting COIN possible in today's Western peacetime political environment?

Insurgency has been, and will probably continue to be, a consistent feature of the modern security environment. Within the coming decades, U.S. and other Western policymakers and their military strategic planners will almost certainly face dilemmas and decisions similar to those faced in the days and months leading up to the U.S.-led wars in Afghanistan (2001 until today) and Iraq (2003 until August 2010). To enable better planning for these *future* political and military challenges that are still likely to occur, it is critical to understand how and why insurgencies develop and how they may be opposed. A better understanding of this question could help answer one of most important questions posed in today's national security decision-making process. Even small countries must think through these problems if they intend to take part in *international* military operations. The following five questions should be carefully considered not only by military decision makers, but also by their political leaders: Is taking part in an international military operation worth the anticipated risk to, for example, the country's international prestige and wealth? (Including, can the country afford to take part?)

21 See Arifa Akbar, 'Mao's Great Leap Forward 'killed 45 million in four years' (a news report on Dikötter, Frank, *Mao's Great Famine; The Story of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe*), *The Independent*, 17 September 2010, <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/news/maos-great-leap-forward-killed-45-million-in-four-years-2081630.html>.

When taking part in a COIN campaign: Is the *prospective* operation viable for our country?

- Do conditions in the country in question favour a successful counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign (or counter-terror campaign), or do they suggest possible failure? (An answer to these questions assumes that the political and military leaders understand the need for a *realistic and not politicised intelligence* picture).
- What are the likely long-term costs associated with securing the local populace (in the country under attack by internal rebellion) to achieve the desired political goal?
- There is obviously a difference between a terrorist attack planned and conducted by extremists from outside our own state, i.e. like 9/11 in the USA (2001) and Mumbai in India (2008), and an internally created insurgency like the long war we saw in Northern Ireland, i.e. ‘internal/civil warfare’. How should we account for these differences?

If the operation is deemed practicable, knowledge of how the insurgency developed should be the platform of the design of the so-called ‘COIN campaign’, helping mitigate the kind of *false expectations* that undermined the early period of the U.S.-led wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan. This kind of knowledge may theoretically provide a more realistic planning framework for *both* policymakers and their military strategists. An appreciation for how insurgencies develop and end could provide military planners with a valuable instrument with which to help manage and, hopefully, recut the ‘normal’ 10- to 20-year timeline of the ‘modern typical insurgency’.

1.2. The purpose of this book

1.2.1. Introduction

This book will describe and explain the development of the different forms of irregular warfare, especially insurgency and its counterpart, counterinsurgency. In all kinds of warfare, the use of violence is important. Four different forms of violence may be involved. They may be described under headlines like:

1. Tactics – tactical techniques used for combating all kinds of ‘irregular formations’. (The term tactics is also used by insurgents to describe their fighting techniques against, for example, a state’s security apparatus.)
2. Terrorism – use of terror as part of an insurgency (here used as a ‘tactical weapon’).
3. Guerrilla warfare – the organised *military* actions used by insurgents.

4. Subversion – i.e. actions from within to undermine the military strength of a regime (but this may also involve actions against a state's economic and political stability). Subversion may also be used against a regime's national security apparatus.

These four activities may also be categorised under 'irregular warfare' as the overarching term. And if the (political) *opponent* to a regime is able to coordinate and use all four activities at the same time, we may use the term 'hybrid war' to describe the war we are involved in. (The term hybrid war will be described later in this book.) There is today no agreement about the 'most correct terms' for the activities mentioned above, but use of violence is always an important element of all kinds of modern insurgency and counterinsurgency.

The methodological approaches have two main components. The first is a review of selected insurgency and counterinsurgency literature, using text analysis of articles/books and other sources. The second is an analysis of selected (and limited) insurgency *case studies*. Conclusions are drawn where possible.

1.2.2. A short description of today's trends in insurgency

The British officer and military writer Thomas Edward Lawrence (1888-1935) wrote about his experiences as an observer/mentor and indirect leader of the Arab uprising against the Ottoman Empire during the last part of the First World War. He wrote also about what he called 'the science of irregular warfare'. The use of the word *irregular* was probably meant to put this kind of warfare in a *contrast* to state-owned troops in formal uniforms. The irregular forces/the insurgents want to destabilise the established regime and take power for themselves.²²

In addition to explaining how and why insurgencies develop, this book has two objectives:

- We will attempt to describe and qualify modern developments in insurgency, including COIN, as important parts of modern irregular warfare. (Insurgency and COIN are here looked upon as *parts* of the main term *irregular warfare*.)
- We will describe some of the common trends in insurgencies that succeed and those that fail (if possible).²³

22 T. E. Lawrence, 'Science of Guerrilla Warfare', article in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (London: Encyclopaedia Britannica Co. 1932), s. 950. See also Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph* (New York: Anchor, Imprint of Random House, 1991).

23 Andrew Exum, 'Designing a Political Campaign for Afghanistan' (Washington D.C.: Center for a New American Security, 05/06/2010). Example: According to a report released in May 2010 by the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), America's counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan has focused more on waging war at the operational and tactical levels, at the expense of the strategic and political levels. (This may be true, but other sources point in different directions.)

The book also features a short description of trends in modern (international) terrorism, including a look at terrorism performed by terrorists from abroad (Chapter 3). But we will also describe ‘home-grown terrorism’, such as the actions of the so-called Bradford terrorists in the London Underground in July 2007, and terror used during the long lasting so-called ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland

One of the leading COIN experts today is Dr. David Kilcullen (more about him later). In this introduction I have chosen to include some of his writings describing the developments in Iraq and Afghanistan after the U.S.-led attack on the Taliban regime in 2001. On 7 May 2009, Kilcullen summed up how the insurgency developed in a Congressional Testimony titled ‘Counterinsurgency and Irregular Warfare.’ He mainly drew on his personal experiences from the insurgencies in Iraq as a platform for his thinking about the still ongoing conflict(s) in Iraq and the war in Afghanistan. In his briefing, Kilcullen did not speak about terrorist attacks planned and managed from abroad, like the actions we saw in Mumbai (2008) and during 9/11. We may look upon this briefing as a political-military statement in which he provided a summary of what may be the most important views often presented in contemporary writing on insurgency and counterinsurgency strategy and tactics. Many of his points, quoted below, are formulated almost in the form of ‘definitions’, but they represent Kilcullen’s personal views in 2009, and not official U.S. definitions:

Political Strategy. Building the political legitimacy and effectiveness of a government affected by an insurgency, in the eyes of its people and the international community, is fundamental. Political reform and development represents the hard core of any counterinsurgency strategy, and provides a framework for all other counterinsurgency programs and initiatives. This requires a genuine willingness to reform oppressive policies, remedy grievances and fix problems of governance that create conditions extremists exploit. In parallel, the political strategy is designed to undermine support for insurgents, win over their sympathizers to the government side, and co-opt local community leaders to ally themselves with the government.

Comprehensive Approach. Best-practice counterinsurgency closely integrates political, security, economic and information components. It synchronizes civil and military efforts under unified political direction and common command-and-control, funding and resource mechanisms. This requires a shared diagnosis of the situation – agreed between civilian and military agencies, coalition and host nation governments, and updated through continuous, objective situational assessment.

Continuity, Authority and Resources. Key personnel (commanders, ambassadors, political staffs, aid mission chiefs, key advisers and intelligence officers) in a counterinsurgency campaign should be there “for the duration”. If this is not possible, they should serve the longest tour feasible. Key personnel must receive adequate authority and sufficient resources to get the job done while taking a long-term view of the problem, so that a consistent set of policies can be developed and applied over time.

Population-Centric Security. Effective counterinsurgency provides human security to the population, where they live, twenty-four hours a day. This, rather than destroying the enemy, is the central task. It demands continuous presence by security forces that protect population centers, local alliances and partnerships with community leaders, the creation of self-defending populations through local neighborhood watch and guard forces, and small-unit ground forces that operate in tandem with local security forces, developing pervasive situational awareness, quick response times and unpredictable operating patterns that keep the enemy off balance. Synchronization of security, development and governance. Timeliness and reliability in delivering on development promises is critical in winning popular support. This requires careful cueing of security operations to support development and governance activities, and vice versa. In turn, counterinsurgents must synchronize all these activities to support the overall political strategy through a targeted information campaign.

Partnership with the host nation government. Best-practice strategy puts the host government genuinely and effectively in the lead, via integrated “campaign management” planning and consultation mechanisms. These apply coalition expertise to cover local gaps, build the host government’s capacity, respect its sovereignty and leverage its local knowledge and “home-ground advantage”.

Effective, legitimate local security forces. Effective counterinsurgency requires indigenous security forces that are legitimate in local eyes, operate under the rule of law, and can effectively protect local communities against insurgents. Building such forces takes vastly more time and resources than is usually appreciated. While these forces are being built, the coalition must be willing to close with the enemy in direct combat, thereby minimizing insurgent pressure on local institutions. Direct combat (not remote engagement) is essential to minimize collateral non-combatant casualties, ensure flexible responses to

complex ground environments, and allow rapid political and economic follow-up after combat action.

*Region-wide approach. Because of the active sanctuary insurgents typically rely on in neighboring countries, and the support they receive from transnational terrorist organizations and cross-border criminal networks, an integrated region-wide strategy is essential. This must focus on disrupting insurgent safe havens, controlling borders and frontier regions, and undermining terrorist infrastructure in neighboring countries, while building a diplomatic consensus that creates a regional and international environment inhospitable to terrorists and insurgents.*²⁴

The points Kilcullen made during the hearing before the U.S. Congress in 2009 are maybe better understood today among U.S. political and military leaders than they were in 2004/2005. During the three first years of insurgencies in Iraq, the U.S. and their Coalition partners faced rising problems. It was at this time that Kilcullen and the other so-called 'COIN-thinkers' became involved in the internal reforms of the U.S. military forces – reforms that today has consequences for the internal priorities of both the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps.

The description below is included as an example of the situation in a country with an active rebellion – a conflict that includes the use of irregular warfare.

The situation in Afghanistan is, if possible, more complicated than in Iraq. Afghanistan is a country with a history and cultural and political orientation that make it fundamentally different from today's Western nation states. It is therefore important to take this fact into any calculations concerning how to help Afghanistan. Any long-term regional or international relationship depends on the Afghan internal political reality. The American Seth Jones has presented an appropriate way forward when considering the Afghan political dynamic in a *Foreign Affairs* article titled 'It Takes the Villages.' In his article, he argues that '[t]he current top-down state-building and counterinsurgency efforts must take place alongside bottom-up programs, such as reaching out to legitimate local leaders to enlist them in providing security and services at the village and district levels.'²⁵ (Chapter 4 will present the use of so-called *protected villages* as part of a COIN strategy, used earlier by the British Army in Malaya.)

24 David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla. Fighting Small Wars in the midst of a big one* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 110–111. 'Counterinsurgency and irregular warfare: issues and lessons learned, hearing before the terrorism, unconventional threats and capabilities subcommittee of the committee on armed services House of Representatives. One hundred eleventh congress, First session. Hearing held May 7, 2009', website *House Armed Service Committee, Hearing transcripts*, http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_house_hearings&docid=f:57052.pdf.

25 Seth Jones, 'It Takes the Villages: Bringing Change from Below in Afghanistan', *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2010.

One of the major Afghan threats to the country's future as a 'non-Taliban' state is posed by the internal problems in the Afghan security forces. The development of Afghan security forces has in some sources been portrayed as a small 'success story' in a conflict with few bright spots. Already in 2009 Anthony H. Cordesman wrote:

It is not enough to announce a new strategy for the Afghan War and follow it up with conceptual plans and good intentions that set unrealistic goals. The U.S. must now work with its ISAF allies and the Afghan government to take the detailed steps necessary to give the ANSF all the capacity and capabilities it needs to implement that strategy. Major new efforts are necessary to ensure that the ANSF becomes strong enough to work with ISAF collectively, win the fight, and to accelerate the timeline for a responsible transfer of security activity to the ANSF and an eventual drawdown of ISAF forces. This will involve increases in ANSF end strength as soon as these are practical. However, all involved must recognize that success is unlikely to come before 2014, and that any approach to ANSF force development requires efforts that are both innovative and necessarily experimental. Many aspects of ISAF's shape, clear, hold, and build strategy involve major uncertainties, and there is no precise way to determine what combined ISAF and ANSF troop-to-task ratio will succeed. It is far easier to scale back an ANSF expansion program than to cope with one that does not meet strategic requirements. It is also clear that investments in the ANSF, CSTC-A, and added mentors will be far cheaper than any practical alternative.²⁶

And of course the Afghan armed forces are pivotal to stabilising Afghanistan as a non-Taliban state. Yet now more than ten years after the fall of the Taliban, there appears to be little agreement between the government of President Karzai and its international backers on what kind of army the country needs and how to build it. Persistent structural flaws have undermined the military's ability to operate independently. Ethnic frictions and political factionalism among high-level players in the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the Afghan General Staff have also stunted the army's growth. It is often difficult to know which elements of the different insurgency fractions the Afghan army should be fighting. And it is not always easy to understand the underlying trends in the internal political power struggles of the Afghans, as seen through

²⁶ See, for example, Anthony H. Cordesman's briefings about the development in Afghanistan, 'The Afghan-Pakistan War: A Status Report: 2009 A Brief Summary', *CSIS Center for Strategic and International Studies*, http://csis.org/files/publication/burke/090803_BriefSummary.pdf. 'The Afghan-Pakistan War: Status in 2009', *CSIS Center for Strategic and International Studies*, http://csis.org/files/publication/burke/090803_Statusof2009.pdf. Texts written by professor A. H. Cordesman with the assistance of Adam Mausner and Jason Lemieux: 'Afghan National Security Forces: What it Will Take to Implement the ISAF Strategy', November 2010, *CSIS Center for Strategic and International Studies*, http://csis.org/files/publication/101115_Cordesman_AfghanNationalSecurityForces_Web.pdf.

the eyes of the foreign troops who are supposed to help the non-Taliban regime to survive. See, for example, the text below, taken from an AP press release (2010):

KABUL, Afghanistan – Top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. David Petraeus, was frustrated by the Afghan president's blunt call for a reduced military footprint in the country – a remark that threatens to undermine efforts to maintain international support for the war at this week's NATO summit. President Hamid Karzai said in an interview this week that he wanted the coalition to put an end to night raids, which cause friction between Afghans and foreign troops. These operations are a key part in Petraeus' strategy to rout insurgents, improve security and bolster governance and development.

NATO and diplomatic officials said Petraeus was frustrated by Karzai's remarks, which came just days before the NATO summit starts Friday in Lisbon, Portugal. Support for the war is waning in the capitals of troop-contributing nations and NATO officials hope to use the summit to convince heads of state that progress is being made, and that the effort be supported. They said NATO had received assurances that Karzai was onboard with the coalition's strategy and that international forces were working hard to address some of his concerns.

Karzai's spokesman, Waheed Omar, said the president has been "very clear about his confidence in Gen. Petraeus" and that the situation had improved since the departure of retired U.S. Army Gen. Stanley McChrystal. (...)

He said he wants American troops off the roads and out of Afghan homes and that the long-term presence of so many foreign soldiers will only make the war worse. Karzai's remarks come just as more than 30,000 U.S. reinforcements have all arrived and are pushing hard against Taliban strongholds especially in the south and east.²⁷

As a result of the internal difficulties, the Afghan army is still a fragmented force, serving different political and ethnic interests, and far from attaining the unified national character needed to confront numerous security threats. Experts have recommended strengthening civilian input into military development during chaotic situations. One such recommendation is that the Kabul regime must confront factionalism, ethnic strife and corruption within the Afghan MOD and general staff.

²⁷ Press release, no author identified, 'Karzai Call to Cut Troops Frustrates Petraeus', *Associated Press*, Military.com News, 15 November 2010, <http://www.military.com/news/article/karzai-call-to-cut-troops-frustrates-petraeus.html>.

Securing the sustainability of the armed forces in Afghanistan should be the most important part of the national security strategy of Afghanistan. Foreign troops will not stay on in Afghanistan forever, and the regime must accept its responsibility if it is to survive at all. According to Samina Ahmed, Crisis Group's South Asia Project Director: 'International support for the ANA must be targeted not just toward increasing the quantity of troops but enhancing the quality of the fighting force. Developing the national army cannot be done on the cheap, but the price tag will be considerably higher without a broad national review of military policy.'²⁸

1.2.3. A few words about the research approach

In this text I have included and will discuss actual terms and theories about the different forms of irregular warfare. I will identify and describe some *selected* literature/documents on insurgencies and COIN operations. As this text is intended for use as textbook, only a few insurgency cases will be used.

This book will include contemporaneous, relevant findings. Afghanistan (2001 – present) and Iraq (2003 – August 2010) are the most used examples, but this text will refer to ongoing U.S. and NATO COIN operations only *selectively*. In addition, the book includes research material developed by the American RAND Corporation in its studies on insurgency and COIN, published in the last few years, as well as contemporary military and academic articles, journalistic material and published books. Use of an ambitious quantitative analysis had to be ruled out, i.e. explaining today's trends based on a broad quantitative analysis. Such an ambitious project would have needed more researchers and computer support.

It was not our intention to focus on so-called (*Global*) *Islamist* or other religious terrorist threats, except as they relate to ongoing insurgency cases. In Chapter 3, and also in Chapter 4, we have included some material on the use of terror in connection with insurgencies. But as terrorism today is regarded as an international security problem, I wanted to include a chapter on international terrorism (Chapter 6). Terrorism may of course be used as a weapon of choice by rebels, even outside the concept of *organised insurgencies* – the main focus in this book. But it was outside the ambitions of this book to examine and present the 'accepted wisdom' on the subject of so-called global terrorism.²⁹ Together with a description of modern Stabilisation Operations (Chapter 5),

28 'The Afghan National Army: A Force in Fragments', *International Crisis Group*, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/media-releases/2010/asia/the-afghan-national-army-a-force-in-fragments.aspx>.

29 A possible starting point for a *later* and more ambitious research project could be based on the already collected data sets on insurgencies from James Fearon and David Laitin (Published as James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, 'Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War', *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 1, February 2003), which include 127 insurgencies. Of course, such a large number of cases would be too large for this study due to its less ambitious aims (see the Foreword). And a new research programme would have to add up-to-date data (e.g. from insurgencies that *postdate* Fearon and Laitin's work). The Swedish SIPRI collection at Uppsala is another possible source for quantitative collections on war/warfare.

I hope that the book will give the reader a broad collection of perspectives in a single volume.

1.3. A short presentation of some important books and other sources

1.3.1. Introduction

In the text below, I will present some of the written sources used in this book. For a complete listing of literature used, see the selected bibliography. It is outside the scope of this book to present all the theories published during the last 40–50 years. Although these theories may be of interest today, I have here chosen to present the theories thought to be the most relevant for students and planners of modern military operations.

Because insurgencies are defined by so many unique variables, including local culture, terrain, economy and governmental skills, to name but a few, probably only a small set of indicators are suitable for generalisation. Attempting to draw generalised lessons from insurgencies is, at best, an inexact science and, at worst, only ‘informed’ speculation.

As researchers from, for example, RAND Corporation have shown during their research over many years on the different kinds of insurgencies, broad surveys can devolve into exercises in simple reiteration, while narrow case studies offer few ‘universal truths’, if any.³⁰

The Australian-born COIN expert David Kilcullen sums up in his book *The Accidental Guerrilla* the various pitfalls in this kind of research:

*[There] is no such thing as a “standard” counterinsurgency. (...) In other words, the set of counterinsurgency measures adopted depends on the character of the insurgency: the nature of counterinsurgency is not fixed, but shifting; it evolves in response to changes in the form of insurgency. This means that there is no standard set of metrics, benchmarks, or operational techniques that apply to all insurgencies or remain valid for any single insurgency throughout its life-cycle. And there are no fixed “laws” of counterinsurgency, except for the sole and simple but difficult requirement to first understand the environment, then diagnose the problem, in detail and in its own terms, and then build a tailored set of situation-specific techniques to deal with it.*³¹

However, some distinguished experts (including Kilcullen) have distilled a few general lessons. Seminal works by Mao Zedong, the French military theoretician David

30 Austin Long, *On “Other War”. Lessons from Five Decades of RAND Counterinsurgency Research* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006), pp. 57–74.

31 Kilcullen (2009), p. 183.

Galula³² and other writers address insurgent and counterinsurgent strategies that can arguably prove useful in a variety of operational environments.³³ A considerable body of existing literature speaks for this conventional wisdom and supports the questions posed in connection with our research. From the literature, it is possible to sketch an outline of conventional wisdom on insurgency and COIN.

We do not in this chapter intend to restate these existing hypotheses or ‘rehash conventional wisdom’. Instead, we seek, in connection with eventual further studies at a later stage, to use a detailed examination of quantitative and qualitative data from earlier research to explain, justify or refute convention. Theoretically an in-depth study of a sizable sample of cases would also be likely to produce some unexpected results. Some data will, as always in research, necessarily prove inconclusive or insignificant.

1.3.2. Important sources

The literature on insurgency is very voluminous, and I have only been able to look into a small part of the available literature written in English. But there also exist many sources written in languages such as Portuguese, Spanish, Chinese, Russian and French. And only a selected part of this non-English literature is currently available in English translations. In the rest of this chapter, I will present a selection of the available literature written in or translated to English. I will present literature I consider interesting for research and studies on insurgencies. In addition to the literature discussed below, the other authors and I will also introduce further articles, reports and documents in the following chapters when we see a need for extra sources in the description of the trends.

In a book titled the *Tipping Point*, published in 2000, the American writer Malcolm Gladwell described the concept of what he called the ‘tipping point’.³⁴ The theories presented by Gladwell may also be of interest for studies of modern insurgencies, as he looks into the moment when ideas, trends and social behaviours cross a ‘threshold’ and then tip and start to spread to a lot of people. The term is fairly simple – it is the point at which events take a crucial turn towards the final outcome. That said, the identification of the factors that generate a tipping point is often elusive for both insurgents and counterinsurgents. Further, it is commonly very difficult to understand what created a tipping point until long after it has passed. Gladwell states that most

32 David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare. Theory and Practice* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, Second printing, 1965). (Reprinted 2006, but with new page numbers.) Galula also wrote a case study for RAND, first published in 1963 as a classified report. This RAND classic was reprinted in 2006: David Galula, *Pacification in Algeria*, new Foreword by Bruce Hoffman, 1956-1958 (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2006).

33 Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare. A French View of Counterinsurgency* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1964, reprinted 2006).

34 Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (New York: Back Bay Books, January 2002, 1st edition New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2000).

tipping points occur *unobserved* to even close observers, and that these observers often draw erroneous conclusions from paradigm shifts in conditions or behaviour. He uses data on real-life examples to *reason backwards* in the formation of his theory. It is probably necessary to caution the reader about one shortcoming of Gladwell's book. He only describes that 'things tip' and not 'why they tip'. It seems unlikely that any observation or experimental paradigm could be developed to falsify Gladwell's theory of the tipping point, as it is presented in his book. Even if the book itself does not pretend to be 'scientific', his theory may in spite of this be a *useful tool*.³⁵

But not every insurgency has historically had, or will have in the future, a clear tipping point. Many insurgencies have ended in drawn-out negotiated settlements, some of which are inconclusive from the perspective of both the insurgents and the government. Some cases with seemingly clear-cut endings had, at one point, tipped against the insurgency – only to 'tip back again' years later when the insurgents emerged from hibernation or from external sanctuary! In this respect, a tipping point *does not* signal an irreversible event. Instead, it may be used as a *descriptive device* to explain historical cases and as a marker for intelligence analysis. We may provide a more extensive explanation of the concept using an example. (See, for example, the statistics developed in the RAND research report *How Insurgencies End*, 2010.)³⁶

As I will use empirical data from the wars in Iraq (2003–2009) and Afghanistan (2001–present), I have included in this survey a book presenting background documents on the development of the situation in Iraq, *The Iraq Papers*.³⁷ This book is written by authors specialising in so-called comparative analysis, and they have good insight into politics in the Middle East. And to shed light on the Vietnam War, I have included the so-called *The Pentagon Papers* published by the New York Times in 1971 (in a Norwegian, edited version).³⁸ Both books present numerous official U.S. views, and document the internal debate in the U.S. administrations before and during the actual wars. Another book in this tradition is Bob Woodward's *Obama's Wars*.³⁹ At the core of Woodward's book is the division between the civilian leadership and the military leaders responsible for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This book, like the earlier books mentioned here, documents the infighting and problems that will always arise from the lack of a clear strategy for the war effort.

One of the new RAND publications, already mentioned above, documents a more quantitative approach – *How Insurgencies End*. This book provides a great deal of

35 Gladwell (2000), pp.7–14 and pp. 255–259.

36 Ben Connable and Martin C. Libicki, *How Insurgencies End* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2010).

37 John Ehrenberg, J. Patrice McSherry, José Ramón Sánchez & Caroleen Marji Sayej (editors), *The Iraq Papers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

38 Neil Sheehan, Hedrick Smith, E.W. Kenworthy & Fox Butterfield (editors & writers), *Pentagon Rapporten. Den uforkortede norske utgaven* (Oslo: J. W. Cappelens Forlag as, 1971). [The NYT articles were based on the original report developed for the U.S. Minister of Defense; it included 3000 pages (analytical) written text and 4000 pages of documents, collected in a total of 47 booklets.]

39 Bob Woodward, *Obama's Wars. The Inside Story* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).

statistical material about how insurgencies end, based on information collected from 89 ‘modern’ insurgencies. The authors compare, using quantitative and qualitative analysis, lessons from insurgencies and COIN literature.⁴⁰ RAND Corporation has in its published reports described how, by overlaying qualitative assessments on quantitative analysis of insurgency trends, useful indicators can be described.⁴¹

Below I will present some of the main sources. If we look at the books and official documents published after 2004, insurgency has dominated the focus of the U.S. military. Even NATO has been forced to focus on COIN because of the ISAF commitment in Afghanistan. It is important to emphasise that irregular warfare will be an important part of modern warfare for many years to come. If these trends are understood correctly, Western military forces will also be involved in this kind of warfare in the foreseeable future. According to U.S. Marine Corps General James Cartwright:

For the next “five to 10 years,” the military likely will remain engaged in the same kinds of conflicts it has been fighting since 2001....

The vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs on Thursday told a conference in Washington that “no one I know thinks we’ll be out of” these kinds of conflicts any time soon.

“There is nothing out there that tells us we won’t be wrapped up in these conflicts for as far as the eye can see,” Cartwright said at the Center for Strategic and International Studies-sponsored forum.

In coming years, however, the military might be tasked with fighting these kinds of wars “in different places and at different levels,” Cartwright said.

*He did not point to specific nations into which U.S. forces or assets might be deployed over the next decade beyond Iraq and the Afghanistan-Pakistan region.*⁴²

⁴⁰ Connable and Libicki (2010).

⁴¹ Mai Elliott, *RAND in Southeast Asia. A History of the Vietnam War Era* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2010). See also John Mackinlay & Alison Al-Baddawy, *Rethinking Counterinsurgency* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Counterinsurgency Study – Volume 5, RAND Corporation, 2008). Seth G. Jones, *Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Counterinsurgency Study – Volume 4, RAND Corporation, 2008). Austin Long, *On “Other War”. Lessons from Five Decades of Rand Counterinsurgency Research* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006).

⁴² John T. Bennett (Staff writer DefenseNews), ‘Cartwright: Expect war for 5–10 more years’, *ArmyTimes*, Saturday, 15 May 2010, http://www.armytimes.com/news/2010/05/defense_cartwright_war_051310/.

General Cartwright's comment makes it clear that the West should have no illusions about the future international situation, and that U.S. and also other Western forces will probably be called upon to take action. Because of the probable need for well-trained troops capable of fighting different types of irregular forces in the coming years, I will present a selection of literature on the subject.

The term 'conventional wisdom' may help the reader to isolate which parties the experts consider to be the current authorities in the fields of insurgency and COIN. Especially in the last six to seven years, both civilian and military authors have published many works on insurgency theory, practice and (predominantly in the current literature) specific *case studies*. The sheer volume of new literature requires me to narrow the focus by building on writing done by so-called recognised experts, as this book will attempt to present views and experiences we hope will be useful for military readers. My intention is also that this text should be useful as a textbook for military education.

A term like *conventional wisdom* denotes inherent ambiguity. Because of this, the selection process must include texts that are not already on so-called 'official reading lists'. The term conventional wisdom describes the prevailing wisdom, e.g. literature describing the current situation. Most of the works selected as sources in this report were published after the Second World War (with Mao Zedong's work being an obvious exception).

In this description, we have focused on philosophers/thinkers/practitioners, or those authors who have both studied and practised either insurgency or COIN. However, we will also include notable academic works that describe the different forms of insurgency and civil violence, in order to balance the experiential writings with literature of a more academic character. In the book we will present writers, theories and works that we believe have shaped insight into insurgency and COIN. By referring to these works throughout the report rather than in a single chapter, we hope to assist the reader in contrasting each of the findings with some of the assumptions that have been used in recent U.S. and ISAF operational planning. There is a growing difference between Western-style societies and their reaction to insurgents, on the one hand, and reactions in Iraq or other Muslim societies to the use of violence as a political weapon, on the other hand. We need to recognise the need for greater interplay between agencies, as defined in the American concept of 'three block war', developed in the 1990s (this will be described later). These differences in attitudes are both political and cultural, and should not be underestimated.

The term 'asymmetric warfare' became very popular in both the media and among academics following the 9/11 attacks in 2001. In fact it became so misused (or 'over used') that by late 2005 asymmetric warfare could mean almost anything. This is one of the reasons why the term is not as widely used today.

But the term may still be useful for understanding the many rebellions and insurgencies we still have in the world – there is objectively a need to understand how and why the nature of conflict is changing. The British lecturer Rod Thornton has tried to ‘rehabilitate’ the term. He wrote in his book *Asymmetric Warfare*, published in 2007:

*Asymmetric warfare is a broad church. It can be practised by many actors in many different ways across a broad spectrum of civilian and military activity. (...)*⁴³

In his book, Thornton seeks to clarify the meaning and possible significance of the term, which is still used in both military and civilian realms. It is of course important to study why weaker opponents apply so-called asymmetric techniques against the Western world and against regimes in the Third World. An important part of the book is his discussion of why the West’s military superiority may be seriously undermined by asymmetric threats.

With a few notable exceptions (including al-Qaeda in Iraq), nearly all contemporary insurgency theory, i.e. concerning rural-based Communist-led insurgencies, including those in urban areas, is rooted in Mao Zedong’s *On Guerrilla Warfare* (first complete translation into English in 1961).⁴⁴ Even the South American development of insurgency, so-called *foco*, is highly dependent on Mao’s thinking. According to a description in Wikipedia:

*The foco theory of revolution by way of guerrilla warfare, also known as focalism (Spanish: foquismo), was inspired by Marxist revolutionary Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara, based upon his experiences surrounding the rebel army’s victory in the 1959 Cuban Revolution, and formalized as such by Régis Debray. Its central principle is that vanguardism by cadres of small, fast-moving paramilitary groups can provide a focus (in Spanish, foco) for popular discontent against a sitting regime, and thereby lead a general insurrection. Although the original approach was to mobilize and launch attacks from rural areas, many foco ideas were adapted into urban guerrilla warfare movements by the late 1960s.*⁴⁵

As already mentioned, Chairman Mao laid the modern foundation for rural-based Communist insurgencies. Followers of these theories, like the Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh and the Cuban revolutionary Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara, created their own

⁴³ Rod Thornton, *Asymmetric Warfare. Threat and Response in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), p. 23.

⁴⁴ There are several different translations and transliterations of this title. I will in this study use this version: Mao Tse-tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, translated and with an Introduction by Samuel B. Griffith, (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2005, originally written in 1937).

⁴⁵ *Foco* in Spanish: fire or focus in English. ‘Foco’, *Wikipedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foco>.

practice. These theories about *revolutionary war* have inspired and/or shaped nearly every other insurgency since the early 1960s.⁴⁶ The North Vietnamese General Võ Nguyên Giáp, together with other North Vietnamese Communist leaders, brought to print the insurgent philosophy of Ho Chi Minh. See, for example, Giáp's book *People's War, People's Army*,⁴⁷ a work that builds on Mao's *On Guerrilla Warfare* and served to inspire contemporary so-called anti-colonial wars or revolutionary wars in the 1950s and 1960s. Another book written by Giáp and General Van Tien Dung, *How We Won the War*, is a really interesting document of the era. Published a short time after the North Vietnamese had conquered South Vietnam in the Spring Offensive 1975, the book is entirely lacking the 'political correctness' typical of most of the North Vietnamese wartime literature. And it was an *invasion* performed by the North Vietnamese People's Army that decided the war, not the southern insurgents. General Giáp only very briefly presents the duties of the NLF and the so-called Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) in the Appendix to his book.⁴⁸ As Giáp was the 'military architect' of the Communist military strategy during 30 years of war, his views are important.⁴⁹ For a view from the losing side, see *The Final Collapse* by General Cao Van Vien, the last South Vietnamese chairman of their Joint General Staff.⁵⁰

These revolutionary ideas have also inspired later insurgencies. Other North Vietnamese Communist leaders have also written extensively about insurgency theory and tactics. North Vietnamese communist leaders, writing in the 1950s and 1960s, published many books about 'the correct way to achieve Communism' and revolutionary military theory, and some of these books may still be looked upon as important insurgency literature.⁵¹ I will point to a modern Vietnamese book, *Victory in Vietnam*, authored by a group of former North Vietnamese officers. This is the official history of the People's Army of Vietnam for the period 1954 to 1975. As all official history tends to be 'egocentric' – using much space on what went well and little on own failures – this book is not strictly objective; however, it is a rare insiders' account, and gives many details about the Communist regime's internal discussions and decision-making

46 In Mao (1937/1961/1996/2005), Mao presents his insurgent philosophy. These texts are recorded and deciphered in a number of volumes. Translations of Mao's own work may be accessed in the multivolume Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, volumes I through V, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press 1965–1977), published in Beijing. For the official translations of Mao's *Selected Works*, see *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, *Marxist Internet Archive*, <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/index.htm>.

47 Võ Nguyên Giáp, *People's War, People's Army* (Hanoi: Thé Gioi Publishers, 1961/2000). First English edition: (New York: Praeger, 1962). See also Bernard B. Fall, *Hell In a Very Small Place: The Siege of Dien Bien Phu* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1968, New York: Da Capo Press, Reprint edition 2002).

48 Võ Nguyen Giáp & Van Tien Dung, *How We Won the War* (Philadelphia, PA: RECON Publications, 1976), p. 56–57, 61–62.

49 Võ Nguyen Giáp & Van Tien Dung (1976).

50 Cao Van Vien, *The Final Collapse* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, Indochina Monographs, 1985).

51 Other important Vietnamese books on revolutionary warfare are: (Former Party Secretary) Le Duan, *Selected Writings (1960–1975)* (Hanoi: Thé Gioi Publishers, 1994). Troung-Chinh, *Selected Writings* (Hanoi: Thé Gioi Publishers, 1994). Pham Van Dong, *Ecris (1954–1975) 2 édition* (Hanoi: Editions The Cioi, 1994).

process on both politics and war.⁵²For his part, Che Guevara split with Mao's view of revolutionary warfare. In *Guerrilla Warfare*⁵³, he espoused the special Latin American so-called *foco* modification to the Chinese Communist rural insurgency theory. The French revolutionary writer Régis Debray supplemented Guevara's book *Guerrilla Warfare*⁵⁴ with his own book *Revolution in the Revolution?* This may be considered a more philosophical work, which also fed the (often disastrous for the revolutionaries) notion/ideas of the rural *foco*. Andrew Joscelyne wrote about Debray and his book (1995):

*In the '60s, Régis Debray fought beside Che Guevara in Bolivia. Today, his obsession isn't ideology – it's 'mediology.' Twenty-seven years ago, French radical theoretician Régis Debray was sentenced by a Bolivian military tribunal to 30 years in jail. He had been captured with the guerrilla band led by Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, Fidel Castro's lieutenant. Released after three years, largely because of the intervention of compatriots such as President Charles de Gaulle, André Malraux, and Jean-Paul Sartre, Debray returned to writing. He spent five years in the early 1980s as a special advisor on Latin American relations to French President François Mitterrand.*⁵⁵

Debray in his book tried to analyse the tactical and strategic thinking/doctrines then prevailing among militant socialist movements in Latin America. This book was also used as a 'handbook for guerrilla warfare'.⁵⁶ (His book *Revolution in the Revolution?* is still considered by some revolutionaries as a primer for guerrilla insurrection.)

In modern theories about irregular warfare, guerrilla warfare is normally presented as only one of the many possibilities insurgents have to fight their opponents. And use of terror is very often regarded as a tool for the revolutionaries. Guerrilla warfare in the early phase of an insurgency is traditionally built around revolutionary cadres, in which a small group of combatants use mobile military tactics in the form of ambushes and raids to combat a larger and often less mobile conventionally organised and trained army.

It is also logical to include the controversial Brazilian writer and revolutionary Carlos Marighella (1911–1969) in this presentation, because he represented an urban philosophy. Carlos Marighella was a Brazilian Marxist revolutionary and writer. Marighel-

52 Many authors, *Victory in Vietnam*, translated by Merle L. Pribbenow, Foreword by William J. Duiker, (Lawrence, Kansas, Modern War Studies, University Press of Kansas, 2002).

53 Which itself was derived from Marxist/Leninist theory.

54 Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (New York: Vintage, 1969, La Vergne, TN: BN Publications, 2007 ('Print on Demand Book'), originally published in Spanish 1961).

55 Andrew Joscelyne, 'Revolution in the Revolution', *Wired*, http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/3.01/debray_pr.html.

56 Régis Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution?* (New York: Grove Press 2000, first French printing Paris: F. Maspero 1967). See also some harsh criticism of the 'revolutionary amateurs' by Guevara and Debray: Breaker McCoy, 'Che Guevara's Silly 'Foco' Theory', *Scribd*, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/8263366/Che-Guevaras-Silly-Foco-Theory>. See 'Jules Régis Debray', Encyclopedia, Absolute Astronomy, http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/R%C3%A9gis_Debray.

la's most famous contribution to guerrilla literature was the book *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, consisting of advice on how to disrupt and overthrow an authoritarian regime.⁵⁷ Marighella's book was first published in 1969. His writing builds on Mao and Che to a point and then diverges, all but abandoning the themes of rural land reform and the long war in favour of the kind of quick, explosive urban campaigns that shocked Latin America in the late 1960s and early 1970s.⁵⁸ But European students of Marighella's theories quickly understood that this approach would be unsuitable for European operations – not every theory can be used to good effect everywhere.

The Spanish economist and author Abraham Guillén (1913 –1993) may also be included here. He was one of the most prolific revolutionary writers in Latin America during the 1960s and may be looked upon as the intellectual mentor of Uruguay's Tupamaros revolutionaries. He is today best known as the author of *Strategy of the Urban Guerrilla*, which played an important role in the activities of urban guerrillas in Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. While Guillén supported urban insurgency, he also espoused the kind of *hybrid* rural/urban insurgency that later emerged in several 21st-century conflicts.⁵⁹ Because of the trends we have observed in today's insurgencies in the Middle East, Guillén may be looked upon as the most visionary of the (modern) insurgent theorists.

Another interesting report/book is a RAND Corporation counterinsurgency study written by David C. Gompert and John Gordon IV: *War by Other Means*.⁶⁰ This RAND report (2008) gives recommendations based on the premise that COIN is a contest for 'the allegiance of a nation's population; victory over jihadist insurgency consists not of merely winning a war against terrorists but of persuading Islamic populations to choose legitimate government and reject violent religious tyranny'.⁶¹

Understanding Counterinsurgency: Doctrine, Operations, and Challenges, a book edited by Thomas Rid and Thomas Keaney, was published in 2010.⁶² This book is a collection of essays on the ever-evolving nature of counterinsurgency. Rid and Keaney

57 For a description of Carlos Marighella, see: 'Carlos Marighella', *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlos_Marighella. His book is also available in *Marxists Internet Archive*, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marighella-carlos/1969/06/minimanual-urban-guerrilla/index.htm>.

58 *Minimanual* is a tactical, crib-notes distillation of his more nuanced understanding of insurgency theory, and it represents a rather radical shift in perspective. In the anthology *For the Liberation of Brazil*, Marighella (1971), pp. 47, 179) states that 'the decisive struggle will be in the rural area – the strategic area – and not the tactical area (i.e. the city)' and that 'guerrilla warfare is not the right technique for urban areas'. This earlier work is bogged down with a lot of old-fashioned Marxist rhetoric, but it also offers some parallel analysis to Guillén's (1973) *Philosophy of the Urban Guerrilla*. The British COIN manual states: 'The *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla* was to aspiring urban insurgents in the 1970s what Mao Tse-Tung's *Protracted War* (a.k.a. *On Warfare*) had been to earlier generations of rural revolutionaries, and for much the same reasons.' (See UK Ministry of Defence, 2001, p. A-1-E-1).

59 Abraham Guillén offers an interesting critique of Marighella, Guevara and others in the last chapter of *Philosophy of the Urban Guerrilla*.

60 David C. Gompert, John Gordon IV et al., *War by Other Means. Building Complete and Balanced Capabilities for Counterinsurgency* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Counterinsurgency Study – Final Report, 2008).

61 The citation is taken from the back cover of the printed RAND book.

62 Thomas Rid and Thomas Keaney, *Understanding Counterinsurgency: Doctrine, Operations, and Challenges* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

have managed to put together interesting but often contradictory discussions from some of the best thinkers working on the understanding of counterinsurgency, i.e. doctrine, operations and future challenges. As suggested by the subtitle, the book is divided into three sections. The first part examines the development of counterinsurgency doctrine in Britain, France, Germany and the United States. The second part is an in-depth discussion of the *operational* aspects of counterinsurgency, featuring essays by experts and practitioners from each branch of the U.S. military. The third and maybe the best part surveys the challenges within the counterinsurgency environment, with essays focusing on topics such as the impact of governance and information operations as well as the influence of the time factor. One of the most interesting chapters concerns *governance*, ultimately the path to an *exit strategy* in any modern counterinsurgency campaign. But the most important chapter is the conclusion written by Rid and Keaney themselves: counterinsurgency doctrine should be understood in the greater strategic picture. As they conclude in the book's last chapter:

Understanding counterinsurgency also means understanding the emotional side and its ensuing risk: the higher the costs and the longer it takes, the higher the likelihood that war . . . may change "from a tool of policy to a force that imposes – or seeks to impose – its own emotional demands." These emotional demands make it both more difficult and more important to remember that wars are fought not to be won, but to gain a political objective beyond war.

Robert Taber is here represented with a still interesting, if rather subjective view of insurgent philosophy and practice that he put forth in the book *War of the Flea* (published 1965).⁶³ The U.S.-based *Library Journal* wrote the following comment about Taber's book in a review: 'Very interesting on the popular level and a good example of political journalism.' This work from the early 1960s is one of the older books that enjoyed a 'renaissance' after 2001.

The French officer/military theoretician David Galula has been an important source for modern counterinsurgency theoreticians and planners. His book *Counterinsurgency Warfare* (1964) is arguably one of today's most recognised and influential books on the subject. Galula also wrote a Memorandum for RAND Corporation, published in 1963 as a confidential document. A new edition of this RAND study, including a new foreword, was published in 2006.⁶⁴ Galula was an experienced practitioner and excellent writer. It is also interesting that this book had little influence

⁶³ Robert Taber, *War of the Flea. The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, Inc, 2002, first edition Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 1965). Remark: Notably absent from this list are modern Islamic philosopher/practitioners, such as Osama bin Laden. In an effort to separate insurgency from terrorism, I decided to omit them in this study. That said, it would be worthwhile to study Jihadist and other Islamist writers.

⁶⁴ Galula (2006).

in his own lifetime, but was brought back and became an important work because of the growing difficulties the Americans started facing in Iraq in autumn 2003. I think Ann Marlowe is right in her description of the reasons for the new interest in Galula's writing since around 2004:

*It is a safe bet that if the United States had not found itself – or to be more accurate, identified itself – as fighting an insurgency in Iraq sometime in 2003, “David Galula” would still be a nearly forgotten name. In 2003, his two books on counterinsurgency had been out of print for forty years. One, *Pacification in Algeria*, had never really been published at all; written as a study for RAND, it was classified until 2005.*

One of the characteristics which makes Galula's work so robust – its infusion with both the French and Anglo-American counterinsurgency traditions – also left him an intellectual orphan. In his lifetime, Galula had the bad luck to be an expert who wrote in English about a conflict mainly of interest to the French. Still worse, the Algerian war was tainted for Americans by the shadows of colonialism and torture. Though Galula was in the United States during the early years of the American involvement in the Vietnam War, he seems to have had only a fleeting influence on those who formed our strategy.

*In France, counterinsurgency theory had enjoyed a great flourishing in the 1950s and 1960s, as the French Army fought successively in Indochina, Suez, and Algeria. But the stars of this movement, a group of colonels including Roger Trinquier and Charles Lacheroy, were already famous before Galula began to write. In the context of the French tradition of *guerre revolutionnaires*, there was little novelty in Galula's approach.*

By 2006, when FM 3–24 brought Anglophone writers back into the game, the French had less reason to be absorbed in counterinsurgency studies. So even after Galula's works were republished in English – and translated for the first time into French, nearly 40 years after his death – he remains almost unknown to the nation whose uniform he wore for most of his adult life.⁶⁵

Nearly all today's COIN philosophies stem from, or refer to, David Galula either directly or indirectly, although many of today's philosophers/practitioners on 'modern warfare' reach similar conclusions independently. I will use Galula's text extensively

65 Ann Marlowe, *David Galula: His Life And Intellectual Context*, SSI Monograph, Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), United States Army War College, August 2010, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1016.pdf>, p. 1–2.

here. Galula is followed closely by the contemporary officer/military theorist David Kilcullen. Before his book *The Accidental Guerrilla* was published in 2009, Kilcullen was probably best known for his informally published *Twenty-Eight Articles* (2006) on COIN, but he also authored *Countering Global Insurgency* (2004). His book *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* offered an indirect approach to COIN that emphasises *local relationships* and capacity-building in light of efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. This approach, Kilcullen asserts, is most effective in complex environments that include what he calls ‘accidental guerrillas’, individuals who enter into conflict not as an existential threat to another nation-state but as defenders of their own space.⁶⁶ Kilcullen has helped shape conventional wisdom not only through his writing but also through his close association with the so-called ‘surge’ in Iraq (2007), and his work with U.S. Army General David Petraeus, a well-known contemporary COIN practitioner.

John J. McCuen (1926–2010) may be mentioned here. This late U.S. Army Colonel had experience from several Southeast Asian COIN operations and was the author of *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War* (published 1966). It is one of the older ‘modern classics’ on Communist revolutionary warfare. This book is not well known today, but is occasionally cited by experts, and is an interesting source.⁶⁷ In the foreword to this book, Sir Robert Grainger Thompson (1916–1992) wrote in September 1965:

*If someone sat down and added up the casualties of all insurgencies and revolutionary wars of the last twenty years (that is excluding Korea, Suez, the China-India and the India-Pakistan conflicts), the total would probably exceed that of the Second World War. In Vietnam alone casualties in 1965 have been running at about 5000 a month. They were equally heavy at times in China, Algeria and the French war in Indochina. (...)*⁶⁸

Thompson had taken part as a so-called Chindit in the UK-led Burma Campaign against the Japanese during World War II. But it was in his position as Permanent Secretary of Defence for Malaya that he became well-known (as a LtCol). From January 1952, he worked together with General G. Templer, the British High Commissioner in Malaya,

66 David Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010). This book may be looked at as an updated version of Kilcullen's 2009 book, intended for use at the tactical level. Kilcullen writes in the Preface: ‘This book is intended for counterinsurgents – civilian and military students and practitioners of counterinsurgency – and for the general reader interested in understanding today's conflict environment, of which insurgency forms an enduring part.’ p. ix.

67 John J. McCuen, *The Art of Counter-revolutionary War. The Strategy of Counterinsurgency*, Foreword by Sir Robert Thompson (Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1967, first published by Faber & Faber, London, 1966. New printing, St. Petersburg, FL: Hailer Publishers, 2005). According to some collections with titles on insurgency and COIN, John J. McCuen has written a book with the title *French Strategy of Revolutionary War* (New York: School of International Affairs, Columbia University, 1961). The book probably had the subtitle *Protracted revolutionary war in Algeria*. The book is, if it exists, out of print, and to our knowledge only the book published in 1966/1967 is currently available.

68 McCuen (1967), p. 15.

to deal with the so-called Malayan Emergency. Thompson was an important part of the British team, leading the operations that resulted in the defeat of the Communist-led insurgency during the Malayan Emergency. But today Thompson is best known for his extensive writing on counterinsurgency and fighting revolutionary warfare.⁶⁹

I will also mention the British General and military theorist Sir Frank Kitson (born 1926). His most important book, as long as we are talking about the different kinds of irregular warfare, is *Low Intensity Operations*.⁷⁰ An important fact here is the following observation: ‘When this book was first published ... the US was losing an insurgency in Vietnam, and Great Britain was in its final stages as a colonial power. By that point, Britain had participated in more than 30 low intensity operations, and had been unsuccessful in almost all of them. Kitson, a veteran of many, decided to put his thoughts on paper as to how he thought these battles could be won.’⁷¹ Some of Kitson’s ideas for Northern Ireland were very advanced for the time, and became controversial. Kitson recognised the significance of drawing the local population and civilian institutions into the problem-solving and community-building effort. So much so that the political leaders of the day never used them – his ideas were too controversial.

Another Kitson book of interest for the study of irregular warfare is *Bunch of Five*. This was General Kitson’s military autobiography. Here he describes his experiences in Kenya 1953–55, Malaya 1957, Muscat and Oman 1958, as well as his peacekeeping activities during two stints in Cyprus (1963–64 and 1967–68). He had wanted to write about Northern Ireland, but at the time of first publication the topic was still too sensitive. Instead, he wrote a fifth part summarising his conclusions based on experiences from all the areas he had fought in.⁷²

Bernard B. Fall (1926–1967) was a correspondent/journalist and historian rather than a military practitioner. But his book *Street Without Joy* (1961) is an interesting and critical description of the war between the French colonial forces and Việt-Minh, from 1940s to 1954.⁷³ Fall was a good military analyst and scholar, but he was one of the U.S. experts on Vietnam whom Robert McNamara and his ‘technocrats’ chose not to use. (See McNamara’s self-pitying and very selective book *In Retrospect*.)⁷⁴ Fall’s firsthand narrative and his thinking about the future of ‘revolutionary war’ have

69 Thompson, (1966/2005). Robert Thompson, *Krig ved stedfortreder. Den revolusjonære krig i stormaktsoppgjøret* (Oslo: Elin-gaard forlag, 1970). It was General Templer who made the remark that, ‘The answer [to the uprising] lies not in pouring more troops into the jungle, but in the hearts and minds of the people.’

70 Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations. Subversion, Insurgency, and Peacekeeping* (St. Petersburg, Florida: Hailer Publishing, 1971, London: Faber and Faber, 1971, new printing by Hailer Publishing 2008).

71 Frank Kitson – text quoted from the back cover of the Hailer Publishing printing, 2008.

72 Frank Kitson, *Bunch of Five* (London: Faber & Faber, 1988), reprinting 2010. Kitson has also written an excellent book on modern conventional warfare, *Directing Operations* (London: Faber and Faber, 1989).

73 Bernard B. Fall, *Street Without Joy* (Mechanicsburg, PA: The Stackpole Books, 1961/1994).

74 Robert S. McNamara, *In Retrospect* (New York: Times Books, 1995), p. 32. He wrote in his book: (We) ‘lacked experts to consult to compensate for their ignorance.’

influenced many of today's COIN experts, including David Kilcullen and other modern writers on COIN development.

What B. B. Fall had figured out during his research into the earlier French experience was that the factor what mattered most in determining the war's outcome in Indochina, and later in South Vietnam, was control of the countryside. The following text, first published in the U.S. periodical *Foreign Policy* in 1966, should also be of interest for people responsible for fighting today's insurgencies:

*It may well be the opinion of future historians that the small but fierce engagements which in late 1965 pitted newly-arrived American troops against the Chu-Luc (Main Force) units of the Viet Cong and of North Viet Nam were the First Battle of the Marne of the Vietnamese War. The Battle of the Marne in September 1914 halted the seemingly irresistible onslaught of the Kaiser and thus foreclosed the possibility of an immediate end of the war through a collapse of the French; but the Great War, with its immense human and material losses, still ground on for four years and the enemy would often again come close to victory. The same happened in World War II before Moscow in the winter of 1941, or at Guadalcanal a few months later: no "turning point" as yet, but a halt to the runaway disaster. In South Viet Nam, after being stopped at Chu-Lai, Plei-Mé and the Ia-Drang, the Communist regulars lost enough of their momentum for the time being not to be able to bring about the military and political collapse of the Saigon government late in 1965 – a situation which would have altogether closed out the American "option" of the conflict. But just as at the Marne 52 years ago, or before Moscow a quarter-century ago, nothing had been decided as yet. Years – perhaps a decade – of hard fighting could still be ahead. And the political collapse of the government in Saigon is still a distinct possibility. It is, however, important to assess in detail the military and political elements on which this precarious balance rests and what real possibilities for maneuver (as against wishful thinking on one side or party rhetoric on the other) exist at present in the Viet Nam situation.*⁷⁵

§

Richard Clutterbuck (1917–1998) was a central contributor to the development of modern theory on insurgency and terrorism. He was an experienced field officer (Major General) and later a professor, and contributed to the insurgency literature with 'Guerrillas and Terrorists' (1977) and, maybe most importantly, 'The Long, Long War

⁷⁵ B. B. Fall, 'Viet Nam in the Balance', *Foreign Policy*, October 1966. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/23827/bernard-b-fall/viet-nam-in-the-balance>.

The Emergency in Malaya 1948–1960’ (1966/1967).⁷⁶ Another rediscovered writer on small wars is the already mentioned British Colonel C. E. Caldwell, who authored the voluminous book *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice* (1906). Caldwell in his writing about British colonial warfare does not fit in easily in today’s ‘political mainstream’, and many of his observations from the tactical level are today dated because of both the political and technological changes since 1906.⁷⁷

Gil Merom in his interesting and ‘politically incorrect’ book *How Democracies Lose Small Wars* (2003) argues that modern democratic states fail in combating insurgencies because they are ‘unable to find a winning balance between expedient and moral tolerance’. Small wars are therefore lost at home when a critical minority shifts the centre of gravity from the battlefield to the home front.⁷⁸ The American Jeffrey Record served as an assistant province adviser in Vietnam and later authored the critical book *Beating Goliath* (2007).⁷⁹ Retired Army officer John A. Nagl has produced a series of texts on insurgency and COIN, most notably his book *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (2005).⁸⁰ Nagl’s title references T. E. Lawrence, whose works are very often used as reference material.⁸¹ See also an article written by John A. Nagl, ‘Constructing the Legacy of Field Manual 3–24.’⁸² In this article Nagl writes that the Field Manual (FM) 3–24, *Counterinsurgency*, published in December 2006, was built around two big ideas: first, that protecting the population was the key to success in any counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign, and second, that to succeed in COIN, an army has to be able to learn and adapt more rapidly than the insurgents. Nagl has also taken part in the work on *The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (2007),

76 Richard Clutterbuck, *The Long, Long War: The Emergency in Malaya 1948–1960*, with a Foreword by Sir Robert Thompson (London: Cassell & Co Ltd, 1967, first US Edition published by Praeger 1966.) See also Richard Clutterbuck, *Terrorism and Guerrilla Warfare: Forecasts and Remedies* (London: Faber & Faber, 1977; Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1980). In this book he combines an analytical approach with the more practical common sense of a soldier to develop and explain his theories about guerrilla war and terrorism.

77 See Ian F. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies: Guerrillas and their Opponents since 1750* (New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 36. Beckett (2001) wrote about *Small Wars* that Caldwell is still a useful historical reference.

78 Gil Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars: State, Society, and the Failures of France in Algeria, Israel in Lebanon, and the United States in Vietnam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, new printing 2008).

79 Jeffrey Record, *Beating Goliath: Why Insurgencies Win* (New York: Potomac Books Inc, 2009). Thomas E. Ricks wrote in a book review: ‘The United States would be better off if more people read Jeffrey Record’s insightful analysis – especially people in power. His analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the American way of war is by itself worth the price of the book.’ Merom gives a very detailed and thought-provoking description of the Israeli dilemma in the book’s Part III, pp. 155–228.

80 John A. Nagl, Peter J. Schoomaker (foreword), *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*, Foreword by Peter J. Schoomaker, (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2005).

81 T.E. Lawrence is widely quoted especially in American ‘COIN circles’, but he was never an insurgent but an insurgent adviser during WW I. While Lawrence has influenced conventional military wisdom, many of his aphorisms are probably too dated and out of today’s context to be used in this report. Lawrence could of course have been cited in this report as an insurgent, but it is difficult to find evidence that Lawrence’s writing influences modern insurgents to any great degree.

82 John A. Nagl, ‘Constructing the Legacy of Field Manual 3–24’, *Joint Forces Quarterly*, No. 58, Third Quarter, July 2010. According to Nagl, future military doctrine should benefit from FM 3–24’s example of requesting input from the field and from outsiders, making the preparation of doctrine less about traditional practice handed down from past generations and more about constant learning and adaptation based on current experience and collaboration with a broad group of concerned partners.

FM 3–24. In addition Nagl wrote the Foreword for the (‘civilian’) University of Chicago Press edition of the doctrine document.

Thomas X. Hammes’ book *The Sling and the Stone* (2006) is still on the required reading list at many military educational institutions. Hammes is one of the more concise and prescriptive authors. Hammes often summarised conventional wisdom in a very reader-friendly format.⁸³ A very good description was printed in a book review in *Military Review*, March–April 2007: ‘Can a two-and-one-half-year-old book be reviewed as a classic? It can, and should, if it says the kinds of smart, prescient things that Hammes had to say in 2004. *The Sling and the Stone* was written to appeal to a vast and diverse audience. It provides numerous jewels of information for the general reader as well as senior military leaders, military operational planners and supporters, interagency personnel, and U.S. political leaders who are looking for a provocative read to aid them in making informed decisions in support of U.S. national security. Since its first publication, this visionary book has ignited others in public and private life to read, research, write, and advocate for the United States to change its defence posture in order to meet the challenge posed by the advent of 4GW. Many of Hammes’ ideas have now been adopted by the military and are currently in practice in Iraq and Afghanistan.’

Noted COIN scholar Bard E. O’Neill has written perhaps one of the most accessible of the various *academic* works on the subject. In his book *Insurgency and Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare*, he developed a framework for analysis.⁸⁴ O’Neill’s analysis has later been used by many students of insurgency. In his Preface to his 2nd revised edition published in 2005, he wrote: ‘As I pored over the literature, it became evident that there were two kinds of writings on the subject: descriptive and theoretical. Seldom did the two come together, and the theoretical materials often focused on only part of the problem. The more I read, the more I became convinced that there was a need for a comprehensive framework for analysis that integrated and added to the collective understanding and insights about insurgency.’⁸⁵ Other interesting military/academic works on insurgency (and COIN) are among others: the French officer Vincent Desportes’ *Tomorrow’s War. Thinking Otherwise* (2009),⁸⁶ Ian F. W. Beckett’s *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies* (2001) and Stathis N. Kalyvas’ *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (2006).⁸⁷ Furthermore, William R. Polk has written a comparative analysis of insurgent movements over three centuries (*Violent*

83 Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2006). See the book review in *Military Review*, March–April 2007: (...) ‘Hammes’s book is truly an enlightening must-read for Military Review’s readers, particularly those attending career military schools. It should remain so for many years to come.’

84 Bard E. O’Neill, *Insurgency & Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 1990, 2000).

85 Bard E. O’Neill, *Insurgency & Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2nd revised edition, 2005), p. vii.

86 Vincent Desportes, *Tomorrow’s War. Thinking Otherwise*, Preface by General (U.S.) William S. Wallace, Collection The Strategies & Doctrines, (Paris: Economica, 2009).

87 Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006/2008).

Politics). His conclusion is not optimistic, seen with Western eyes, as he shows that time after time great military powers have failed because they became viewed as occupants.⁸⁸

Other books or smaller works describing different sides of modern forms of (irregular) warfare could also be of interest for today's studies of insurgencies. The following short 'booklist' presents texts written by both scholars and practitioners: Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (2007),⁸⁹ Gil Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars* (2003),⁹⁰ Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian (editors), *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*,⁹¹ David H. Ucko, *The New Counterinsurgency Era, Transforming the U.S. Military for Modern Wars*,⁹² Anthony James Joes, *Resisting Rebellion: The History and Politics of Counterinsurgency* (2004),⁹³ William A. Stuebner and Richard Hirsch, 'Mindanao: A Community-Based Approach to Counterinsurgency' (about Muslim rebellions in the Philippines)⁹⁴ and Brooke Stearns Lawson, Terrence K. Kelly, Michelle Parker, Kimberly Colloton and Jessica Watkins, *Reconstruction Under Fire: Case Studies and Further Analysis of Civil Requirements*.⁹⁵

88 William R. Polk, *Violent Politics. A History of Insurgency, Terrorism & Guerrilla War, from the American Revolution to Iraq* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007). As Polk is an American former diplomat and scholar, he was very concerned about the early U.S. COIN strategy in Iraq (before 2007), because they had decoupled warfare and politics.

89 Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). Book review by Nicolas van de Walle, *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2007: 'Primarily based on case studies of wars in Uganda, Mozambique, and Peru, although Weinstein offers data from many other conflicts as well, his book demonstrates that insurgencies that can count on either foreign support or mining revenues – and thus do not need the support of local populations to survive – are much more likely to commit violence against civilians. He shows convincingly that civilian violence is rarely random: it follows a logic related to the internal needs of guerrilla armies.'

90 Merom (2003).

91 Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian (editors), *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare* (London: Osprey Publishing, 2008). See book review written by Robert D. Kaplan in *The Wall Street Journal* (10 April 2008): 'Denial is the subtext of *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*. The book's editors, Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian, present a series of lucid, expert essays on the experiences of conventional military forces adapting to an insurgency. The contributors discuss the British in Ireland, Palestine and Malaya; the French in Vietnam and Algeria; the Israelis in the West Bank; and the Americans in all sorts of places... [We] need to add the subject of counterinsurgency to the canon of Army learning, at long last, and never again forget its lesson. We can make a start with this excellent primer of a book.'

92 David H. Ucko, *The New Counterinsurgency Era. Transforming the U.S. Military for Modern Wars* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2009).

93 Anthony James Joes, *Resisting Rebellion: The History and Politics of Counterinsurgency* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2004).

94 William A. Stuebner and Richard Hirsch, 'Mindanao: A Community-Based Approach to Counterinsurgency', *PRISM* (National Defense University Press), Vol. 1, No. 3, June 2010. Included in the article we find the following text: 'The United States Agency for International Development's Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) program began in 1995 and will run through 2012 in its current phase (GEM 3), helping to accelerate broad-based economic growth and supporting the peace process in Mindanao. By 2012, the program will have recorded a 15 years of continuity, consistency, and dedication to the peace process (from pre-planning to implementation to closeout) with a total cost of approximately \$250 million.'

95 Brooke Stearns Lawson, Terrence K. Kelly, Michelle Parker, Kimberly Colloton, and Jessica Watkins, *Reconstruction Under Fire: Case Studies and Further Analysis of Civil Requirements* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2010). I here quote from the summary of this monograph available at <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG870.1>: 'This monograph is a companion volume to "Reconstruction Under Fire: Unifying Civil and Military Counterinsurgency," a RAND Corporation monograph published in 2009 [see <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG870>] that focused on methods for improving the security dimensions of undertaking the civil aspects of counterinsurgency (COIN).'

According to the mentioned authors, successful COIN operations require the integration of security and civil COIN to create conditions in which the population can choose between the government and the insurgent. It is always important to eliminate the key grievances that gave rise to the insurgency in the first place, and to present the population with choices that are more attractive than what the insurgents can offer. In 'U.S. Military Forces and Police Assistance in Stability Operations: The Least-Worst Option to Fill the U.S. Capacity Gap', Dennis E. Keller wrote that: 'Establishing an effective local police force is one of the most critical elements of successful counterinsurgency (COIN) and stability operations, but it is a task for which the U.S. government is the least prepared and capable. The establishment of an effective police force is critical to security sector reform, justice sector reform, and the successful transition to the host nation's security forces. But the United States lacks the institutional capacity to provide an immediate and coordinated civilian police training and advisory effort, particularly in a failed or fragile state.'⁹⁶

Another interesting book is written by Claire Metelits (2010), *Inside Insurgency*.⁹⁷ The book is based on her own fieldwork in countries like Sudan, Colombia and Turkey. She builds on interviews with insurgents, commanders, officials from governments and local civilians. The most interesting part of the book might well be her description of group dynamics inside insurgencies, and their use of violence in civil war. *Maoist Insurgency since Vietnam*, written by Thomas A. Marks, gives another perspective. He is an American former soldier who is now an academic and journalist.⁹⁸ His book, published in 1996, was at that time one of the few books written about 'people's war' led by Communists. One of his points was that while Communism may be 'dead' in Europe, revolutionary warfare still remains the principal model for would-be insurgents, including the fact that some form of Marxist-Leninism is still today important for radicals willing to take up arms. Another point he makes is that in the post-Vietnam period (before 1996) the prolonged insurgencies based on Maoist models (i.e. Peru, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Philippines) have all failed to gain state power in the local civil wars.

96 Dennis E. Keller, 'U.S. Military Forces and Police Assistance in Stability Operations: The Least-Worst Option to Fill the U.S. Capacity Gap' Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) Paper, August 2010, *Strategic Studies Institute (SSI)*, U.S. Army War College, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1013>. Lawson, Brooke Stearns, Kelly, Terrence K., Parker, Michelle, Colloton, Kimberly and Watkins, Jessica, *Reconstruction Under Fire: Case Studies and Further Analysis of Civil Requirements* (Santa Monica, CA, RAND Corporation, Monograph 870.1, 2010).

97 Claire Metelits, *Inside Insurgency. Violence, Civilians, and Revolutionary Group Behavior* (New York: New York University Press, 2010).

98 Thomas A. Marks, *Maoist Insurgency since Vietnam* (London: Frank Cass, 1996).

Another so-called 'old classic' was written by LtCol C. N. M. Blair. His view was that guerrilla forces would play a significant part in any future war. He wrote about his views in his book *Armed Groups and the Balance of Power*. He used historical examples, mainly from the Second World War. This text was *restricted* when first printed, and describes in detail many of the tactics that today are part of so-called unconventional warfare, i.e. guerrillas led by state authorities.⁹⁹ A scholarly book written by Anthony Vinci gives a description of relations between those who engage in different forms of irregular warfare. This is a very complicated picture and the author argues that the different rebellions may best be understood if we look upon the very different groupings as 'taking part in the balance of power with states and other armed groups, as they are empirically sovereign non-state actors that are motivated by pursuit of power and exist as part of an anarchic, self-help system'.¹⁰⁰

Ted Robert Gurr's contribution to the study of conflict and insurgency is important. On the basis of his well-respected work, *Why Men Rebel* (1969/2010), Gurr has been regarded as one of the world's leading authorities on political conflict and instability.¹⁰¹ In his book he emphasises the importance of social psychological factors, what he calls *relative deprivation*, and ideology as root sources of political violence. This book is primarily a theoretical work. Gurr is also well known for his book *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics*, which he wrote together with Barbara Harff. The second edition of this book (2000) surveys the historical, cultural and geographic diversity of ethno-political conflict. Using an analytical model to elucidate four case studies, the Kurds, the Miskitos, the Chinese in Malaysia and the Turks in Germany, the authors provide the reader with tools for analysing emerging conflicts based on the demands of nationalists, indigenous peoples and immigrant minorities.¹⁰² *Understanding Modern Warfare*¹⁰³ by David Jordan et al. is a new study of the theory and practice of warfare, presenting concepts, vocabulary and ideas, and the book has some useful historical examples.

Mark T. Berger and Douglas A. Borer (editors) have collected and edited a book called *The Long War – Insurgency, Counterinsurgency and Collapsing States*. A central

99 C.N.M. Blair, *Guerrilla Warfare* (Uckfield, East Sussex: The Naval & Military Press Ltd, 1957, new printing 2009). According to the publisher: '(This was first published as a) Restricted publication, written with access to official documents. Largely (about) British-supported guerrilla operations during WW2, it then goes on to consider the lessons learnt & how these can be applied to the future ... Remains the only comprehensive official survey of British involvement in irregular operations in WW2.'

100 Anthony Vinci, *Armed Groups and the Balance of Power. The international relations of terrorists, warlords and insurgents*, LSE international studies (London & New York: Routledge, 2009), see first text page.

101 Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: First edition Princeton University Press, 1969, Fortieth Anniversary Edition, Herndon, VA: Paradigm Publishers, 2010). A major thesis of Gurr's book is his development of the 'Relative Deprivation' factor and its impact upon violence. According to Gurr, 'relative deprivation' is: 'A perceived discrepancy between value expectations and value capabilities.'

102 Ted Robert Gurr & Barbara Harff, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics* (New York: Westview Press, 1st edition 1994, 2nd edition, 2000).

103 David Jordan, James D. Kiras, David J. Lonsdale, Ian Speller, Christopher Tuck, C. Dale Walton, *Understanding Modern Warfare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

theme in this book is: ‘Global War on Terror or what is also increasingly referred to as the “Long War”. The Long War is often represented as a “new” era in warfare and geopolitics...but it also emphasizes that the Long War bears many similarities to the Cold War.’¹⁰⁴

Since all doctrinal publications have many authors and liberally refer to earlier works, typically without citation, they should be viewed as useful summaries or snapshots of the *official* military take on *conventional wisdom*, rather than as individual positions. Today’s official U.S. COIN theory is summarised in the U.S. Army & U.S. Marine Corps counterinsurgency manual, field manual (FM) 3–24. It may be useful to identify what is new compared to older COIN doctrines and theory, such as the RAND Corporation publications and manuals from the late 1960s. The FM 3–24 incorporated (2006) the then most recent ideas on COIN and is a source of current US military thinking. FM 3–24 accepts the traditional view from the literature that the most important task of the counterinsurgent is to secure and protect the population – to gain its support. If the population supports the government, people will provide the necessary information/intelligence to locate/identify the insurgents. Without good information, the security forces will not be able to defeat the insurgency. This, including the emphasis on cultural awareness and language skills among the soldiers, is maybe new in the writing of COIN doctrines, but it is not new compared to earlier practice (these are the same experiences as during the Vietnam War). The U.S. Marine Corps’ *Small Wars Manual*, published in 1940, reflects both the authors’ experiences and U.S. Army material, and nearly three decades of articles published on the subject in the *U.S. Marine Corps Gazette*.¹⁰⁵

At the joint level, the U.S. in 2009 published the Joint Publication (JP) 3–24, *Counterinsurgency Operations*.¹⁰⁶ The Foreword of the JP states that: ‘This publication provides joint doctrine for the planning, execution, and assessment of counterinsurgency operations across the range of military operations. This will include the description of relationships between COIN, irregular warfare, counterterrorism, and foreign internal defense.’ Time and again, argues Gideon Rose in his penetrating look at American wars over the last century, *How Wars End: Why We Always Fight the Last Battle*, U.S. leaders have focused more on beating up the enemy than on creating a stable postwar environment. This happens, according to Rose, because Americans always forget the political aspects of war. What happened in Iraq was only the most prominent modern example of this phenomenon, not an exception to the rule.¹⁰⁷

104 Mark T. Berger and Douglas A. Borer, *The Long War – Insurgency, Counterinsurgency and Collapsing States* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 0.

105 U.S. Marines Corps, *Small Wars Manual* (Washington D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940; a new printing of the original U.S. Marine Corps manual by Sunflower Univ Press, 1996 Pavilion Press, 2004 and Cosimo Reports, 2010) also <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/swm/index.htm>.

106 U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3–24, *Counterinsurgency Operations*, October 2009.

107 Gideon Rose, *How Wars End: Why We Always Fight the Last Battle* (New York: A CFR Book. Simon & Schuster, 2010).

The new generation of UK doctrines, including the updated UK doctrine, is published by the UK Ministry of Defence.¹⁰⁸ Of the different doctrines, the one that may be the most insightful is the draft for the British Army Field Manual, Volume 1, Part 10, *Countering Insurgency* (2009). Both the 2006 U.S. COIN (FM 3–24) manual and the older (1940) *Small Wars Manual* offer more *prescriptive* recommendations than traditional doctrine texts. Included in this report will also be eventual upgrades of the earlier mentioned doctrines, or other new doctrines of interest. A very interesting modern COIN doctrine is the French *Doctrine for Counterinsurgency at Tactical Level* (2010); a translation from French to English exists.¹⁰⁹ This new French text is inspired by the French counterinsurgency theorists and practitioners of the 1950s, especially Roger Trinquier.

NATO has also produced documents on COIN. One of the newer interesting documents is *Contemporary Operations, Principles and Implications* (2008).¹¹⁰ NATO's most updated doctrine document on COIN is *Bi-SC Counter-Insurgency (COIN) Joint Operations Guidelines (JOG)*. The following quote from p. iii. tells the reader something about the intentions of the document:

*JOG 01/04 has been developed for use at the operational and tactical levels and describes COIN as one of the predominant campaign themes. The guideline provides a description of the complex operational environment, its actors and all important influencing factors. The guideline describes insurgency as the most dangerous and challenging irregular activity that can occur in a failed or fragile state. The description of insurgency sets the scene for a comprehensive description of the attributes of counterinsurgency, the planning and the military contribution.*¹¹¹

NATO does not use the term IW (the USA uses the term primarily in connection with the discussions connected with 'hybrid warfare'), instead using terms like

108 Here follows a collection of the later UK doctrine documents, all concerned with the different kinds of warfare:

– UK Army, Army Field Manual, Volume 1, *Combined Arms Operations*, 2001.

– UK Ministry of Defence, Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre. Joint Discussion Note 4/05, *The Comprehensive Approach*. Shrivenham, January 2006.

– UK Ministry of Defence, Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre. Joint Warfare Publication 3–50. *The Military Contribution to Peace Support Operations*, 2nd ed. June 2004.

– UK Ministry of Defence, UK Joint Doctrine Publication 3-40. *Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution*, November 2009.

– UK Ministry of Defence, British Army Field Manual, Volume 1, Part 10, *Countering Insurgency*, October 2009.

109 Centre de Doctrine d'Emploi des Forces 01, *French Doctrine for Counterinsurgency at Tactical Level* (Paris: Ministère de la Défense, Armée de Terre, 2010).

110 NATO, ACOS, Operational Doctrine Publication, *Contemporary Operations, Principles and Implications*, ACOT, ODP, CONTOPS, CCLA, 001, Ed 001/Rev 000, 17 May 2008, Page 30/307. See also the NATO doctrines: NATO, *Allied Joint Doctrine*, Allied Joint Publication (AJP)-01(C), March 2007- NATO, *Allied Doctrine for Joint Operations*, Allied Joint Publication (AJP) 3(A), July 2007 and AJP-3.4.x – Counterinsurgency Operations – Working Draft (2008).

111 NATO, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), Allied Command Transformation, *Counter-Insurgency (COIN)*, Bi-SC Joint Operations Guidelines JOG 10/10, 26 May 10.

COIN, CT and today also the 'new' term CHT (counter hybrid threats). The point here is that the term IW includes (or may include) all the mentioned terms, plus the term unconventional warfare (UW).

In this report we have also used many articles by well-known writers such as Andrew Krepinevich, James D. Kiras, David Lonsdale, Raymond Taras and R. Ganguly, A. Walter Dorn and Michael Varey, Fareed Zakaria, Anthony Cordesman, Gian P. Gentile and other contemporary authors writing about irregular warfare. (In this chapter, I have not presented a detailed list of articles. Please consult the Literature list.)¹¹²

¹¹² In this research we have also used different databanks (for example, data from James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin's 'Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War' project). The American Gordon McCormick's quantitative study of insurgency cases is useful. (The author has access to his briefings.)

2 CONCEPTS AND PROBLEMS CONNECTED TO IRREGULAR WARFARE

Nils Marius Rekkedal

2.1. About this chapter

This chapter introduces some of the key concepts and problems regarding terms such as irregular warfare, insurgency, counterinsurgency and guerrilla warfare. In this chapter, I will discuss some of the important ongoing trends.

In the first part, I will discuss the development of different forms of insurgency-based warfare. I consider it a fact that most conflicts/wars today are civil wars of some kind, and include use of insurgency and terrorism. This theme will be developed later in this book. The main topic in the last part of this chapter is the development of so-called irregular warfare.

One of the intentions of this chapter is to look into which patterns of behaviour fit in with the wars that are going on today. Knowledge of the fundamental features of insurgency and insurgent warfare should be of assistance in attempting to investigate the potential strategic choices of insurgents in future conflicts.

It is also important to note what conclusions we could possibly draw with regard to future political and military efforts, particularly for Western forces, including those of the Nordic countries. (The use of terror and terrorism, normally an important part of modern rebellions/insurgencies, will be described in more detail in Chapter Six.)

2.2. Insurgent warfare is common

2.2.1. Introduction

Different forms of insurgent warfare have been more common in the history of warfare than warfare between nations/nation states, i.e. so-called conventional warfare where government-financed armies fight battles with each other on the battlefield. Another interesting feature is that, at least in the European form of warfare, those who

took to arms against the security forces of the state were looked upon only as bandits or criminal gangs, right up until the Second World War.

We saw a change in attitudes during the course of the Second World War when *resistance movements* against the German occupation became a *politically* accepted activity. It is probably a combination of the development of modern nationalism and the eventual acceptance by governments of the existence of individual rights and liabilities that made it more acceptable to use violent means against the state. In practice, insurgent groups were not seen as ‘genuine’ warring participants in irregular warfare until after 1945. Since 1945, we have seen a ‘legalising’ or formalising of, for example, organised guerrilla forces, i.e. insurgents gradually obtained a formal status as warring parties even in international law.¹¹³

If we look into the development of guerrilla forces, a feature of all successful guerrilla warfare is that an attempt is made to avoid direct and decisive clashes with the state’s main forces while concentrating on attacking, and possibly overcoming, the enemy’s outposts, smaller garrisons and logistics systems – often at unexpected places and times. This principle has often been called ‘asymmetric warfare’, especially in part of the literature published after 2001, but as a form of combat this manner of thinking and fighting is at least as old as irregular/guerrilla warfare itself.

2.2.2. Earlier thinking about irregular warfare

As Carl von Clausewitz noted in his most famous book, *On War* (1832), it is important to understand what kind of war a state and its political leadership is about to be involved in.¹¹⁴ Even if the so-called *nature of a war* can be seen as a constant, the methods and techniques involved in war are subject to continuous change in order to meet the strategic context in which the war is fought and, especially, to be able to meet the operational challenges one faces.

Clausewitz is often looked upon as a writer who was mainly interested in state versus state warfare. This description is too narrow. In his book, Clausewitz addresses the phenomenon as *Volkskrieg* (in English, ‘people’s war’).¹¹⁵ The German writer Werner Hahlweg wrote in his article ‘Preussische Reformzeit und revolutionärer Krieg’ about

113 Probably, in many ways, the best overall historical portrayal of the development of irregular/guerrilla warfare is Robert B. Asprey’s *War in the Shadows. The Guerrilla in History*, Volume I (New York: William Morrow, 1994; Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, Inc, 2002). The original two-volume book was published in 1975. The author in 1994 published a new and highly abridged work. In its Foreword, he wrote: ‘(this work) is to reshape some earlier statements and judgements in accordance with the considerable amount of new and reliable information that has since emerged and to complete the story of the Indochina nightmare insofar as this is possible at this time.’

114 Carl von Clausewitz, *Om kriget*, översättning och granskning Hjalmar Mårtenson, Klaus-Richard Böhme och Alf W. Johansson (Stockholm: Bonniers, 2002). See his Book One, Chapter One, points 23 to 28, pp. 23–44. Clausewitz discusses the different aspects of war in ‘On the Nature of War’ in Book One, and ‘On Theory of War’ in Book Two.

115 Clausewitz (2002). See ‘Sjätte boken, kapitel 26; Folkbeväpning’, pp. 478–483. In the German reprint: Carl von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege. Ungekürzter Text* (München: Cormoran Verlag, in der Econ Ullstein List Verlag GmbH & Co.KG, München 2000, originally published 1832), pp. 529–536.

the use of guerrilla warfare, or so-called *small war*, in the context of Prussia during the early 19th century.¹¹⁶ During the French occupation of Prussia (1808–1813), the possible use of guerrilla war was looked into as an option as a means whereby Prussia could regain its independence. The Spanish guerrilla war (*Los Guerrilleros*, with UK support) was taking place in Spain in this period, and was considered to provide a possible example to follow. (1810–11 Carl von Clausewitz himself was writing about *Volkskrieg* and *Volksbewaffnung*.)¹¹⁷

A more detailed and theory-oriented article was written by the German Carl Schmitt (1962). Smitt was very interested in the theories behind so-called revolutionary war (in the Marxist-Leninist tradition), and how these theories had developed after the Napoleonic Wars. The quote below is taken from Smitt's text. Smitt puts Clausewitz and his German colleagues' thinking about the different kinds of warfare into a broader perspective:

The young Clausewitz knew the partisan from the Prussian insurrection plans of 1808–13. In 1810–11, he had given lectures on guerrilla warfare at the General War College in Berlin, and was one of the most important military experts on guerrilla warfare not only in the technical sense, but also in the deployment of light, mobile troops. Guerrilla warfare became for him, as for other reformers of his circle, “above all, a political matter in the highest sense, meaning precisely of a revolutionary character. Acknowledgement of armed civilians, of insurrection, of revolutionary war, resistance, and rebellion against the existing order, even when embodied in a foreign regime of occupation – this was a novelty for Prussia, something ‘dangerous’, which similarly fell outside the sphere of lawful states.” With these words, Werner Hahlweg came to the core of the matter. Yet, he also added: “The revolutionary war against Napoleon, as the Prussian reformers imagined it, of course did not occur.” It was a “half-insurrectional war,” as Friedrich Engels called it. Nevertheless, the famous professional report of February 1812 remains significant with respect to the “driving impulses” (Hans Rothfels) of the reformers; with the help of Gneisenau and Hermann de Boyen, Clausewitz had conceived of it before he went to Russia. It is a “document of sober analysis, both politically and in terms of the general military”, making reference to the experiences of the Spanish Civil War (1800s) and quietly risking the idea of “fighting barbarity with barbarity and violence

116 Werner Hahlweg, ‘Preußische Reformzeit und revolutionärer Krieg’, *Beiheft 18 der Wehrwissenschaftlichen Rundschau*, September 1962, p. 54–56; also printed in *Zeitschrift für Europäischen Sicherheit* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag E.S.Mittler & Sohn, 1962), p. 7. See also his probably best-known book: Werner Hahlweg, *Guerrilla-Krieg ohne Fronten* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1968).

117 Carl Schmitt, ‘Theorie des Partisanen’, http://petradox.stormpages.com/sch_tp.html; the article was first published in 1962 and was later reprinted in a book: Carl Schmitt, *Zwischenbemerkung zum Begriff des Politischen. 1. Auflage* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1963).

with violence". In this particular case, the Prussian Landsturmedikt of April 1813 can clearly be identified. [Note 28 in original]

Clausewitz must have been bitterly disappointed when everything he had hoped for from the insurrection "failed". [Note 29 in original] He identified civil war and partisans – "party-followers" as Clausewitz calls them – as being a significant part of the "forces exploding in war" and incorporated this into the system he used for teachings on war. Most notably, he also recognised the new "potency" in the sixth book of his teachings on war, Extent of the means of defence, and in the infamous chapter 6B of his eighth book, War is an instrument of policy. Furthermore, we discover that he has made startling and mysterious individual remarks, such as the location of the Civil War in the Vendée – that, sometimes, even a small number of individual partisans can "assume the name of an [51 in original] army". [Note 30 in original] Yet overall, he remains of the time, a regular army officer with reformist tendencies, who was ultimately unable to develop the shoots that were becoming visible at that stage. As we will see, this did not happen until much later, with an active professional revolutionary required for it to take place. Clausewitz himself was still thinking far too much in classical categories when he merely attributed the "blind natural urge" of hatred and hostility to the people, the free mental activity of "bravery and prowess" to the general (Feldherrn) and his army, and the exclusively intellectual handling of the war to the government as an instrument of policy.¹¹⁸

According to the Swedish Commander (Navy) Michael Gustafsson, who has studied Clausewitz and his thinking about the so-called 'Kleine Kriege', it is possible, based on German sources, to sum up Clausewitz's view on what aspects characterise this-kind of warfare as follows:

- *According to Clausewitz, the main particulars making the difference between small and larger war are the following:*
- *Small units will almost always find supply in the field*
- *Small units can keep their whereabouts hidden more easily*
- *Small units can move faster, particularly in combat*
- *Armies and larger Corps need to be divided into subunits; in the case of smaller units, a subdivision is usually not possible*

¹¹⁸ Schmitt, Carl, 'Theorie des Partisanen. Zwischenbemerkung zum Begriff des Politischen', http://petradox.stormpages.com/sch_tp.html. First published in 1962, reprinted in: Carl Schmitt, Theorie des Partisanen. Zwischenbemerkung zum Begriff des Politischen'. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1963).

- *Small units lose their nature when fighting from fixed positions*
- *Combat of the small unit will almost always be supported*
- *Small units can retreat easier and faster, without need for prepared roads*
- *The tasking of small units does not require major preparations*
- *Small units more often have the task of observing the enemy rather than attacking or defending.*¹¹⁹

As we have seen, Clausewitz clearly did not ignore the different forms of irregular warfare, but we may assume from his writings that he was more interested in how to understand all aspects of warfare so that we may win in war, and not so much interested in how small or big the war is. It looks like most authors who have written about *revolutionary war* – the most common term for insurgency used in the period 1945 to about 1980 – have mentioned Clausewitz, if they give any credit to other philosophers of war at all.

After the Second World War, the United States in particular and also the Soviet Union up until the 1990s, were each in their own way responsible for the unusually rapid development of conventional warfare methods and technology. In particular, the enormous technological advances the U.S. has made since 1990 have, however, forced the enemies of the U.S. (and enemies of the West in general) to seek *alternative methods* with which to wage war. The concept of asymmetry comes into the picture here through so-called asymmetric methods and measures being developed in order to take on a basically superior opponent in combat.

2.2.3. The new trends – a description

Insurgency groups and even organisations were in the 1990s often called ‘non-state actors’ in American terminology. In practice, most insurgency groups will never take the form of a *mirror image* of the nation state model that we as Westerners often perpetuate as normal. These groups are instead ‘asymmetric’ both when it comes to action and motivation, i.e. they do not regard what we perpetuate as normal and good – on the contrary. According to Roger W. Barnett, what we fear, these groups normally do not fear; and while our control structures are hierarchical, these groups operate more as networks without fixed lines of command.¹²⁰ While we in the West are continually developing *Rules-of-Engagement* (ROE) in order to be able to better control tactical destruction and reduce as far as possible so-called ‘tactical collateral

119 Michael Gustafson, ‘What does Irregular Warfare mean? An Analysis of a collection of Western thoughts on “Small Wars”’ (Stockholm: Swedish National Defence College, August 2010).

120 Roger W. Barnett, *Asymmetrical Warfare: Today's Challenge to U.S. Military Power* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, Inc, 2003), pp. 1–24. This book provides a good introduction to the various American assessments with regard to modern insurgency, as seen *before* the Iraq War in 2003.

damage', the participants in such groups feel that they are entitled to make use of any suitable measure in order to be able to achieve their strategic objectives.¹²¹

The best organised of these groups have also shown themselves to be both extremely adaptable to countermeasures and able to maintain their motivation when they pursue an ideological assumption. At the same time, they rarely take the form of sitting duck targets, as they are not normally dependent on large infrastructures or permanent institutions in the same manner as a state regime normally always is. It is appropriate here to point out that, if we study the existing spectrum of insurgent groups we find in the world today, perhaps only al-Qaeda and 'al-Qaeda franchises' match the description above. The majority of insurgent groups that are attached to only one place and who fight among their own people are a good deal more traditional with regard to how they fight. This also applies, to a great extent, to the 'new' Islamic insurgent movements in the Middle East.

Most insurgencies have been civil wars of some kind, such as the conflicts in Northern Ireland, French Indochina, Afghanistan and Iraq. In order to understand such warfare, one must study the broad context that forms the basis of the conflict in question: the contest between the fundamental concepts of those involved with regard to how society should be constituted. There are, however, several ways of doing this. The most important point here is that counterinsurgency cannot normally be easily categorised into clearly distinct levels of conflict. An armed attack enacted at the lowest tactical level has, time after time, shown itself able to have major operational and even strategic consequences. It is perhaps the case that each military patrol that is dispatched during certain phases of modern conflicts is planned and controlled at an operational level, because it is of importance how even each individual soldier behaves and carries out his mission. The soldier's actions, no matter how insignificant they may appear to be, when seen at a *tactical* level, could be blown out of proportion by the media. Something that could objectively be seen as an unimportant event could become 'major news' on the international TV networks on an otherwise quiet news day. A minor incident could, in the course of a short time, be blown out of all proportion and be considered an important international matter, even if this is scarcely merited in a more objective light.

Some international media outlets will use whatever material they have available, even if it is classified. When a Serb mortar shell struck an outdoor restaurant in Tuzla in May 1995, killing 68 young people, this did not become a 'big story' in the media. When a similar shell struck a marketplace in Sarajevo three months later, killing 28 people, this received a great deal of attention and triggered NATO's air war against Serb forces.¹²² The difference was partly that the international press corps was sta-

121 Metelits (2010), pp.161–176. See her Chapter 6 about the theoretical and practical implications of active rivalry in connection with insurgencies.

122 It is important to note that the attack on the marketplace in Sarajevo was the reason that triggered the NATO air war. The

tioned in Sarajevo but they were not present in Tuzla. The aim of this example is to demonstrate that the imperfections of the media can go in both directions. It is a fact that individual events may be blown up out of all proportion by the media. But it is just as important to note that other events are *not* blown up, simply because the media are not present.

In conventional warfare, it has normally been the case that officers have expected that, when the broad political guidelines have been put in place, it will be up to the military chiefs to determine how to achieve tactical and operational success. Today, this is no longer necessarily the case, and is definitely not the case with regard to operations carried out as part of a modern counterinsurgency campaign. It is easy to understand that this could have major consequences for both the actual waging of the war and for the political leaders who stick their noses into the *tactical* waging of the war.

An important difference between counterinsurgency and a situation where two state armies come together in a major battle is that, in counterinsurgency, there is almost always a civilian population to take into consideration. The restrictions that are imposed on armed forces during counterinsurgency are almost always there to prevent an unnecessary loss of civilian lives. It is difficult to find examples where government forces have restrictions imposed on them by politicians against killing insurgents (apart from during periods of peace negotiations). Restrictions on warfare with the intention of sparing the civilian population cannot be seen as something negative, either from a humane point of view or in a counterinsurgency context.

In other words, the word *success* in the context of counterinsurgency normally means much the same as making enough military and political progress to enable the civilian police and other law enforcement forces to continue to attend to internal security in the future. Or in many cases, perhaps the best one can hope for is not to lose the war?

As an example, one course of military action could be that the political leaders opt to buy themselves time while attempting to deal with the circumstances that contributed to the insurgency breaking out in the first place. This is not necessarily the same thing as being forced to make concessions to the insurgents and, in order to avoid giving this impression, it may appear counterproductive if the military pushes hard to achieve clear tactical military victories.

El Salvador's Civil War (1980–1992) is an example of a so-called successful counterinsurgency, although the political, social and military situation facing the ruling regime was initially hopeless. El Salvador had about 3.5 million inhabitants in 1980, and the economy was based on exports of food/commodities, with a few landowners dominating the economy. According to Anthony James Joes, the conflict in El

actual basis for NATO's involvement had, by this time, been building up over several years. The massacre of Muslims in Srebrenica at the beginning of July 1995 in particular, was a decisive event.

Salvador was mainly between the military-led government of El Salvador and the Faribundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), a coalition/umbrella organisation of five left-wing militias, supported by so-called liberation theology priests and intellectuals.¹²³ Joes wrote:

*The army consisted of an officer elite presiding over peasant conscripts; the common soldiers did not receive decent training or care, and the unprofessional officer corps had no real mechanism for rewarding competence or weeding out incompetence. In close alliance with the oligarchy, this army compiled a notable record of human rights abuse, including massacres of peasants.*¹²⁴

The government-supported military/security forces targeted people they suspected of supporting social and economic reform.¹²⁵

As usual in this kind of conflict, the insurgents blew up bridges and houses, cut power lines, destroyed coffee plantations and did anything else in their power to damage the economy that supported the ruling regime. The FMLN also murdered and kidnapped government officials.¹²⁶ As time passed, guerrilla efforts became more advanced, and the FMLN was able to mobilise about 12,000 fighters – more than Castro had been able to raise in the much more populous Cuba. The FMLN progressed into a qualified insurgency, i.e. their efforts developed over time based on a strategy for taking over the country. Joes wrote:

*The FMLN, displaying good leadership and bold tactics, and benefiting from army ineptitude, very rapidly mounted a serious challenge approximating a conventional war. In reply, elements of the oligarchy, army, and police sanctioned the organization of “death squads,” whose activities encompassed the murder of anyone dangerous to the regime – including Oscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, in 1980.*¹²⁷

The military-controlled government was able to continue its efforts with help from the USA (support from the Carter administration), which had begun supporting the

123 Anthony James Joes, *Guerrilla Warfare. A Historical, Biographical, and Bibliographical Sourcebook* (Westport, CO, London, UK : Greenwood Press, 1996), pp. 141–145.

124 Joes (1996), p. 141.

125 Joes (1996), p. 144. Joes wrote: ‘the Salvadorean army had the near-unanimous support of the upper and upper-middle classes. This unity was rooted in the defeat of the peasant-based communist uprising of 1932, which had solidified “the strongest anticommunist sentiment in Latin America”.’

126 ‘El Salvador Civil War’, *Global Security.org*, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/elsalvador2.htm>.

127 Joes (1996), p. 142.

government with financial and military aid as soon as the war started. (Later the Reagan administration increased the economic and military training/support for COIN operations.)¹²⁸ As the FMLN was Communist-controlled, the U.S. was willing to support the at that time incompetent Salvadorian army, even if it looked bad for the Salvadorian regime in 1980–1981. The Americans feared an imminent collapse, and did not want a new Cuba close to their borders, or a Sandinista-like regime à la Nicaragua. In January 1981, the FMLN claimed it had started a Maoist style ‘final offensive’, but they clearly failed to take political control in El Salvador. The ‘final offensive’ instead became an expensive setback for the FMLN – even before the American support had really started to arrive in the country. The war went on between 1981 and 1985, with the USA supporting the government, and the FMLN receiving support from Communist sources, including the Soviet Union, Cuba, Bulgaria, East Germany and Vietnam. But by 1985 it had become clear that El Salvador would not be *militarily* taken over by the FMLN. In November 1989, the FMLN tried a last ‘great offensive’, but again they failed. The end of the Cold War meant that they could no longer count on Communist support, and the FMLN had to accept negotiations, and a peace treaty was signed in January 1992.¹²⁹

El Salvador’s Civil War became the second longest civil war in Latin America, after the Guatemalan Civil War (between 1960 and 1996).¹³⁰ But El Salvador never became a new Cuba, mainly because of the traditional strong support for the army among the upper and middle classes. The strong bond between the army and the upper and middle classes had historical roots – this was one of the consequences of a failed Communist-led peasant rebellion in 1932. And like many countries engulfed in civil war, El Salvador exhausted its resources fighting itself, and is today still one of the least prosperous countries in Latin America. But economic reforms since the early 1990s have brought some benefits in terms of improved social and economic conditions, including the diversification of its very important export sector. But a high crime rate remains a major problem for the investment climate. The FMLN is today a strong *political force* in El Salvador.

It is very often impossible to say how long the military/security forces will be involved in an actual civil war. This is one important reason why many theoretical writers have highlighted why a strong civil society strategy is important not only in current theatres of conflict like Iraq and Afghanistan, but also in many other countries

128 The Americans temporarily suspended funds after the rape and murder of four churchwomen in 1980, but growing socialist support from especially Nicaragua, Cuba and the Soviet Union to the FMLN encouraged President Reagan to reactivate support for El Salvador.

129 Joes (1996), pp. 142–143.

130 For a description of the Guatemalan Civil War, see ‘Guatemala Civil War 1960–1996’, *Global Security.org*, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/guatemala.htm>.

threatened by potential insurgencies. This should also be a warning, reminding us that we cannot intervene everywhere. We should emphasise the (unpleasant) reality that Western states may face insurgency threats in more countries than they can possibly handle. I think it would be unwise to assume that current Western COIN strategy will continue unaltered. Of course there are always clear limits to the resources that can be brought into play, expanding our capacity to intervene, etc. This is an important reason for developing a powerful so-called civil society strategy, i.e. empowering the local citizens to become active participants in COIN. This kind of thinking may increase *Western capacity* to resist insurgencies, but the real point here is to increase the capacity of *the threatened societies* to resist the insurgents. (See also Chapter 4.) Civil society organisations, often called CSO in American sources, would have the role of protecting local institutions and communities from terrorism/insurgents. The American journalist Nicholas Kristof has written about this thinking in *The New York Times*, and describes how this might work in his article.¹³¹ The key is probably *ownership*. Poor people in many countries have no stake in the political and economic system and therefore no reason to defend the system against forces trying to bring it down. According to Kristof, when communities have ownership of schools, health clinics or wells, they become stakeholders, and they will protect these assets. This thinking may be looked upon as ‘reinventing the wheel’, because these theories are well documented in the earlier voluminous Vietnam War research. The problem is that these earlier experiences were almost forgotten between 1975 and 2001.

Counterinsurgency is normally a lengthy battle and it is probably always almost impossible to say how long a conflict will last. It is also almost impossible to create *a single* campaign plan where one plans for a quick, decisive victory in the style taught at military colleges. As a successful counterinsurgency will probably take years, experiences from most such conflicts show that the actual *warfare* will change greatly over a period of time. A tangible sign of the effectiveness of an armed force is its ability to change tactics and combat techniques and the time it takes for a change like this to be made. My impression is that American forces in Iraq have an open dialogue up and down the chain of command, which ensures that it will normally not take more than a few days/weeks for tactical adjustments to be made when the soldiers have noted that something does not work.

This means that the military mission has to be correspondingly changed in order to satisfy political ambitions, which one must also expect will be altered over this period. It is consequently of the greatest importance that politicians and military chiefs attempt to identify which phase they are in at any time with regard to the ongoing

¹³¹ Nicholas Kristof, ‘Dr. Greg and Afghanistan’, *New York Times*, 20 October 2010.

insurgency and that they are able to adjust both the political assumptions and military efforts in order to counter the insurgents' adjustments to their own strategic and tactical plans and measures. These problems, seen through American eyes, were commented on back in 2004 by Steven Metz and Raymond Millen:

*The United States must make clear whether its approach to counterinsurgency is a strategy of victory or a strategy of containment, tailoring the response and methods to the threat. A strategy of victory which seeks a definitive end makes sense when facing a national insurgency in which the partner government has some basis of legitimacy and popular support. In liberation insurgencies, though, a strategy of victory is a very long shot; hence a strategy of containment is the more logical one.*¹³²

A central point that Metz and Millen brought forward was that as the insurgents will always attempt to avoid becoming involved in so-called decisive battles at a time that does not suit them, they will, instead, attempt to develop operational methods where political and psychological factors are given a central place in further warfare – something that clearly differs from thinking with regard to ordinary conventional warfare. Their recommendation is that the Americans should now try to move towards an ‘effects-based approach designed to fracture, de-legitimize, de-link, demoralize, and de-source insurgents’.¹³³ What the authors tried to ‘sell to the readers’ was a new and more holistic way of thinking, where one consciously puts together several specialist groups, e.g. regional specialists, intelligence people, police and officers with operational experience, so that they are able overall to perform the complicated evaluations and plans that will be required if one is to achieve political and military success in a given area. And when the new leadership assumed power in Iraq in early 2007, the Americans really did change their military behaviour. Depending on who becomes the ‘owner of the problem’ – the American armed forces as a whole, the Pentagon, the State Department, etc. – the ‘problem owner’ will establish a so-called *task force* in order to coordinate activities between all of the participants. This task force is put together with a view to meeting the needs of the individual case. This way of thinking had some success in Iraq from 2007 onwards.

An insurgency normally goes through several stages, particularly as a result of the political and military countermeasures implemented by the ruling regime and, possibly, its allies. Successful insurgent movements have all demonstrated a great ability to

132 Steven Metz & Raymond Millen, ‘Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century: Reconceptualising Threat and Response’, *Strategic Studies Institute (SSI)*, U.S. Army War College, 2004, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=586>, p. vii.

133 Metz & Millen (2004), p. vii.

vary their efforts over a period of time and have also been able to adapt to the terrain in which they operate. Similarly, the military must be able to deal with these developments and attend to and adjust the military role they play in the counterinsurgency. Three factors are normally considered important:

1. It is important to continually analyse one's own fatality figures and the results of one's own activity. This will later form the basis for tactical adjustments.
2. A feedback system must be established that captures experiences all the way down to 'the grass roots level' in the military organisation and ensures that there is constant dialogue with low-level users.
3. It is the low-level users who know best what is not working.

The military chiefs must be able to choose adapted military measures over a period of time and must accept that they will never gain full control of a heavily guerrilla-infested area. Seen in this light, perhaps the taking and holding of terrain or towns means less in connection with counterinsurgency than it does in connection with conventional warfare. Historical experience shows, on the other hand, that the supply lines have been a serious bottleneck for many insurgent movements. Food, weapons and the evacuation of the wounded are often a main concern for the leader of an insurgency and much of the insurgents' resources are used up safeguarding supply lines. Seen in this light, denying the insurgent movement access to, for example, large towns, villages, the road network and border areas will be an important element for those fighting an insurgency. But this is also a resource-heavy task for the armed forces. This has proved to be an important point. It will normally be critical for the later state of the conflict to isolate the adversary from his supply lines. This will force him to take active measures to break this *impasse*, something that can later be exploited using, for example, flexible rapid-reaction forces.

2.2.4. Military theory must be adjusted to meet the realities

Military chiefs obviously also retain their traditional roles as advisers to political leaders, especially with respect to stabilisation operations and counterinsurgency, but it is rare – at least in the West today – for military chiefs to have full tactical freedom over military measures, which would be seen as *internal* military matters in conventional warfare. There are certainly many reasons for this, but one important reason is the relationship between 'success' and so-called 'Centre of Gravity thinking'.

What is the centre of gravity (CoG) in connection with counterinsurgency operations? It is not obviously the same as in conventional warfare. Based on what we have experienced so far in the two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, there may be a need for

a reform in how we think about CoG. Especially in connection with peace and/or stability operations, there may be a need for new thinking about how we use these theories.¹³⁴ In connection with irregular warfare, CoG must be made relevant for the planning process and the execution of the COIN campaign. There is probably a need for adjustments, as there obviously are clear differences between how we use forces in connection with fighting insurgents and in so-called major combat operations in conventional warfare.

The term *success* must be defined in this context on the basis of the political objective that the campaign aims to achieve. As an insurgency (or rebellion, etc.) may principally be seen as a political struggle, it has, since the Second World War, proved necessary, time after time, to set a lower target for this form of warfare than ‘total victory’, as defined in a more traditional military context. This does not mean that tactical defeat is or should be acceptable, but this signals to the military (and other security forces) that there will be clear restrictions associated with the actual warfare and it may also be a signal that the goal is quite simply not a clear military victory, as this is not part of the political goals set for the campaign. It may be the case that the intention is to put so much pressure on the insurgents that they will negotiate a political solution and give up their hopes of a final military/political victory.

According to existing UK, U.S. and NATO military doctrines, the military planners may use terms like *centre of gravity* (CoG) and *decisive points* (DP’s) during planning and execution of military operations.¹³⁵ The UK Joint Warfare Publication (JWP 3–50): *The Military Contribution to Peace Support Operations* presents the CoG analysis in this way:

414. The CoG is defined as the ‘characteristics, capabilities, or localities from which a nation, an alliance, a military force or other grouping derives its freedom of action, physical strength or will to fight’. In PSO it is the CoGs of the warring factions, or parties in dispute, and the potential CoGs for the reformed nation or society that are most likely to be of interest. The first step is to identify the adversaries’ CoGs. Denial or destruction of, or threats to, these CoGs should deter or coerce the parties from conflict. However, it must be clear why they are CoGs and what each does to make it a CoG. These are termed the Critical Capabilities. The next step is to examine what is needed to achieve each Critical Capability, in other words, the Critical Requirements. These Critical Requirements are then examined to determine if they are in

134 In the 2008 edition of FM 3–0, *Operations* the American military has decided that the term *Peace Operations* is a broad term that encompasses ‘multiagency and multinational crisis response’. The U.S. Army will in the future be conducting the following types of peace operations: Peacekeeping, Peace building, Peacemaking, Peace enforcement and Conflict prevention. (The U.S. doctrine documents JP 3–07.3 and FM 3–07 contains a description of *peace operations*.)

135 U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Counterinsurgency Operations*, Joint Publication JP 3–24, October 2009.

*some way incomplete, or vulnerable. These become the Critical Vulnerabilities: the things that can be exploited in order to undermine the adversaries' CoG. Having completed this analysis it is then possible to develop objectives that will assist in undermining those CoGs. These objectives are selected by comparing the degree of criticality with vulnerability and the friendly capability to attack those vulnerabilities. In due course, and having attacked the vulnerabilities, it is quite possible for CoGs to change and therefore the analysis must be constantly updated.*¹³⁶

For example, in the U.S. JP 3–24 *Joint Counterinsurgency Operations* we can read: 'A thorough and detailed center of gravity analysis helps commanders and staffs to understand the systemic nature of the operational environment (OE) and the actions necessary to shape the conditions that define the desired end state.'¹³⁷ The UK Army doctrine for operations (2011) uses the following definition of CoG:

*Centre of Gravity. A centre of gravity is the identified aspect of a force, organisation, group or state's capability from which it draws its strength, freedom of action, cohesion or will to fight. Again, this concept's relevance at the tactical level is based on understanding it rather than using it.*¹³⁸

Often, there will be a strategic CoG with regard to an insurgency:

- Who (government/the ruling regime *or* insurgents) has clear *popular* support?
- Maybe the real strategic CoG for the insurgents is (destroying) the actual government's legitimacy?

Popular support is one of the elements of the (more informal) so-called 'supporters/backers', and it is an important one in war. By weakening the popular support for the government, insurgents can indirectly attack the enemy's CoG. For the government, the enemy's strategic CoG is the insurgency's top leadership plus their 'ideology' (normally built on a political and/or religious foundation). The insurgents' supporters/backers are normally various domestic and/or international so-called 'front organisations', such as urban cells and rural organisations, and must include sources of financial funds, i.e. money laundering, bank robberies, drugs trafficking, the diamond trade, etc. Such a CoG is actually very difficult to attack *directly* by conventional

¹³⁶ UK Ministry of Defence, *The Military Contribution to Peace Support Operations*. Joint Warfare Publication 3–50 (JWP 3–50) (Shrivenham, Swindon: The Joint Doctrine & Concepts Centre, Second edition, August 2008), p. 4–7.

¹³⁷ In Joint Publication 3–24, the American doctrine writers do not give their own CoG definition, pp. xxiii–xxiv.

¹³⁸ UK Ministry of Defence, Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, *Operations*, Army Doctrine Publication, December 2010.

military means, even if insurgent movements normally use force to control the population. An insurgency can be seen as an organised attempt to force political changes and, as a logical result of this, one must try to influence ordinary people so that one can influence the actual CoG by means of political measures.

An insurgent movement always needs some form of ‘popular coalition’ or another, where an attempt is made to gain the sympathy of various layers of the population. The movement cannot build up a groundswell of support by only concentrating on the poor, for example. A coalition like this can only be kept together over a period of time if someone keeps it together. In reality, this means that an *enemy image* must be created. The enemy may, for example, be an undemocratic regime or an occupying force – but we also see other ethnic groups acting as the enemy in connection with some insurgent movements. If the government side is able to break down or entirely remove the enemy image created by the insurgent movement, then the insurgent movement’s days are probably numbered.

The government side’s countermeasures against an insurgency should always – at least if we look at this ideally – assume as their starting point that the actual core of the threat lies in the insurgent’s political potential and not in his, initially, rather limited military capacity. But in spite of this the government often concentrates on taking action against the insurgents’ limited military efforts, which can be counterproductive in the longer term. The reason for this is easy to see: if one does not safeguard one’s own population against raids and terrorist attacks, one will encounter strong criticism from newspapers and political groups that normally see warfare in a short-term perspective.

We saw a concrete example of an *offensive* counterstrategy from the British side in Malaysia in the 1950s. There, they did not try to control the CoG by making extensive use of jungle patrols or military offensives but by consciously taking and subsequently making public the political decision that Malaysia would be given its political freedom. Military efforts were obviously important but were hardly, by themselves, decisive in overcoming the insurgency, as seen from the strategic level. The military campaign should obviously put military pressure on the insurgents, but military efforts are only part of a total solution.¹³⁹

Military efforts are planned as only one of several forms of coordinated measures directed at the overriding objectives that the insurgents have declared they seek to achieve. If these efforts are to be successful, it is necessary for the actual regime itself to understand the danger and be able to develop a suitable ‘counter-strategy’ where both military and all actual forms of political measures are included in the plan. If one has

139 Sam C. Sarkesian, *Unconventional Conflicts in a New Security Era. Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (New York, London: Greenwood Press, 1993), pp. 55–78.

been successful in drawing up a functioning counter-strategy, one should then next be able, relatively easily (at least in theory), to prepare the necessary/adapted operational and tactical assessments, and concrete plans. While military forces will normally play a central role in certain phases of this counteroffensive against the insurgents, their efforts will nevertheless only be *secondary* compared with the social and political measures that are necessary if the regime is to survive in the long term. Here, in particular, it has proved historically difficult to succeed in achieving this balance.¹⁴⁰

Depending on how strong the insurgent movement is, these military efforts will be adapted to the evolving situation. A problem that we have seen with many modern insurgencies is that the government side's soldiers have to perform many missions that are not very glamorous or particularly gratifying, being often characterised by long watches, patrols where little happens and routine duties. They never know when they will be shot at, as they are not normally on the offensive themselves in this warfare. There may be the rare opportunity for striking offensively and they may then succeed in overcoming a guerrilla group, but it will usually be the case that they are preoccupied with various stabilisation operations and trying to control the insurgents' activities. This is not, however, the same as being forced to play a *reactive* role out of necessity. If one can explain to soldiers and officers that this is the reality of this kind of warfare, and motivate them accordingly, this will help them to understand the bigger picture. This will also help the military units involved to understand the role they should play. The soldiers must be made to realise that the *absence* of attacks/hostilities is a kind of success in itself. It is also important that, if one is successful in getting the military units to understand their role, they can also become more effective and will acquire a realistic picture of what constitutes 'success' when dealing with an insurgency.

If one can get the military units to accept that the objective will not normally be a major victory but, more often than not, smaller local successes in the counterinsurgency tasks in which they are engaged, one will have come far.

However, we have seen historically that it is often difficult for military forces to see themselves as only a part of a number of primarily *civilian* measures directed at the insurgent movement. Unless the military is willing to look at itself as a vital, but perhaps not the most important, element on the long road towards a political solution, it will often have problems with both direction and morale in connection with the kind of *protracted warfare* in which the majority of insurgent movements prepare to engage. As already indicated, insight will be required into the fact that effective COIN will assume that one has several operations on the go at the same time, i.e. along military, social, economic and legal lines, where one is working towards laying down

¹⁴⁰ John A. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam. Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (London: Praeger, 2002), see 'Part III, Vietnam', pp. 124–142.

interim goals, where the DPs lead towards the CoG. All efforts should, according to the doctrines, be coordinated so that one can maintain a constant focus on the main targets of the campaign, which must be the political goals one has set oneself.¹⁴¹

It is the military chief's goal to identify these so-called *decisive military points* that one then organises in such a manner that they can be included in the chosen *lines of operations* with a view to achieving the military goals set.¹⁴² Military planning in connection with the combating of a guerrilla could therefore be carried out in line with NATO's revised 'Guidance of Operational Planning' (as from 2010 NATO has used the abbreviation COPD).¹⁴³ Obviously on the condition that one is duly aware that there will be great differences between conventional warfare and the combating of insurgents/guerrillas! There is also a need here for the military plan to be devised based on a number of so-called 'operational objectives' which, in turn, will be interpreted and adapted at the different levels, which should make an overall contribution to combating the insurgents by marginalising them. This assumes that the military are trained to combat selective targets so that unnecessary destruction can be avoided and so that the military efforts are involved in supporting the efforts of other state or private institutions/organisations. In this form of warfare, the DPs could be to 'restore public law and order', 'control roads/communications' or 'clean up in prohibited areas used by guerrilla units'. The term *prohibited areas* has been used about areas where the government side wants to have complete control. Some guerrilla movements use the term for areas in which the guerrillas exercise full control – these are often called 'liberated zones'. In order to achieve this level of control, the forces deployed must have clear plans for resource allocation so that they are able to follow up on the plans created. If we look at the ongoing counterinsurgency operations, I must admit that I am not yet convinced that the current doctrines and planning methods really are the best for COIN operations.

The strategic plans must obviously be led and implemented in such a manner that one is in phase with and coordinated with all current civilian units and efforts, and aware that one must be prepared to adjust the plans made over a period of time so that one does not lose sight of the strategic goal. The intention might be to create all operational plans in such a way that each overlaps the other (they arise as the result of

141 Antulio J. Echevarria II, 'Clausewitz's Center of Gravity: It's Not What We Thought', *Strategic Studies Institute (SSI)*, United States Army War College, September 2001, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=363>. (Echevarria has later published the text, but under another title.)

142 According to U.S. Army FM 3–0, *Operations*: 'Lines of operations define the directional orientation of the force in time and space in relation to the enemy. They connect the force with its base of operations and its objectives. An operation may have single or multiple lines of operation. A single line of operations concentrates forces and simplifies planning. Multiple lines of operations make it difficult for an enemy to determine the friendly objectives and force him to disperse resources against several possible threats.' (FM 3–0, see fig. 5–2, pp. 5–7, 5–8.)

143 NATO's so-called 'Guidelines for Operational Planning' (GOP) may be an example of this type of 'operational goal' that is made use of today. This includes the military theory terms that are referred to briefly here.

natural phases in the campaign).¹⁴⁴ This is the only way of doing this: it will never be possible to create a great ‘master plan’ that will apply to a war that will probably last many years. This conceptual thinking is necessary if one is to take on a well-led insurgent movement, but could probably be interpreted as being in contrast to the more traditional military thinking with regard to the goals of warfare. The military chief and leaders of such a campaign also have much more complex and ‘undisciplined’ task forces available from the civilian community, and have different options to call on than ‘pure’ military operations have. Here, military efforts will take the form of a campaign in the broadest sense of the term.

In order to illustrate this way of thinking, let us assume that, in connection with counterinsurgency, a common initiative from the threatened regime has succeeded in clearly improving the internal security situation in the country, something that can be seen as vital progress if we look at the political ‘lines of operation’ established. The military chief sees it as an important new goal to exploit the new security situation to regroup with a view to reducing the supply of weapons and ammunition that previously flooded in from ‘country X’ – something that can be seen as a military ‘decisive point’ (DP). This can then be seen as a shift in the so-called ‘main effort’ (a demonstration of the strength of the factored inputs) – after the armed forces along the border with ‘country X’ have been strongly reinforced, fresh tactical progress will in the long term contribute to there being fewer guerrillas and terrorist attacks inside the country. Such developments will, in turn, possibly lead to further opportunities to adjust the political tactics, which will again contribute to a better relationship with the local community, which was previously kindly disposed towards the guerrilla. (We can possibly see this political feature as a political ‘decisive point’.)

An historical example of this type of use of military power is the British use of *offensive* operations over the border with Indonesia when the strong nationalist regime in Indonesia wanted to drive the British out of their colonies of Sarawak and Northern Borneo, areas that Indonesia felt it was entitled to once the country became independent in the 1950s. Here, even decisions on smaller operations at a company level were taken at a high level on the British side, so that these operations were well in line with the chosen *political* tempo. Eventually, Indonesia chose to abandon its political and military pressure from the early 1960s.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ See, for example, Metz & Millen (2004), pp. vi–viii. One should, however, note here that, when establishing DPs, planners often forget that these arise as the result of analysis concerning the identification of *critical vulnerabilities*. This is often *not* how things are done in practice where DPs are a kind of ‘division’ of the CoG into its individual factors, which can subsequently be influenced by military means. The result of this misunderstanding is that the actual design of the operation and criteria for success may differ from the real military challenges and the fundamental relative strengths of the involved opponents.

¹⁴⁵ For a general discussion on nationalism and political developments in Indonesia from late 1940s until the 1960s, see Asprey (1994), pp. 817–824.

In contrast, consider the French in Algeria. Although the French carried out their operations on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the military ‘decisive points’, these were, in reality, never sufficiently well harmonised with the overriding French political strategy. Consequently they never established the actual centre of gravity.

2.2.5. Assumptions and terms the reader should have some knowledge of

Developments in the ongoing wars in countries like Afghanistan and Iraq (Iraq is today only a ‘conflict’), all play a part in illustrating the central problem faced in modern warfare: the wars are irregular and include the use of guerrilla tactics, and acts of terrorism are routine. Another common feature is that the insurgents are fighting against what they see as foreign occupying forces, and/or internal political, religious and ethnic enemies. This may have a unifying impact, albeit often short lived, on different insurgent factions, and can give them certain legitimacy among the population.

When attempting to interpret and understand ongoing wars/conflicts in the Third World, an important factor to take into account is that the modern Western form of conventional (or regular) warfare developed into its present form during the Second World War. Three main ingredients have dominated this form of warfare after 1945, and they have been based on the following key conditions:

1. Ground warfare. Different forms of armoured combat vehicles with support from (self-propelled) artillery have dominated the picture, including different kinds of air support (from fixed-wings and helicopters).
2. Naval warfare. So-called *aircraft carrier groups* and different classes of submarines are still the dominant platforms at sea. It is always assumed that these seagoing platforms have strong air support.
3. Air warfare. The combination of fighter-escorts, fighter-bombers and bombers has dominated the picture. Today’s airpower is also very dependent on good communications, including support from space-based satellites.

Of course, modern mechanised warfare has connections to the defence industry – moreover, without a strong industrial base, the different platforms would not have existed. The development of military organisations is therefore very dependent on both tactical requirements, including threat assessments, and the industries that are producing the equipment. These combinations of platforms are, in turn, associated with various communications systems and supported by sensors. Together, these combinations have been at the heart of Western military thinking about modern warfare until the present day. It should be noted here that warfare has not been defined by the

weapon systems in themselves but, rather, by a fundamental assumption or concept that technology was decisive for the outcome of a war. The armed forces of all great powers in the 20th century have also been organised with a view to ensuring that they can exploit the mass investment in technology in the most effective manner possible. The military structures developed were obviously designed to be able to handle the material one had obtained, but it was equally important that these structures were able to train officers and soldiers to use the modern equipment on the battlefield. The swift introduction of nuclear weapons in the 1950s would fundamentally change the way the two superpowers, the USA and the Soviet Union, thought about organising their military powers. The Western armed forces have remained technically focused on a military organisation built up around the technology they have developed.¹⁴⁶

Seen in this light, there is perhaps nothing new about preparing for two in many ways different forms of war. During the Cold War, the states involved were, at least theoretically, prepared to both conduct a large-scale conventional war and warfare involving the use of WMD's. In our time, military thinking is dominated by conventional war and fighting against insurgent movements and/or terrorist groups. But, in practice, most Western states still prepare for the conduct of conventional warfare.

In many ways, we can see a modern armoured division, a mechanised division, an aircraft carrier group, or a fighter or bomber unit as symbols of the *optimal* organisation – all developed in order to be able to take on and combat similar technology-based forces that other industrial countries have built up. To this day, these forces make up the actual *basic structure* of modern conventional warfare – and this structure has also functioned excellently up until now in this form of warfare, principally targeted against other industrialised states.

It has, however, proved to be the case that when the forces of industrial states are deployed against *organised* insurgent/guerrilla forces, they have only proved to be effective to a limited extent. Both the U.S. in Vietnam and, later, the Soviet Union in Afghanistan discovered that their available forces had limited success against guerrilla forces, even though they normally won the individual battles they took part in. A fundamental problem has been that, since the 'base units' in most guerrilla movements are individuals, teams or groups of troops, deploying superior technology against them does not normally confer a great advantage. It is rare that a sufficient concentration of insurgents can be targeted to enable one to fully exploit one's own firepower superiority. As previously mentioned, there are some exceptions, such as the recapturing of the airport at Saigon and the Citadel in Hué during the Tet Offensive (1968) in the Vietnam War, and Komsomolsk (in Chechnya) in March 2000.

A guerrilla force will not normally 'fight clean battles'. For periods, the guerrilla soldiers' weapons may even be buried or at least carried concealed. When they gather

¹⁴⁶ George Friedman, 'Military Doctrine, Guerrilla Warfare and Counterinsurgency', *The Stratfor Weekly*, 13 August 2003.

to carry out a raid or a local attack, they produce the weapons they have and combine these with mortars, hand grenades or light anti-tank weapons, such as Russian-made RPGs. When the guerrilla soldier appears without weapons, it is, in practice, difficult to distinguish him from ordinary civilians. On their part, the insurgents in Chechnya have claimed that they have lost more soldiers in the winter when the men trek down to the villages as 'civilians' or try to reach another country, than during the hostilities against Russian security forces in the summer: it is not just a case of burying the weapons and strolling down from the mountains. Another important factor is that the guerrilla forces normally have the initiative – it is they who choose the time and place of a raid or ambush, not the opponent. This itself contributes to reducing the risk of being discovered or, for example, kept under electronic surveillance – if the government forces were to know the orders of the insurgents, it would be easier for them to go on the offensive themselves. Safety in the field is important in an insurgent movement. In both the FMLN (in El Salvador) and with the Chechens, the individual soldiers often did not know the target of an operation until a short time before it began.

An insurgent war that is well led is, in practice, difficult to combat with conventional military forces, particularly during the early phase. The traditional manner of mustering firepower in connection with conventional operations is actually not very suitable for combating smaller dispersed guerrilla forces, and one does not normally have reliable, detailed intelligence about the insurgents during this phase of the war. And even if one does not mind the destruction of civilian property by one's own forces and accepts that there will be civilian losses, it has been the case in many of the wars we have seen since 1945 that the actual mass exodus of civilians and punitive expeditions against areas where there is much popular support for the insurgency are not in themselves any guarantee of success for the ruling regime and the government forces. Deportations and punitive measures are not enough to eliminate an established insurgent/guerrilla movement, as those who survive will normally resume their activities as long as weapons are available and they maintain their motivation.¹⁴⁷

For the same reason, we have also seen that, in order to deal with an insurgent movement in a more effective manner, it has often been necessary to organise one's own so-called 'counterinsurgency troops'. Such thinking is based on another school of thought within modern military thinking, in which the study of guerrilla forces and terrorist organisations is central. Without 'alternative thinking' such as this, and access to good, current intelligence, it is difficult to be able to combat the guerrilla

¹⁴⁷ Robert M. Cassidy, 'Why Great Powers Fight Small Wars Badly', *Military Review*, September-October 2002. Consider, for example, the U.S.'s so-called 'strategic villages' during the Vietnam War and the British internment of IRA members in Northern Ireland in the 1970s; both of these 'techniques' provided limited results.

movement. If the government forces are to be successful, possibly together with conventional forces from an external ally, these forces must be trained and deployed/organised in such a way that they can deal with local challenges. The overall 'mix of forces' required in order to penetrate the insurgents' 'safe areas' is often comprised of Special Forces, locally recruited forces and police forces with a good supply of local knowledge about attitudes, culture, religion and social conditions. On the basis of these resources, one should be able to combat the insurgent forces over a period of time. Normally such 'counter-guerrilla forces' deal with and perform a great number of functions, such as:

- They must be able to deal with the guerrilla forces in a 'symmetric' manner, i.e. be strong enough to be able to go to battle and win (at least survive) if the guerrilla leadership decides to muster huge forces and attempt to overcome the government forces' outposts and smaller garrisons. This is where the availability of armoured units, artillery support and air support comes in as an important military factor, particularly in connection with military attacks/counteroffensives.
- It is important that they are able to recruit and train *local forces* with a view to being able to take on and overcome guerrilla forces operating in the area. The local knowledge that this type of locally recruited force represents is also of importance for obtaining information and intelligence.
- It is important in connection with counterinsurgency that a good intelligence service can be established. It must have access to information about how the guerrilla recruits, who are recruited, how and where they train, who acquires weapons and ammunition along the way and how propaganda and the indoctrination of guerrilla soldiers and of their civilian networks are carried out. If one is to be able to attack/combat guerrilla units, access to information on where they are, where they are going and what plans they might have is necessary.
- It is also important to try to prevent the guerrillas (or terrorist or criminal gangs!) from establishing their own 'safe areas', whether in the jungle, in mountain areas or in villages/urban areas. All areas should be just as accessible for both one's own and the adversary's forces. It is also important that the insurgents do not have a monopoly on moving or attacking at night.

If the counterinsurgents are to have lasting success, they must try to split up the insurgents and the civilian population. If one uses Mao Zedong's old saying 'the fish in the water', the counterinsurgents must be able to catch the 'fish' (the insurgents) in the 'water' (the people). If they are unsuccessful in creating a split between the insurgents and their civilian networks, the insurgents are likely to survive and will simply

grow stronger over time. The idea of splitting the insurgents from the population sounds logical. In reality, it is then necessary for the government forces and their local allies to control the country's villages and towns, something that is very demanding. It is not enough for the government forces to maintain a daytime presence if it is the insurgents who dominate at night. As it is often the insurgents who have organised the population *first*, it will be a difficult and time-consuming task to create a network of informers when the insurgents' network is already in place and keeping track of all people who speak with the government soldiers.

This will be particularly difficult if one is involved in an ethnic conflict and one's local allies are *not* from the same ethnic group as the dominant section of the population. In Iraq, for example, it cannot be taken for granted that the local Sunni Arab population will have anything to do with government soldiers who often are made up of Kurds and Shias.

It is obviously normally a distinct advantage for an insurgent movement to have a local population to rely on, but the supply element does not always have to rely on the local population. From a supply point of view, we can, in connection with many modern conflicts, modify Mao's old saying and state that the 'fish' do not actually need 'water'. In several guerrilla wars, we have seen the local population actually become a burden for the insurgent movement. This is particularly the case if the government forces' tactics for counterinsurgency are based on terrorising the population and the insurgents are, at the same time, very much preoccupied with protecting the population that they themselves come from. This problem is most frequently seen in connection with ethnic conflicts where the population belongs to other ethnic groups than the government forces. Then the 'fish' must carry the 'water', something that again makes the guerrilla very vulnerable to attacks from the counterinsurgents. This happened, for example, in El Salvador at the beginning of the 1980s¹⁴⁸ and, more recently, in Kosovo in 1999.

The military units that usually carry out counterinsurgency missions normally consist of two different main components:

1. Maybe the most important military force customised for use in a COIN environment is well-trained Special Forces, i.e. well-motivated light infantry forces that use heavy firepower/air support through access to the existing communications networks. These forces have several tasks, including intelligence gathering, raids against the guerrilla, monitoring of enemy activity and, in particular, trying to establish good contact with the local population, and acting as instructors for locally recruited soldiers, etc. Special Forces performing tasks

¹⁴⁸ Joes (1996), pp. 141–145.

such as reconnaissance will, on the other hand, normally try to avoid contact with the civilian population for security reasons.

2. In addition, different kinds of conventional/regular forces are always included, either under the control of the main units of the Special Forces that are deployed, or under their own military command. These forces represent various forms of heavy firepower support, and such forces will normally constitute the *main force* if they have to overcome large bands of guerrillas. For example, during the introductory phases in the Vietnam War (before 1965), the two kinds of tasks described above were normally carried out by specialised counterinsurgency units.

Special Operation Forces [SOF] or ‘Green Berets’ were often the names given to the American Special Forces that had begun to arrive in South Vietnam from early 1962 to serve as instructors and advisers for the conventionally trained South Vietnamese government forces.

This way of doing things had, however, at least two fundamental weaknesses when we look *retrospectively* at the strategic rationale behind the actual military thinking:

1. Most importantly, the supply of specially trained *counterinsurgents* during the Vietnam War was never sufficient to be able to base the warfare on their methods and style of warfare (and the number of well-trained Special Forces was probably never high enough later either).
2. It should be noted here that it is not how many guerrilla soldiers the enemy has that is decisive, but how large the actual civilian population is in a conflict area. The nature of the geographical area is also of importance – a large landscape with difficult terrain will support the insurgents’ efforts.

It is probably relatively irrelevant whom the local civilian population supports politically during the first phase of the conflict. The political situation fluctuates all the time and political moods may change several times on the way to the final goal. What counts is that those who are to combat the insurgency have enough suitable forces to be able to ‘penetrate the sea of people’, down to where the guerrilla are living and recruiting. Why is this an important assumption? Because there are almost always ‘openings’ in the security network of an insurgency, and the counterinsurgents will of course try to find them. Historical experience points to the fact that the threatened regime’s side may need a significantly larger number of forces than the often limited number of insurgent soldiers. Without a clear superiority in forces, it would be very

naïve of the regime to try to establish an acceptable and credible local and/or regional *security situation*.

The guerrilla always operates in an environment where, almost regardless of what the security forces do, there will be enough targets to attack. And not even the best-trained forces loyal to the government can prevent civilians and groups loyal to the government (particularly leaders) from being attacked under normal circumstances. We saw this clearly in Iraq between 2004 and 2009, where never a day went by without a significant number of attacks against the new regime and those who supported it, and against American forces and civilian employees who worked for foreign companies in Iraq or the new Iraqi regime. In addition, large forces will always be required in order to deal with the *passive* security that is expected – particularly by the civilian population. (One example: it was estimated that in the spring of 2005 about 20,000 security personnel were working in Iraq as private contractors; this was actually greater than the entire British military contribution that year.)¹⁴⁹

Another term that can be used to describe the situation is ‘preventative security’. These operations often appear to the government side’s soldiers as a rather boring and hardly motivating service, but are in fact extremely essential work. Because of The War on Terror, we saw a new U.S. interest in theory about insurgency and terrorism. Due to the growing problems faced by the Coalition troops in Iraq from autumn 2003 onwards, we from 2004 saw a growing number of articles published about insurgency and countermeasures. As David H. Ucko wrote in his book *The New Counterinsurgency Era*:

*(...) the U.S. military in Iraq assumed control over a stability operation larger in scale and complexity than anything it had previously undertaken, at the very least since the Vietnam War. The Bush administration further complicated this already ambitious endeavor by disbanding the Iraqi military and subjecting the Iraqi government to a deep-rooted process of de-Baathification, resulting in the creation of a large pool of disgruntled former soldiers (...)*¹⁵⁰

An important task for the armed element of any government today is to defend/protect the civilian population, the machinery of government and/or economic targets so that they can survive, without undermining the ideals that the government should protect.¹⁵¹ Seen in this light, one must have enough *security forces*. It then becomes the task of especially the elite forces to *actively pursue* and overcome the insurgent’s political and military cadres as well as the core troops of the insurgents/guerrillas. An

149 For a very thorough discussion of the phenomenon of the modern security industry, see for example Peter W. Singer, *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004), pp. 230–242.

150 Ucko (2009), p. 60.

151 Robert R. Tomes, ‘Relearning Counter Insurgency Warfare’, *Parameters*, Spring 2004.

operational pattern such as this is itself a problem, as the elite forces are often those that are officially noticed, while the traditional infantry and police experience an often dangerous day-to-day existence, without much glamour. This is hardly an inspiring situation for the security forces deployed out in rural areas or small towns, and as previously demonstrated, the ordinary security forces may feel that they are given little credit for their efforts.

The large number of soldiers that will normally be required in order to combat the insurgent forces in an effective manner will rarely be led and financed by a foreign great power, perhaps with the exception of those occasions when an insurgency (or rebellion) has broken out in a country that is small in terms of population or measured in square kilometres. As we have seen in Iraq after 2003, and previously in Vietnam, the *logistical costs* of major involvement can be significant – perhaps large enough that one might ask whether it would be ill-advised to continue, regardless of how the war goes. Put bluntly, this means that, if one is to have any hope of defeating a well-led insurgency that has developed a guerrilla movement, it would be wise to invest everything in developing a locally recruited military force (including police forces) that can eventually take over responsibility for combating the insurgents, or at least be strong enough for the adversary to understand that he can *never* win. Until then, a well-functioning insurgent movement will normally not be interested in real negotiations. The role of the locally recruited forces will then be to operate as main forces/security forces and they will normally be trained as infantry. These forces will not only defend important infrastructure but also operate as support troops when one combats large guerrilla units. Another aspect of this is that the locally recruited troops know the local culture better than any *foreign* troops can be expected to. Seen in this light, these forces are, if they are trained and led in an acceptable manner, important ambassadors for the regime and can deal with the civilian population in a natural way. Secondly, this will be of great importance as intelligence can be obtained from the area ‘the fish [the insurgent] is swimming in’ through day-to-day contact with civilians. This will also be key information for the SoF and heavier conventional forces that are seeking to identify and overcome the many small and large guerrilla units and their political/religious leadership.

However, recruiting from a previously heavily guerrilla-infested area is always associated with problems. Can the recruits be trusted? According to an article written by Waleed Ibrahim, this was obviously a real problem for the Americans in Iraq in the first years of the insurgency after the conventional part of the war was over in late spring 2003.¹⁵² Several freshly recruited Iraqi units simply ‘disintegrated’ when they were deployed against the city of Fallujah in Iraq (2004).¹⁵³ Due to the causal relationships involved, it has not been easy to determine why the Iraqi units, led by Iraqi officers, did

¹⁵² Waleed Ibrahim, ‘Rebels Strike Iraqi Forces After Bin Laden Call’, *Reuters Report*, 28 December 2004.

¹⁵³ Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco. The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (Penguin Books, 2006), pp. 322–337.

not work. But there are probably two particularly significant factors. The Iraqi forces had not yet reached a sufficiently high standard of training to be able to carry out complicated and intensive urban operations, and political guidance was given to the local USMC commander not to carry out operations under the conditions at that time.¹⁵⁴ Gradually, as the training of the Iraqi forces has continued, the emphasis has been on three things: leadership, individual skills and the ability to carry out division operations at battalion level. And the situation slowly improved over time, especially after the American so-called ‘surge’ of extra American soldiers into Iraq in 2007.

Historically, it has proved to be extremely easy for guerrilla cadres to enlist in newly set up security forces – and this has been particularly common in situations where the guerrilla war is already a reality and the government forces are desperate to try to deal with this by expanding their own forces. Under wartime conditions, an actual *security check* on all new recruits is often impossible, even with help from huge foreign forces, as we saw before 2010 in Iraq. Seen in this light, it can almost be assumed that, when one recruits for new forces in the middle of a war, one will end up taking some people who are sympathetic to the insurgents into both the police and ground combat forces.¹⁵⁵ One of the consequences of this may be that it becomes extremely difficult to keep one’s own offensive operations secret. And, as it is in practice impossible to distinguish what the actual political opinions of recruits or officers are by means of any known technical aids, there is hardly any effective manner available for avoiding infiltration. This will be particularly bad if recruitment has mainly been carried out under the supervision of the external ‘supporting power’.

A foreign force has, in practice, limited local knowledge about things like attitudes, traditional loyalty and culture – and, without this kind of insight, it is almost impossible to ‘weed out’ the adversary’s infiltrators during the recruitment process.

This shows that, historically, the insurgents have had a ‘built-in advantage’. When they have infiltrated a government’s security forces, the insurgents will have a good supply of basic information on tactical/operational norms and general military assumptions. In practice, it is almost impossible to guard against infiltrators. One step that can be taken is to ensure that information on forthcoming operations is withheld until such time as it is impossible for any infiltrators to pass it on to the insurgents. This is a tactic that several insurgent movements also use. The ‘need to know’ principle is a good protective mechanism in most contexts. If it is assumed that the infiltrators are operating individually and do not know each other, it is also important that no soldier/officer finds himself *alone* in a situation where he could cause great damage; for example, while guarding an important object, as a communications operator or on admission checks. Obviously, the insurgency’s political and military leaders will

¹⁵⁴ Ricks (2006), pp. 338–346.

¹⁵⁵ The Associated Press, ‘Iraq Infiltration on U.S. Bases Well-Known’, 28 December 2004.

exploit such information and they will often have a better intelligence picture than the government forces. The guerrilla force that can either decide to hide in the terrain or 'disappear' into a loyal, or at least non-informant population, has a clearly superior operational starting point, with a good supply of information on future military operations. The insurgents are free to choose whether they themselves will use their military means or whether to avoid combat against a superior military force. In a situation like this, the guerrilla forces have acquired the operational upper hand because they can normally assume that they will be able to surprise the enemy tactically.¹⁵⁶

It is, of course, always the objective of those attempting to combat the insurgency to turn this clearly negative situation around. Most military theorists who have written about counterinsurgency have also asserted that one should try to mirror the guerrilla's capacity.¹⁵⁷ There are, however, grounds for being sceptical about whether this is possible at an operational level, particularly when it is almost impossible for foreign forces to infiltrate a guerrilla movement. It is obviously difficult for a white or a black person to pretend to be Asian. Using local forces for this purpose at a tactical level will probably yield a greater chance of success. This means that, if good information is to be obtained on what the insurgents are planning at a high level, it can be hoped that they will give themselves away when using their communications systems or that this intelligence can be gathered using electronic means. The alternative is if the security forces can themselves recruit people who are negatively disposed to the insurgent's cause, but who, nevertheless, have access to the guerrilla leadership. Practice from modern guerrilla wars has shown that it is difficult to succeed in 'planting' an agent in the guerrilla leadership, while it has often been very easy for the insurgents to obtain access to information from the adversary's operational level. During the Vietnam War, for example, operations were disclosed on several occasions as the result of poor communications security – on both sides in that war.¹⁵⁸

Historically, attempts have often been made to deal with this handicap by using the available information, which is often less correct, and compensating for the shortcomings by planning and carrying out major military operations. Then if the forces did not, for example, know exactly where the guerrilla was located or were not sure of who actually were active members, they undertook large so-called *mobile operations* where they went in and occupied a given area in an attempt to engage, identify and finally overcome the guerrilla units located in the selected area. Both the French in Indochina and, later, the Americans in South Vietnam made extensive use of this type of

156 Ricks (2006), pp. 193–95, 222–25 and pp. 323–24. The reference gives good insight into the problems connected to the U.S. and Coalition intelligence gathering and use of (bad) intelligence.

157 Some of those who have practical experience of counterinsurgency who have written about it are the Englishman Sir Robert Thompson, the Frenchmen Roger Trinquier and David Galula and the Americans John S. Pustay, Jeffrey Race and Douglas S. Blaufarb. Please refer to the bibliography for the titles of the books.

158 James Bamford, *Body of Secrets: Anatomy of the Ultra-Secret National Security Agency from the Cold War Through the Dawn of a New Century* (New York: Doubleday, 2002), p. 306.

‘heavy raids’, normally with limited military achievements.¹⁵⁹ Several of the military or civilian researchers who have written about the Vietnam War have demonstrated that this type of warfare had at least three consequences:

1. These operations were normally large and not very cost-effective. Reinforced battalions were, in practice, often used to overcome a group of 10 men. In such a situation, the efforts could hardly be considered to be in proportion to the result, and it becomes extremely difficult to consider that a minimal ‘tactical success’ such as this had any positive strategic effect at all, since a large guerrilla unit normally split up into smaller groups when attacked and usually decided to flee and not ‘fight to the last man’. In such a case, the guerrilla unit was, in practice, not defeated and the rest of the units regrouped and reorganised as soon as the enemy’s main forces had pulled out.
2. Another factor was that the operations they carried out often contributed to heightening political problems. Large operations of the type described above are not normally carried out by units specialising in combating insurgent forces. Special Forces are normally trained to carry out very *selective* (and important) military operations.
3. If one indiscriminately carries out what the Americans in South Vietnam often called ‘search and destroy’ missions, and allows traditionally trained military forces to carry them out, these troops will often use maximum firepower to keep their own losses down. As such operations are often carried out in densely populated areas, one will almost constantly inflict local losses. The result has often been that the local population becomes more *hostile* towards the government forces (or to the foreign troops supporting them) and more sympathetically disposed to the guerrilla due to great losses and major devastation locally during battles.¹⁶⁰ When Special Forces and other forms of military unit (including police and civilian officials) are later sent to ‘pacify’ the now, in theory, ‘cleansed’ area, this is an extremely difficult and lengthy job. The results of search and destroy missions have often proved to be less than successful.

And this brings us to what is probably the most deep-rooted problem when attempting to counter an insurgency that is already well underway. During the opening phase, the insurgent movement is normally a small group of people who have decided to use violent methods to change what is to them an unacceptable political/economic/

159 Harold G. Moore & Joseph L. Galloway, *We Were Soldiers Once, and Young: Ia Drang: The Battle that Changed the War in Vietnam* (Norwalk, CT: The Easton Press, 1992/1995). The book describes the Battle of Ia Drang, a hilly area in South Vietnam, which can be described as a ‘heavy raid’ into an area held by a North Vietnamese division.

160 One example is the Israeli problems during their occupation of territories in Gaza and on the West Bank in the Palestinian areas, and in Southern Lebanon.

ethnic and/or religious situation. It will always be a while before the next stage of the insurgency is reached, i.e. the stage when the insurgents are able to develop a complex organisation with its own logistics and tax system and are in a position to possibly obtain weapons and other special support from abroad.

During the first phase, the guerrilla is mainly preoccupied with *surviving* and developing his own political base, i.e. the nature of the guerrilla war must, by necessity, appear more political than military. Historically, it has also often proved to be the case that the guerrilla movement becomes more vulnerable when it reaches its second stage and becomes more militarily potent than it was in the militarily weak introductory phase. If the government forces are well-led and have decided on a sensible 'counter-strategy', the army's heavy equipment will, however, come into its own – particularly if the guerrilla arrogantly attempts to attack and/or hold areas or cities before he is at least as well equipped and trained as the conventional forces deployed against him.

But it has often proved to be the case that this has not been a problem for the guerrilla, as the threatened regime's political situation has often greatly deteriorated in the meantime. Even if it is now possible to inflict great losses on the guerrilla, the supply of new recruits is so good within the increasingly hostile local population that the guerrilla can relatively easily compensate for the losses incurred in clashes with the government forces. In reality, it is often difficult for the regime to continue the war as before and it realises that it is impossible to achieve a purely military victory against the guerrilla forces. At this stage it has often been seen to be necessary to begin negotiations – possibly through intermediaries. Sometimes this leads to progress, but perhaps equally often it results in the outbreak of a new round of warfare before either the regime realises it has lost or a superpower intervenes in the war on the side of the government in order to try to turn the war around again. The Vietnam War is a good example of this kind of military intervention – the Americans realised that the regime in South Vietnam was succumbing to pressure from the NLF and North Vietnam in the spring of 1965.¹⁶¹

If one loses the *political* battle there are actually two alternatives remaining: one could obviously give up the struggle, or attempt a war of attrition against the insurgents. First, the Americans and then, later, the Soviet Union were to experience that it is in practice difficult for even a superpower to sustain great losses over several years in a war, particularly in the Third World. There is always a danger that politicians will get fed up or that popular opinion against participation in the war will build up over time. The question that will always come up is whether this war is actually of crucial importance to one's own interests. If the answer to this is no, we will probably see a withdrawal from the actual war, even if this means that the regime one initially entered into the war to support now risks falling. South Vietnam is a classic example of this.

¹⁶¹ Blaufarb, (1977), pp. 206–239.

The fact that a great power is supporting and has great influence on the government's policies is something that can provide the insurgent movement with much sympathy and support from sections of the population. For example, in the Philippines, the promises to close down the American bases (and the fall of Ferdinand Marcos in 1986) became important elements in the fight against the Communist NAP guerrilla. Similarly, it took three years for the Afghan Mujahedeen to take Kabul after the Russians had first begun to retreat. This happened despite the fact that most Western observers and journalists assumed that the Kabul regime would collapse like a house of cards as soon as the Russians had left the country.¹⁶² As we already know, once the Russians were finally out of Afghanistan, the various Mujahedeen groups began to fight each other. Insurgent movements have historically often showed high willingness and ability to accept the losses that are required, if the insurgents are well-led and have a strong political will to continue.¹⁶³ Of course, this always depends on the local conditions. Although it is difficult to document, I would state that a well-motivated insurgent movement has no problems accepting losses equivalent to its entire force over the course of a period of three to five years. In practice, we are here not talking about the force being 'replaced', but the guerrilla being able to compensate for losses he suffers as quickly as they are inflicted. There are great problems associated with finding reliable casualty figures in an insurgency. Insurgent movements seldom release figures on their own losses. The adversary often issues exaggerated reports of the insurgent movement's casualty figures.¹⁶⁴ One example is provided by the civil war in El Salvador. The conservative newspapers in the capital (San Salvador) published casualty figures that (if they were correct) would have meant that the FMLN would have had to renew its force every 12–24 months – something that is hardly possible for any insurgent force if it is to be combat fit. By comparison, the insurgents in Chechnya would, if the Russian figures were correct, have had to renew their fighting force on *at least* an annual basis – an impossible task.¹⁶⁵ For their part, Russian authorities claim that the Chechens lost about three times as many soldiers as they did during the two wars.¹⁶⁶

162 Another important reason for the Mujahedeen's lack of progress could be that they were unable to handle the adjustment from defensive guerrilla warfare to offensive warfare.

163 Hammes (2004), see especially Chapter 6, 'The Vietnamese Modification'.

164 Joes (1996). In this book, Joes describes almost all major rebellions/guerrilla wars. He tries to describe the genesis and context of each of these guerrilla insurgencies, and the factors contributing to the victory or defeat of the guerrillas.

165 The first Chechen War took place from 1994 to 1996. After a break from 1997 to 1999, a new war broke out in 1999. After the Russians recaptured Grozny in February 2000, the so-called Ichkerian regime fell apart. Russia has severely disabled the Chechen insurgency movement, and the Russians withdrew most of their armed forces in 2009. A pro-Russian regime now rules in Chechnya, but there is no peace in the Caucasus region.

166 According to 'Chechnya', Times topics, *New York Times*, <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesand-territories/russiaandtheformersovietunion/chechnya/index.html>., 'The two wars resulted in tens of thousands of casualties and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians. A fierce separatist movement has evolved over the last decade into an Islamist insurgency responsible for almost daily attacks against law enforcement and government officials in the region. In October 2010, attackers burst into the Parliament in Grozny and killed at least three people, wounding more than a dozen others before they were killed by police or by their own explosives, officials said.'

When we talk of casualty figures, the casualty rates (or alleged casualties) between the sides are a topic in themselves. During the Vietnam War, the American forces stated that the number of insurgents killed was about 12 times higher than the Americans' casualties. In Chapter 10 of his book *The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam*, William J. Duikers quotes from an extremely interesting report on American and North Vietnamese thinking on casualties and inflicting casualties: "There is no doubt that the North Vietnamese and NLF casualties were significantly greater than the Americans."¹⁶⁷ During the war in Iraq in the period from 2005–2007, the relative figures looked somewhat similar, but casualty figures are always disputed. In a typical developing insurgency in the Third World, the casualty figures of the government forces will, during the guerrilla phase, very often exceed the insurgents' casualties. It is not uncommon for the relative figures to be 1:2–1:4 or higher in the insurgents' favour. In many guerrilla wars, the *claimed* casualty figures for the insurgent forces will be much higher than those of the government forces. When the casualty figures also stem from operations initiated by the insurgent forces, there is every reason to regard the figures with scepticism.

In Iraq, the mentality of the insurgents was also an important element when discussing their casualty figures. This is because some of the so-called *jihadists* can almost be said to have 'martyrdom' as their primary goal. Such extremists do not consider their own losses to be important. Obviously, those combating the insurgency may come unexpectedly upon a base belonging to the insurgents or ambush a supply column, but these are often exceptions in an insurgency. An advantage will also be gained when the forces fighting the insurgency are far ahead in terms of technology, training and tactics – as was the case in Iraq.¹⁶⁸

We see a dilemma here for the ruling regime: if, at an early stage, it realises the danger posed to the regime by the guerrilla war the regime may nevertheless find it difficult to take the political strain that will often ensue from implementing widespread repression/combating of the guerrilla forces, who are still in an early phase and are consequently weak both politically and militarily. If the regime proceeds in too hard a fashion, this could intensify the underlying *political* ill-feeling towards the ruling regime. If, on the other hand, it chooses not to intervene with speedy political and military measures, the insurgency will obviously survive and probably slowly grow stronger. This is in fact a real dilemma that arises in most guerrilla wars. If it decides to wait before taking 'tough' countermeasures, the regime instead risks meeting an increasingly better politically developed adversary who will also eventually increase its

¹⁶⁷ William J. Duiker, *The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Second Edition 1996).

¹⁶⁸ Linda Robinson, *Tell me how this ends. General David Petraeus and the search for a way out of Iraq* (New York: Public Affairs, 2008), see pp. 25–45, pp. 169–180, pp. 345–367. Her description of the development from 2005 to 2007 in Iraq is interesting, especially the description of the 'Surge' planning and execution in 2007–2008. For a somewhat different evaluation of the Iraq development, see Ucko (2009), pp. 119–140.

real military fighting capability. As previously indicated, the guerrilla forces could be regarded, at this later stage, more as regular military units. However, if they do not receive significant weapons support from outside, they will not normally have any hope of taking on and defeating large conventional forces.

As regards the many insurgencies we have seen since the Second World War, the government side has often managed neither to take an early decision nor deal with the reasons for the guerrilla initially deciding to begin an armed insurgency by way of political, social or economic measures/reforms. This dilemma looks difficult to avoid in parts of the world and this is in itself a constant source of inspiration for new insurgencies, particularly in the often less well-governed (newer) nations in the Third World.¹⁶⁹ If we take the evolving situation in Iraq from the summer of 2003 as an example, in late 2003 it became obvious that the U.S. (including UK forces) was not able to 'surgically' remove what in the period from autumn 2003 to summer 2005 may be regarded as a rather unorganised and weak *terror campaign*, mainly directed at American and other foreign forces in Iraq. The reason for this may be that the U.S. (perhaps principally the Secretary of Defence at that time, Donald Rumsfeld, himself), could be accused of having broken the 'first commandment' of any analysis of warfare: what type of war are we fighting?

The long series of well-organised terrorist attacks from the summer of 2005 assumed a different character. It became apparent that these hostilities in Iraq could no longer be looked upon as a 'temporary terrorist campaign' conducted by random Saddam supporters, a few foreign 'holy warriors' and a growing number of suicide bombers – they could be described as a *civil war*. In Iraq, the war had changed to a guerrilla war that was beginning to approach Mao's 'phase two', as described earlier in this book.¹⁷⁰ The attacks had become better planned and were increasingly directed at the segments of Iraq that wanted the Americans to stay, or that actively worked for them. The new Iraqi regime that was establishing itself became a main target itself. In Iraq, the use of violence over time developed into a civil war, with strong religious and ethnic overtones.¹⁷¹

Overcoming this type of guerrilla organisation requires, in practice, *protracted warfare* if the state-controlled forces are to have any hope whatsoever of succeeding. Furthermore, it became increasingly more important that there was a growing feeling

169 Joes (1996), pp.138–141. An example: The greatest threat to the Sandinistas was probably the democratic reform movement in Nicaragua. If it had succeeded while the Sandinistas were still getting established in the mountains, the cause of the insurgency would have been neutralised. It is important to remember that in many developing countries, the umbrella that the people gather under is often a 'strong man' – or an occupying power. In the case of *ethnic* insurgent movements, the enemy's political system is normally *not* of decisive importance for the end of the war.

170 See, for example, one of the early, more realistic, descriptions of the negative development: Stratfor, 'Iraq: The Implications of a United Insurgency', *Marxist-leninist-list*, *The Mail Archive*, 6 October 2004, <http://www.mail-archive.com/marxist-leninist-list@lists.econ.utah.edu/msg04490.html>.

171 Kilcullen (2009). See his description of what led up to the so-called 'Surge' in Iraq in 2007, pp.116–119, 133–143.

among the American and European public that the war in Iraq had gone on more than long enough, and that it was already time to withdraw.¹⁷² A desire like this – to be able to get back home quickly – stands in clear contrast to what we may learn from the historical experiences of similar insurgencies. This type of complicated war will normally be protracted: especially so in the case of Iraq after sympathy had been established for the insurgents among the country's Sunni Muslims. Additionally, the insurgent groups had changed their strategy on the basis of new experiences. It was, for example, not very likely that they would again attempt to defend large population centres like the city of Fallujah.¹⁷³ As Iraq historically is split into three different 'cultural areas' – Sunni, Shia and Kurds, and also has other minorities – there is much to suggest that it will be difficult to find a new political foundation that will unite the nation. Violent attacks between the three main ethnic groups became part of day-to-day warfare in Iraq, especially from 2005, and it became obvious that the country could be overtaken by a civil war once the occupying power pulled out. Some thought that after the Americans and their Western allies had pulled out, peace would come. During 2010, we saw the opposite – in fact, the civil war may break out again, as there seems to be no political will to find permanent political solutions. The front lines in a possible new round of civil war may consist of Sunni Muslims and Shiite Muslim groups in Baghdad and southern Iraq. In the north, battles may break out between Sunni Muslim groups and the Kurdish *Peshmerga* militia.¹⁷⁴

As the last part of this description of the different forms of theoretical models we may use when dealing with insurgencies, I will present the following models for fighting against an insurgency. The two primary approaches are called *enemy-centric* and *population-centric* in today's American literature. I will here use the description developed by Metin Turcan, published in the blog smallwarsjournal.com in March 2011.¹⁷⁵ According to Turcan his aim was to (...) 'attack many "dogmas" [that] currently exist in the COIN literature'. He also wanted to 'challenge traditional COIN

172 At a press conference in the summer of 2003, Rumsfeld denied that the U.S. had plans to keep its forces in Iraq for two years. By 2005, the two years had passed, and the Americans could not see any possibility of a quick withdrawal. See, for example, the article written by David S. Cloud & Eric Schmitt, 'U.S. General Sees No Ebb in Fight', *The New York Times*, 24 June 2005.

173 Ricks (2006), pp. 330–41, 343–45, 358–59, 398–406.

174 It is a kind of paradox that the Sunni Muslim insurgents, who, due to their attacks on the two other ethnic groups, are increasing ethnic antagonism, would probably be the weakest party in such a conflict. Shi'ite Muslims constitute between 60–65 per cent of the population and would be very likely to count on assistance from the neighbouring country Iran in the event of any new civil war. In 2005, the Kurdish Peshmerga militia already constituted a strong force of an estimated 100,000 soldiers, according to 'Q&A: Iraq's Militias', *The New York Times*, June 9, 2005, http://www.nytimes.com/cft/international/slot2_060905.html?scp=3&sq=peshmerga&st=cse.

175 Metin Turcan, 'Seeing the Other Side of the COIN: A Critique of the Current Counterinsurgency (COIN) Strategies in Afghanistan', *Small Wars Journal*, 12 March 2011, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/seeing-the-other-side-of-the-coin-a-critique-of-the-current-counterinsurgency-coin-strategi>.

wisdom available in the literature’ and ‘aims to lay out a different perspective regarding the COIN efforts in rural areas at the tactical level, a rarely studied level from COIN perspective’. Metin Turcan wrote:

Enemy-Centric Approach

The first one is the enemy-centric or direct approach the utmost aim of which is to destroy the will of the insurgents to fight by neutralizing their capabilities both in the recruitment phase and in the fighting, or put simply this is “the approach of killing mosquitoes.” In this kinetically-based approach, COIN forces use attrition warfare and focus their efforts, or all killing power, on annihilating the insurgents by killing or capturing them. In fact, the idea of an enemy-centric approach came from Clausewitz, one of leading military strategists of modern times. The enemy-centric approach, which he described in his famous book, On War, has been facilitated as the primary doctrine by modern armies, and eventually it has been the foundation of military strategy, force structuring, and training for decades. This Clausewitzian doctrine, has, therefore, turned out to be the core principle, around which modern armies are built. Because traditional wisdom consider insurgency a deviant form of war, traditional COIN strategies and smallwarsjournal.com doctrines are based on the same notion as the more general approach to war. When conventional direct approach applied to the COIN, therefore, the focal assumption is that COIN forces should find and isolate insurgents first, and then focus its killing power on insurgent’s decisive point. In David Kilcullen’s words, this approach could be summarized with the motto of “first defeat the enemy, and all else will follow.” Furthermore, following Clausewitzian view which postulates that war is essentially and inherently political, traditional wisdom on COIN solely focuses on the political causes and dimensions of insurgency, and tends to omit other dynamics such as socio-cultural and economic ones that may drive an insurgency.¹⁷⁶

According to Turcan, if the counterinsurgents choose the enemy-centric approach, the best military tactic is to launch a search and destroy mission, because a ‘search and destroy mission is the tactical offensive method which is employed by ground and aerial military forces in short durations to contact, attack, exploit and pursuit the enemy. The utmost aim of this method is to develop a situation to establish a direct fire contact or regain it with the insurgents.’¹⁷⁷ Turcan described the other *primary approach* as a ‘population-centric approach’ and outlined the ideas behind this approach in the following way:

¹⁷⁶ Turcan (2011).

¹⁷⁷ Turcan (2011).

Population-Centric Approach

The second primary approach is the population-centric one which mainly targets the coerced supporters and innocent bystanders, and aims to control the population. Or put simply this is “the approach of draining the swamp.” According to this approach, if the objective of establishing control over the population and the environment in which the people live can be achieved, then the insurgents would be deprived from shelter, supply, recruitment, more importantly moral legitimacy. Among the followers of this approach, Galula proposes that COINs are not only primarily military conflicts but also a combination of socio-political, economic and military ones. He also suggests four laws in the implementation of an effective COIN strategy. These are;

- The aim of the war is to gain control of the population rather than control of the territory,*
- Most of the population will be natural in conflict; support of the masses can be obtained with the act of active friendly minority,*
- Support of the population may be lost. The population should be efficiently protected to allow it to cooperate without fear of retribution by the insurgents,*
- Order enforcement should be done progressively, that is, removing insurgents, gaining support of the locals, building infrastructure, and setting long-term relationship with the local population. (...) ¹⁷⁸*

According to Turcan, some other important arguments are:

(...) In the same vein, General David Petraeus explicitly states that; The decisive terrain is the human terrain. The people are the centre of gravity. Only by providing them security and earning their trust and confidence can the Afghan government and ISAF prevail. To win the support and legitimacy of the local populace, or to win their hearts and minds, the COIN forces should apply unconventional approaches, which would generally be hard to explain with traditional military wisdom. The term ‘hearts’ represents the emotive component, which indicates that the victory of the COIN forces will best serve the long term interests of the local populace. The term “minds” represents cognitive component, which indicates that the COIN forces will win the war eventually, and therefore, to side with the COIN forces would be the better choice for the local populace.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ Turcan (2011), see especially p. 6.

¹⁷⁹ Turcan (2011), p. 7. According to David Kilcullen, ‘neither concept [winning hearts or winning minds] has to do with whether people like you. Calculated self-interest, not emotion is what counts.’ David Kilcullen, ‘Twenty Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-Level Counterinsurgency’, *IO sphere 2006 Summer*, Air University, 2006, http://www.au.af.mil/info-ops/iosphere/iosphere_summer06_kilcullen.pdf.

Turcan wrote about ‘hearts and minds’ in this way:

To win the hearts and minds of the local populace, the population-centric approach should include;

- *Separation of insurgents from the populace,*
- *Securing the populace against the threats of the insurgents,*
- *Establishment or strengthening of existing governing institutions to be legitimate in the eyes of the populace,*
- *Establishment of the rule of law, or a just social order.*¹⁸⁰

There is obviously no ‘perfect solution’ here. Both methods may be used in a conflict, but the *local conditions* should always be taken into consideration. A good intelligence picture is always needed, and this is normally difficult to achieve when countering different forms of rebellions or insurgencies.

2.2.6. The importance of intelligence

In a complicated war situation, as irregular wars normally are one becomes entirely dependent on good intelligence if one is to have any hope of military success – it is vital if one is to succeed in bringing the situation under control. In this context, it is important to emphasise that military intelligence in connection with, for example, counterinsurgency must take a very different form than with regard to conventional warfare. Basically, different priorities will be required if one is to have success in this type of warfare compared with conventional circumstances. Standard intelligence procedures such as ‘intelligence preparations of the battlefield’ (IPB) and ‘order-of-battle’ (OOB) built up around counting and organising the enemies’ heavy materiel into organization sheets are not perfectly suited to the analysis of a COIN environment, and the intelligence staff is forced to adapt the procedures to the local situation.¹⁸¹

Electronic-based intelligence, with its emphasis on measuring and establishing electronic signals, also needs to be reorganised significantly before it can function effectively in the context of irregular warfare. Experiences from Afghanistan and Iraq in particular dictate that, at a lower level, i.e. for intelligence officers at battalion and brigade (S2) and division levels (G2), one must adopt a different mindset than in ‘traditional’ manoeuvre-based conventional warfare. Here, it is oneself that is *statically* misplaced in an area, and the mission is to try to avoid major acts of violence directed against oneself or the local administration and population. Naturally, other rules of play also apply, and it has clearly proved difficult to change these. Here, one should

¹⁸⁰ Turcan (2011), p. 7.

¹⁸¹ See U.S. Army, FM 34–130, Chapter 3.

perhaps try to 'reinvent' and further develop some pattern of operations that one has tried to follow during the many *peace support operations*.¹⁸² In this type of lengthy guerrilla conflict, S2 and G2 sections will have more than enough to do trying to create a *local picture* of who has power, who actually rules the housing districts and who is related to whom. And, obviously, both ethnic and religious factors in particular must be taken into consideration. This often has more similarities to how normal *police* work functions rather than traditional field intelligence.¹⁸³

In an article in *Foreign Affairs* on developments in Iraq, James Dobbins has taken as his starting point his earlier experiences as a special envoy to other conflict areas, such as Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Somalia. Under the heading 'Picking the Right Battle', he describes the challenges faced in connection with interventions: Counterinsurgency campaigns require the close integration of civil and military efforts, moreover, with primacy given to political objectives over military goals. They require detailed tactical intelligence, which can be developed only by Iraqis and is best gathered by a police force in daily contact with the population. Training the Iraqi police and building a counter-terrorist 'special branch' within it should, according to Dobbins, take priority over all other capacity-building programmes, including the creation of an Iraqi military.¹⁸⁴

If I am not mistaken, Dobbins' advice was almost the opposite of what the Americans did in Iraq until the end of 2005. The police forces seemed to have a lower priority than the development of the Iraqi military forces. The methods that have been shown to provide success in this type of warfare, according to Dobbins, clearly have many similarities to attempts in Western cities today to combat organised criminal networks or drug rings.¹⁸⁵ According to Dobbins, any success they have had has been based on culture and language skills, the development of matrices charting 'who-socialises-with-who', several forms of (electronic-based) network analyses (including mobile phone tapping), cultural analyses, analyses of money transactions, etc. Experience from the wars of the last 10 years should give the intelligence people a good platform to build on. If the counterinsurgency practitioners are able to collect and organise the results of the information gathering efforts, there should not be serious problems in creating an overview of the local population, for example who have been hired in or given management positions, etc. Are they loyal to those they work for, or have they instead been

182 Timothy L. Thomas, 'Preventing Conflict Through Information Technology', *Military Review*, December 1998/January-February 1999, pp. 44–57. Timothy L. Thomas, 'IT Requirements for Peacekeeping', *Military Review* September–October 2001, p. 29. The articles give a good overall insight into American thinking about the Balkan situation while they were still heavily involved in the Balkans.

183 Lester W. Grau, 'Guerrillas, Terrorists, and Intelligence Analysis', *Military Review*, July–August 2004.

184 James Dobbins, 'Iraq: Winning the Unwinnable War', *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2005, p. 19.

185 See, for example, Nils Marius Rekkedal and Niklas Zetterling, *Grundbok i operationskonst: utvecklingen i operationskonsten och dess teorier*, translated by Elsa Johansson and Cecilia Winblad (Stockholm: Krigsvetenskapliga institutionen, Försvarshögskolan 2004), pp. 258–264. (Cf., also the statement from the FBI agent Colleen Rowley, who, following 9/11 went out publicly and stated that al-Qaeda should be fought against in the same way as the Mafia.)

‘planted’ by the insurgents? The latter is, as previously indicated, a prerequisite in order for the insurgents’ own organisation to be able to obtain the intelligence *they* need in order to avoid being effectively defeated by the regime’s security forces.

In the real world, it is always extremely demanding to accomplish what has been briefly described above. Much depends on to what extent local military commanders and civilian leaders are able to operationalise the gathering and analysis of the information that will be required, and achieve reasonable cooperation with the local police forces (this depends largely on their own training background). Many of the U.S. Marine Corps’ troops and company commanders in Iraq, and today in Afghanistan, have been reservists with a background as police officers in U.S. cities. Some have actively tried to adapt their own police experiences to the situation in Iraq or Afghanistan, and there are several good examples of more cautious and non-violent approaches being more successful than the use of military resources.¹⁸⁶ Efficient security forces will normally also encourage better relations with the local population, something that again increases the opportunities for better local intelligence, with a consequently improved understanding of the situation over time. For example, in his description of local factors, David Galula emphasised the importance of the civilian police. He wrote as follows about the role of the local police:

The eye and the arm of the government in all matters pertaining to internal order, the police are obviously a key factor in the early stages of an insurgency; they are the first counter-insurgent organization that has to be infiltrated and neutralized.

*Their efficiency depends on their numerical strength, the competency of their members, their loyalty toward the government, and, last but not least, on the backing they get from the other branches of the government – particularly the judicial system. If insurgents, though identified and arrested by the police, take advantage of the many normal safeguards built into the judicial system and are released, the police can do little. Prompt adaptation of the judicial system to the extraordinary conditions of the insurgency, an agonizing problem at best, is a necessity.*¹⁸⁷

Historically, it has also proved to be the case that it is of limited effectiveness to make extensive use of electronic means of gathering intelligence when the adversary is recruiting peasants who are not normally dependent on electronic means of communication. An equally serious problem is that many of those who are willing to cooperate

¹⁸⁶ The author has a collection of documents that gives an overview of the developments in the security situation in the two countries from 2005 to 2011.

¹⁸⁷ Galula (1965), p. 31.

with Western forces often have their own agendas. They are often seeking to do so in order to get the opportunity to line their own pockets, either through corruption or pure theft from government funds or international aid.

Even if one works hard to collect information with alternative means, instead of relying on traditional forms of field intelligence, it has often proved difficult to create a sufficiently good intelligence picture to be able to attack and possibly defeat the actual insurgent groups. It has been possible to destroy certain groups, but there is much to suggest that the insurgents' networks are nevertheless becoming increasingly stronger in, for example, Iraq. An important factor here is that an intelligence officer with a Western background will need a long time to penetrate the 'local laws' that apply in, for example, a Sunni Muslim environment still heavily dominated by tribes and clan thinking. And by the time that the person in question has begun to understand some of what is going on around him, his period of service in the war zone will often be over and he will be sent home.

Another point is that, in a war-ravaged country like Afghanistan, it is almost hopeless to try to draw up traditional 'Order-of-Battle' outlines with the associated organisational outlines that are vital aids to traditional field intelligence developed for conventional warfare. Drawing up this type of overview will normally be more or less a 'work of art', and this type of information has often proved to be of little tangible value in the actual combating of the insurgency. What we are talking about here is the mapping of networks, which is in itself a far more demanding task than structuring hierarchical models. The analogy with ordinary police work is probably useful again. If organised gangs or well-organised criminal groups are to be exposed and combated, a special approach to the problems is required. As this does not involve 'ordinary' (often unorganised) criminals, one must adopt a different mindset if one's side is to make progress. Normally, in connection with the combating of well-organised criminals, the police aim to find out who is involved in which gang/group, which parts of the city/district the individual gang controls, what weapons they have, what tactics they prefer to use and how they normally conduct themselves. Similar techniques can be employed to 'separate the insurgents from ordinary citizens', to paraphrase Chairman Mao's old notion of 'fish and water'. It must also be clarified what information is actually needed and what information is *unnecessary* with regard to counterinsurgency. The format of intelligence reports is then tailored to ensure that really important information reaches the different types of users.

Culture obviously has a significant influence on attitudes and the operational pattern one chooses to employ. Consequently, in practice, there is little chance of being successful if the intelligence personnel involved in the counterinsurgency do not have good language and cultural skills themselves or at least access to loyal people with these skills. An insight into the local culture and history is almost essential for real

success in this type of war. Ideally, in all battalions and brigades, one should have a good supply of this type of expertise in local knowledge and, if possible, also at a lower level. This type of expertise is often a commodity in short supply. Furthermore, earlier practice indicates that such operations specialists have normally been concentrated at a high level (often at corps headquarters or higher). Access to this type of expertise is obviously not enough to ensure victory when combating an insurgency in which foreign troops are heavily involved; however, in practice, it is almost impossible to achieve success unless this form of expertise is available and functions well. One aspect of using locally recruited interpreters is that they will naturally enough have their own local loyalties to think about. Interpreters who operate in their local environment can often have problems with local rulers if they do not act loyally towards them. We see here that the very fact that one is interested in recruiting local people can also lead to other problems. These matters should, in any case, always be thought through when considering employing the services of locally recruited interpreters.

Both Iraq and Afghanistan have lengthy and relatively 'militant' traditions – this has clearly been an operational factor in Iraq and is a particularly interesting feature with regard to Afghanistan. The environment has developed attitudes in the population where, as part of their own ordinary strategy for survival, they have learned to avoid problems either by trying to evade, confuse or outmanoeuvre their adversaries. Loyalty is not permanent here, except to one's own family, clan or other close and long-lasting connections. In Afghanistan, you may hear the saying: 'You cannot buy an Afghan, just rent him.' Another interesting point to make is that because of their strong loyalty to their own clan, people tend to hold their tongue until the clan leader gives his permission to talk to 'outsiders'. This is, of course, a problem in connection with the collection of intelligence. It is also very important to have access to well-trained analysts – information is of limited value for military and political operations unless it is evaluated by properly trained analysts.¹⁸⁸

It also proved to be the case in Iraq that the census data was quite worthless when preparations began for the first so-called free election (2005) of the new national assembly in the country. As regards the preparations for the election, the Americans supporting the new Iraqi administration had to create a new list based on sources as dissimilar as Ba'ath party membership records, police lists, military rolls and various local municipal or religious lists. It was on this basis that they later developed the foundation for the electoral register used during the 2005 election. Such census data is in itself important *intelligence data* when one seeks to develop a strategy to combat an ongoing insurgency. But the most important information about who is who and who actually makes the decisions in a given area may perhaps be better uncovered

188 Based on Anthony H. Cordesman, *The Lessons of Afghanistan: War Fighting, Intelligence, and Force Transformation* (Washington, D.C.: The CSIS Press, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2002), see especially Chapters 3 and 4.

using anthropological methods, that is, by studying family ties, drawing up matrices of who associates and trades with who and particularly by finding out who controls the local cash flow. As previously indicated, it is necessary to develop and employ modern police methods if success is to be achieved, as local knowledge based on information from the local population has historically proved to be perhaps the most important individual factor regarding effective counterinsurgency. (Both Galula and Trinquier described these problems in their books.) And when the necessary intelligence picture has been created, it is obviously a prerequisite that one possesses well-trained forces that can quickly and effectively move in and neutralise or arrest known insurgents. But the type of technique described above only works if one has good local knowledge and these techniques are not always useful when one is attempting to expose foreign infiltrators or, for example, border crossers. In the last two cases, an effective and non-corrupt border control system is probably the most important factor, along with a requirement that everyone must have, and possibly carry around, valid identification papers.¹⁸⁹

In the case of Iraq, they had to assume that identification papers from the old Saddam regime were not reliable. Of course, the implementation of a new system for identifying the population cannot be carried out by often corrupt, and often infiltrated, local security forces. During the phase in which new ID papers are registered and issued, there is always a great danger of the insurgents being able to obtain false or dual identities. In this context, it is also important for intelligence work that one has good maps and knows something about who really owns land and buildings. Such information, together with analysis work and an insight into how the local or key leaders think, will always be important for a successful counterinsurgency. Identifying the *secret* supporters of the insurgents/terrorists when combating an urban guerrilla, has much in common with good detective work done by police. The questions one usually asks the informants are:

1. Who is this person? (The *identity* of a person is to be investigated – leaders of insurgencies and terror or insurgent organisations often have several aliases.)
2. Who does the person usually associate with?
3. Who is (or are) the person's closest working partner(s)?
4. What is his actual background?
5. Which people are closely related to the person in question and where do they live?
6. Allies willing to be involved (and/or who can be assumed to be loyal to whom)?

¹⁸⁹ Based on Anthony H. Cordesman, *Iraq's Evolving Insurgency: The Nature of Attacks and Patterns and Cycles in the Conflict* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, Working Draft, Revised 2 February 2006), pp. 35–48. Anthony H. Cordesman, 'Shaping the Future of Counterinsurgency Warfare: A Strategic Approach' (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, Updated as of 29 November 2005), pp. 7–16.

The Americans constantly state that good intelligence, a better capacity for *joint* and *combined* operations, and better cooperation between the many intelligence organisations and the CIA in particular should be combined with increased flexibility/adaptability to carry out so-called '*just in time*' operations.¹⁹⁰ Developing, systematising and classifying such large amounts of data is a demanding and often not very exciting job for those given this task; however, without being able to develop this classification and using it, it is extremely difficult, particularly in large cities, to find and overcome well-organised terrorist and guerrilla groups.¹⁹¹ Here, good computer support and adapted software are a prerequisite for effective work. The data will, in turn, be used as the basis for analysis work, provide the basis for how one should prioritise police and military efforts and provide the foundations for the evaluation of threats and so-called 'force protection', etc.

This is nothing new. As early as in the 1970s, according to Mark Urban, British intelligence developed a system of archive pictures of houses in Republican areas of Northern Ireland. Soldiers who were to examine these houses could, by means of this system, find out whether the house had a cellar and how the various items of furniture were arranged. Eventually, this information was stored on computers along with information on matters such as the movements of suspected IRA terrorists.¹⁹² But British intelligence probably had more resources and time per insurgent in Northern Ireland than the Americans and NATO forces have in today's Afghanistan.

On 12 September 1992, Peruvian intelligence swooped on a house in the capital, Lima. After thorough intelligence work, which included the monitoring and analysis of household waste from the house, they managed to arrest the Maoist guerrilla's uncontested leader, 'President Gonzalo'. This would prove to be a decisive blow against the guerrilla forces, which were extremely dependent on this leader figure.¹⁹³

As previously demonstrated, there is a particularly great need for intelligence in connection with all forms of counterinsurgency. Intelligence has always been an extremely demanding and dangerous job for those carrying out these tasks in a counterinsurgency. It is also clear that this type of intelligence work is, in reality, very different from the type of field intelligence work that is normally carried out at a tactical and

190 Direct access to detailed quality information at lower levels from 'Other Government Agencies' (OGA), such as the CIA, paramilitary forces and Special Forces, is becoming more and more important in the U.S. military system. For an interesting description of the new way of doing intelligence operations, see Robin Moore's *Hunting Down Saddam: The Inside Story of the Search and Capture*, Foreword by Mark Vargas (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004), last chapter, pp. 227–257.

191 A possible problem is the traditional way of organising Western S2 and G2 sections in the headquarters at battalion, brigade and divisional level, which are designed to function well in modern conventional warfare. In counterinsurgency war, analysing many 'bits and pieces' coming in from a lot of different sources requires a robust staffing. One needs to tailor the staff according to the actual needs in the different conflicts.

192 Mark Urban, *Big Boys' Rules: SAS and the Secret Struggle against the IRA* (London: Faber and Faber, 2001), pp. 116–117.

193 More systematic presentations of successful collection and analysis methods are described in two articles. See, for instance, Colleen McCue, Emily S. Stone and Teresa P. Gooch, 'Data Mining and Value-Added Analysis', *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, November 2003, pp. 3–4. See also the article written by Farnaz Fassihi, 'Two Novice Gumshoes Charted the Capture of Saddam Hussein', *The Wall Street Journal*, 18 January 2004, p. 1.

operational level in connection with conventional warfare. One main difference is that the guerrilla war is normally of a lengthy duration and this form of conflict takes its character from the local community it occurs in. Obviously, modern technology and the greater use of police collection and analysis methods can serve as good aids. These measures, combined with traditional collection methods such as patrols and the use of agents, contribute overall to the necessary intelligence picture. It is important for the local population to be able to tip off the authorities without having to walk into a police station or be seen talking to a patrol. This is usually done by means of a system using an anonymous 'tip-off phone'. The obvious danger is that this will be abused in private vendettas. However, if one is dealing with a sophisticated insurgent movement, the latter will make sure that the tip-off phone is inundated with false tips.

As already indicated, a large amount of different data is required in order to be able to organise and lead an effective counterinsurgency and this data must be classified and analysed. Finally, one must have the will and ability to strike and render harmless (or at least neutralise) the insurgent groups and leaders one is up against. There is also good reason to take note of the following wise words of Karen Armstrong:

*Precise intelligence is essential in any conflict. It is important to know who our enemies are, but equally crucial to know who they are not. It is even more vital to avoid turning potential friends into foes. By making the disciplined effort to name our enemies correctly, we will learn more about them, and come one step nearer, perhaps, to solving the seemingly intractable and increasingly perilous problems of our divided world.*¹⁹⁴

Gradually, as more information about the planning of the Iraq War in 2003 has emerged, it has proved to be the case that the American side had clearly not undertaken the necessary consideration of how they would tackle the period after the actual war was won. The major European colonial powers, and from the late 1950s also the United States, conducted many lengthy so-called COIN campaigns from the 1940s to the 1970s. In Vietnam and elsewhere in South-East Asia, in Africa and in Latin America, a series of wars were conducted during the entire period mentioned – and some of these wars are still ongoing. Theoretically, we should have a great stock of historical experiences to make use of, but it has often proved difficult to learn from the earlier mistakes of others. Some of the previous lessons will, however, be emphasised later in this book.

In the aftermath of the apparently effective conventional war against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq in the spring of 2003, it has proved difficult to create new, stable political and economic development in the country. The U.S. was at the head of a broad coalition in which Great Britain was the only other Western state contributing

¹⁹⁴ Karen Armstrong, 'The label of Catholic terror was never used about the IRA', *The Guardian*, 11 July 2005.

large military efforts in Iraq. The other participating states were all making smaller military contributions.

2.3. The term irregular warfare

2.3.1. Introduction

Here we will give a broad description of the term irregular warfare. The term was already introduced earlier in this chapter, but here we will look more thoroughly into the theories behind the term. The use of the term has been more common during the last few years, but it is not a completely new term. In the U.S. document *Irregular Warfare: Countering Irregular Threats. Joint Operating Concept* published in May 2010, the authors wrote in the Executive Summary:

*Since the original version of the Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept was approved in September 2007, the understanding of irregular warfare has continued to evolve. Battlefield experience, further reflection, and official guidance led to the decision to update the concept in advance of the normal revision cycle. Events such as joint and Service war games, workshops, seminars, and joint experimentation have all contributed to the development of thinking about irregular warfare.*¹⁹⁵

On page 3 of the document, the doctrine writers stated:

The approach in detail: The approach to the problem is to prevent, deter, disrupt, or defeat irregular threats. Prevention is the primary focus of effort, since it is preferable to deal with incipient threats and the conditions that give rise to them. Once a threat is manifest the joint force will aim to deter, disrupt, or defeat it.

There are principally five activities or operations that are undertaken in sequence, in parallel, or in blended form in a coherent campaign to address irregular threats: counterterrorism (CT), unconventional warfare (UW), foreign internal defense (FID)⁷, counterinsurgency (COIN), and stability operations (SO).¹⁹⁶ In addition to these five core activities, there are a host of key

¹⁹⁵ U.S. Department of Defense, *Irregular Warfare: Countering Irregular Threats*. Joint Operating Concept, (JOC) v. 2.0. The U.S. Joint Forces Command and U.S. Special Operations Command coauthored this concept, published 17 May 2010. p. 3.

¹⁹⁶ (Note 8 in the original text says): 'These five activities and operations are not listed in an effort to suggest sequence or a linear phasing model. This concept advocates the execution of these five activities in concert with one another to achieve the desired ends.'

*related activities including strategic communications, information operations of all kinds, psychological operations, civil-military operations, and support to law enforcement, intelligence, and counterintelligence operations in which the joint force may engage to counter irregular threats.*¹⁹⁷

Or as written in Chapter 3 of the same U.S. document:

3. The Irregular Warfare Problem

In the 21st century's complex operating environment, adaptive adversaries present irregular threats that seriously challenge military-only responses in what are essentially contests for influence and legitimacy. Irregular threats including terrorists, insurgents, and criminal networks are enmeshed in the population and are increasingly empowered by astute use of communications, cyberspace, and technology to extend their reach regionally and globally. Subversion and terrorism are not readily countered by military means alone, justas legitimacy and influence cannot be achieved solely by rapid, decisive application of military power.

*Since the problem is not purely a military one, the approach is also not purely military. Due to the nature of these complex and amorphous threats, these contests are unlikely to end with decisive military victory. Success will more often be defined by long-term involvement to remedy, reduce, manage, or mitigate the conflict and its causes. The joint force thus must find multidimensional approaches in tandem with other partners to solve them, when directed by the President to do so.*¹⁹⁸

The three quotes above clearly indicate that the United States' military thinking today has come a long way if compared with the 'almost lost war' against the insurgencies in Iraq in the period 2003 to 2006.

2.3.2. Defining the term irregular warfare

In the many new doctrine documents published in the last three to four years seeking to regulate ongoing U.S. and NATO operations, the description of the term irregular warfare changes from document to document. But in most of the documents used as sources here, irregular warfare is described as some kind of *violent struggle* between so-called *non-state actors* and a state, but also state actors may use *irregular warfare*

¹⁹⁷ U.S. Department of Defense, JOC (2010), p. 4.

¹⁹⁸ U.S. Department of Defense, JOS (2010), p. 14.

against both non-state actors and another state. This use of violence is most common if the 'hostile state' is supporting an active insurgency in the threatened state. An irregular campaign may be sponsored by neighbouring states or states supporting the insurgents. This may create a very complicated international situation, as for example in the Eastern Congo, involving at one time the military participation of six different African states plus UN peacekeeping forces. Such state-sponsored insurgencies are therefore more difficult to counter due to the extra dimension of international political forums, such as the UN.

These kinds of broad and maybe also imprecise forms of conflict include, for example, insurgency, counterinsurgency and perhaps also so-called unconventional warfare as important parts of the ongoing warfare. The important point here is that different kinds of irregular forces normally will be part of these conflicts. It is also important that the reader understands that today also *conventional* military forces normally play an important part in this kind of warfare – especially in counterinsurgency. Historically this is nothing new. For example the Chinese military theorist Sun Zu (Sun Tzu) described this as a way of using limited resources against well-equipped forces.

What then is the main difference between traditional state-owned conventional forces and their operations, and operations performed by irregular forces? There may be more differences, but here we will look especially at two approaches to the problem:

1. Irregular warfare differs from conventional/regular warfare in that it takes what the British military thinker Liddell Hart called an indirect approach, i.e. if they are well-led, the irregular forces avoid a direct military confrontation with the enemy's conventional (heavy) forces. The insurgents will combine the use of different forms of irregular forces (for example, guerrilla forces), and will use indirect and often unconventional methods to subvert/exhaust the enemy and his supporters. Use of different forms of terrorism is very common – normally used against persons looked upon as 'enemies of the good cause', or more indiscriminately against the population as a whole. (Terror is very often used against groups from a different ethnic background or against people belonging to a different religion or ideology.)
2. The use of terror is normally an important 'weapon' in almost all kinds of irregular warfare. Irregular warfare takes place among or within the population. Normally this kind of conflict is waged not to secure so-called military supremacy but to take over the political power in a population. Military power can contribute to the resolution of this kind of conflict, but it will rarely be decisive in the conflict. Today, we normally consider that the use of military power may create the necessary security, including the political conditions

necessary to arrive at a solution to the conflict. It is here important to note that it is the combination of all the state's different instruments of power that *together* influence the outcome of the conflict.

In the FM 3–0, *Operations* doctrine published in 2008, the American doctrine writers divided *irregular warfare* into five groupings. How to explain (and divide) the term will always be open for discussion/debate, but it is possible to describe some important points from FM 3–0 in the following manner:

3. Foreign internal defence (FID), i.e. participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programmes taken by another government or other designated organisation to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness and insurgency.
4. Support to counterinsurgency, i.e. indirect support emphasises host-nation self-sufficiency. Such support builds strong national infrastructures through economic and military capabilities, etc.
5. Counterinsurgency comprises those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency (see the Joint level document JP 1-02). The U.S. doctrine document FM 3–24 describes COIN in some detail.
6. Combating terrorism comprises actions, including antiterrorism (*defensive* measures taken to reduce vulnerability to terrorist acts) and counterterrorism (CT) (*offensive* measures taken to prevent, deter and respond to terrorism), taken to oppose terrorism throughout the entire threat spectrum (see JP 3-07.2).
7. Unconventional warfare is a broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted through, with or by indigenous or surrogate forces that are organised, trained, equipped, supported and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes, but is not limited to, guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities and unconventional assisted recovery. Within the U.S. military, conduct of unconventional warfare is a highly specialised special operations force mission.¹⁹⁹

As described in the five points above, it is important to try to understand the different terms used for the different forms of what may be called 'keeping the state safe'. The American definitions mentioned above do not say much about the term *subversion* or *subversive warfare*. But use of *subversion* was undoubtedly an important factor during the Second World War (1939 to 1945). During this war, different forms of propaganda and sabotage were used, aiming at the *subversion* of the opposing side. Use of *subversive warfare* was in accord with an ancient principle of war, laid down by the classical Chinese military thinker Sun Zi. One of his views about how to conduct

¹⁹⁹ FM 3-0 (2008), pp.2–10 to 2–13. (The U.S. document JP 3–05 contains doctrine on unconventional warfare.)

war was that the supreme art of generalship is to subdue the enemy without any (big) battles.²⁰⁰

All the most important war leaders during the Second World War (all being politicians) paid close attention to propaganda, in which it was important to despise their opponents and call them criminal warmongers, etc. Examples of two important techniques used during the Second World War are:

1. The press (newspapers) was always the principal formative influence on public opinion, and was strictly controlled by all states involved.
2. Broadcasting by radio was important and more effective than the use of leaflets and the underground press in occupied Europe. This was mostly the 'pre-TV age', and radio broadcasting became the essential wartime news medium. It provided news much faster, if less permanently, than any newspaper. In all the warring nations, the government exercised control over what was broadcast, particularly news items.

Leaflet-dropping by the Allied forces went on all through the Second World War, even after the use of heavy air bombardments against Germany became common. (Leaflet-dropping was practised by all the major powers.) Both sides also made frequent use of forged pamphlets:

1. They were called *black propaganda*, because the texts were inadmissible by the government that produced them. Black propaganda depended largely on lies and deceit.²⁰¹
2. So-called *white propaganda* was based on facts, albeit *distorted* to favour the *propaganda* being disseminated.²⁰²

Another useful medium for influencing opinion was film. Films could also be used directly as propaganda vehicles. The Americans called political warfare *psychological warfare* – a term still in use. *Subversive agents* might have specific tasks like sabotage of purely military or industrial importance, or agents could be given more general tasks – i.e. more political aims. One further subversive influence over public opinion

200 Sun Zi, *The Art of War*, Research and Reinterpretation by J.H. Huang (New York, NY: William Morrow and Company, Inc, 1993).

201 Black propaganda purports to emanate from a source other than the true one. This type of propaganda is associated with covert psychological operations. Lewinson, William A., An Introduction to propaganda, 1999, *The Stentorian*, <http://www.stentorian.com/propagan.html>. Black propaganda pretends to be from a friendly source, but is actually from an adversary and is intended to deceive its audience. 'Propaganda', *SourceWatch*, <http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Propaganda>.

202 White propaganda is issued from an acknowledged source. This type of propaganda is associated with overt psychological operations. Lewinson (1999). White propaganda generally comes from an openly identified source and is not intentionally deceptive. 'Propaganda', *SourceWatch*.

was available, as it had been for centuries: the sermon, in church, chapel, temple or mosque. Religion was still an important tool, and still is in many countries.²⁰³

The use of subversive agents was another technique. The training, dispatch and control of *subversive* agents were the task of several wartime secret services, for example the British SOE, the American *Office of Strategic Services* (OSS), the German *Sicherheitsdienst* and *Abwehr*, and the Soviet NKVD (later renamed to KGB). Their tasks were to be distinguished sharply from those of spies and intelligence agents, who in the UK and sometimes in the USSR had different controlling bodies, i.e. the UK's MI6 and the Soviet Union's GRU. But both the American and the German secret services ultimately came to be controlled by one leader.²⁰⁴

According to the American document JP 3-24, *U.S. Joint COIN Operations*, we see a clear connection between insurgency and subversion – but the doctrine writers did not say much about Western forces using *subversion* as part of, for example, a COIN strategy:

b. Insurgency is an internal threat that uses subversion and violence to reach political ends. Typically the insurgents will solicit or be offered some type of support from state or non-state actors, which can include transnational terrorists who take advantage of the situation for their own benefit. (...)

*c. **Insurgency.** Insurgency is the organized use of subversion and violence by a group or movement that seeks to overthrow or force change of a governing authority. Insurgency can also refer to the group itself. An insurgent is a member of that group. When compared to their adversaries, insurgents generally have strong will but limited means. Although some insurgents have no interest in working within any political system, it is this relative disparity of means that normally drives groups to use insurgency to alleviate core grievances. (...)*²⁰⁵

A good insight into what characterises the different kinds of forces is very important for all officers, soldiers and other civil servants representing a state's power structure.

203 Anthony Rhodes, *Propaganda: the Art of Persuasion: World War II* (London: Angus and Robertson, 1976), pp. 123–126, p. 139, p. 159.

204 Rhodes (1976), pp. 123–126.

205 JP 3-24 (2009), p. I-1.

2.4. May we learn something from earlier insurgencies?

Many people, including the author, sympathise with the relatively common view that one should try to learn from the histories of others and oneself, and especially from mistakes that have previously been made. One problem is, however, that one may succumb to the temptation of drawing *direct* parallels from one historical setting to another.

Since all wars have their own special causes and are always conducted in a given cultural and geographical area, they will also lead to a locally adapted military and political course of events. It is consequently seldom the case that it is possible to directly compare two situations and, if we nevertheless succumb to the temptation of doing this and introduce solutions that worked in a historical situation in a completely different setting, it is most likely that this will not work as hoped.

How do states deal with violent *non-state*/insurgent groups? States often practice the following three general options for conducting the different types of conflict/war that were briefly described earlier:

1. First, the state authorities can try to raise the costs of the insurgents'/non-state actor's violence through punishing them with a strategy of so-called *reciprocal violence* (punishment).
2. Alternatively, they can forgo the interaction of punishing the group and instead attempt to remove the insurgents/terror group by crushing the entity with use of overwhelming force, if an opportunity presents itself.
3. Finally, states can opt for a strategy of accommodation, offering *inducements* as part of an attempt to integrate the group into a non-violent realm of the country's *political* process. Some states may even be observed to attempt more than one of these strategies over the course of their interaction with a particular 'non-state group'.

The success of a particular approach (method) is the product of issues that have earlier not been the subject of detailed study by scholars, but today many new studies of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been published. Maybe we could now talk about a 'Second Counterinsurgency Era'? The American Douglas S. Blaufarb, who served in the CIA for over twenty years, spending long stints in Vietnam and Laos, published his in many ways classic book *The Counterinsurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance 1950 to the Present*, two years after the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. In his analyses of what went wrong in Vietnam, Blaufarb made the following observations:

Thus, in the mid-1970s, very little if anything remained of the analytic structure which constituted the justification for the gravity with which, in the 1960s, the United States had viewed the threat of people's war and the urgency with which it sought to counter it. Rarely has there been so complete a reversal of strategic views and assumptions by a great power within so short a span of time. Many serious observers and analysts now look upon the brief preoccupation with counterinsurgency as an aberration stemming from cold-war fixations combined with the Kennedy style of policy development, a style emphasizing enthusiasm and faddishness at the expense of sober reflection. (...) It is fruitless to speculate what such changes (outside US) might be, but even in today's world, a Communist-sponsored and effective guerrilla insurgency, encouraged by the Russians in, for example, Panama or Mexico, could quickly reawaken U.S. concern.

*(...) In other words, it is imaginable, although far from likely in the near term, that some future White House may become interested in scrutinizing the counterinsurgency experience which we have been at some pains to recount and analyse (...)*²⁰⁶

And the use of COIN came back, but not because of support to insurgent movements from Russia or China. Even the Americans did not completely discontinue the use of COIN during the late 1970s and 1980s. During this period we saw many internal uprisings/civil wars in Latin America, Africa, Asia and even in Europe. Examples are the FARC in Colombia and Gaddafi's Libyan support to the IRA in Northern Ireland, but during this time insurgencies were not the main concern in the NATO area. Maybe this may be looked back upon as the 'Second COIN Era'?

Connected to today's ongoing wars against insurgencies, which may be named the 'Third COIN Era', different forms of Islamist extremism have become probably the most important 'catalyst', though not the only one. There are still insurgencies based on fighting against political repression and social/economic grievances, for example, and cases in which the rebels may have nationalist ambitions. And as Blaufarb discussed more than 30 years ago, counterinsurgency is, after all, essentially *not a military problem*. He wrote that competent and effective military operations are 'a product of a healthy political system in which the army and police avoid behaving like an army of occupation and, instead, place themselves at the side of the people against a common enemy'.²⁰⁷

Beyond the resolve of the state or the violent group, or the direct tactics employed, the source of the motivation of the group plays a direct role in the success of the

206 Blaufarb, (1977), pp. 297–98.

207 Blaufarb (1977), p. 308.

state's strategy. Studying competing explanations of the motivations of violent groups helps answer significant questions about violent conflict. Why do some interactions between states and violent non-state groups persist while others are concluded? This is the puzzle tackled by this project, which is addressed by way of a case study of various Russian attempts to quell insurgency in the province of Chechnya.

As mentioned earlier, every insurgency has its own unique causal connection. That is why the clearly better trained and equipped Western forces have run into trouble in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is important to try to understand the limits of Western power in this kind of warfare. A few thousand fighters lightly armed with a dedicated leadership, a tested ideological platform and a supporting theory, in combination with great patience, may be difficult to destroy with the force structure, and with the many political and military restrictions, Rules of Engagement (ROE), Western forces fight under today. But here we must be careful – and not underestimate the historical realities. As Blaufarb pointed out in 1977: 'Too many have fallen back on the easy excuse that we failed in Indochina because our power was constrained and leashed, that more bombs, more destruction, more firepower was the answer. (...) it is to be hoped that some will be convinced that the failure was one of understanding: an inability to perceive the underlying realities of both our own system and that of the countries into which we thrust our raw strength.'

The leadership of a successful rebellion/insurgency often employs the *power of weakness* to bring the opposing state's population to regard the war as an *abomination* that must be stopped. The American military thinker William S. Lind wrote:

Historians long ago recognized that official decisions, including for war or peace, are vastly more complex events in which non-rational factors play decisive roles. In fact, modern decision theory recognizes not only that decisions made by governments do not follow a "rational" business model, neither do most business decisions. Non-rational, often irrational, considerations dominate both.

*(...) Paradoxically, the more the state is successful in winning on the battlefield by turning its immense, hi-tech firepower on guys in bathrobes who are armed only with rusty World War II rifles, the more it becomes disgusted with itself. The weaker the Fourth Generation enemy is physically, the stronger he is morally. And the moral level is decisive.*²⁰⁸

208 See for example William S. Lind, 'Critics of the Fourth Generation: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly', On War #147, Authors' Archives before Dec. 1, 2007, *Project On Government Oversight, Defense and the National Interest*, http://www.dnipo.org/lind/lind_1_10_06.htm.

Due to the historically very different experiences from one war to the next, it is consequently likely that we can hope to learn something only from more general experiences – and we should also be content with this. When any actual new situation arises, we should carry out a fundamental analysis of the likely unique political, cultural, religious and military conditions before performing any other evaluations and becoming involved in any particular conflict ‘from the outside’. We can see from this that challenges with regard to intelligence in particular will be important if someone from ‘the First World’ considers intervening directly in conflicts in ‘the Third World’. This type of analysis will require much experience of intelligence and access to a whole series of different information and sources, as well as a good ability to be able to analyse these factors in a *relevant* manner.

We should also note that the two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the US, were ‘indirectly at war’ with each other several times after the Second World War even though the two did not have a *direct* military confrontation during the Cold War. The two opposed states would often support the opposing sides as we saw in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. In the period after the Second World War, all great powers, including the newer (regional) ones, such as India and China, have been directly or indirectly involved in local or regional wars in their political area of interest. Also, since the end of the Cold War in 1991, all the world’s great powers have been involved in conflicts. These have typically taken the form of wars with smaller neighbouring states or ethnic separatist movements. Conflicts of the latter variety are still going on in Chechnya, Sudan and Kashmir. Another variant has been where a superpower supports a separatist movement in its locality, such as Russia’s support for the insurgents in Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Moldova after the break-up of the Soviet Union.

2.5. ‘Methods of insurgency’ – a brief overview

If it is appropriate to see *insurgency* as a political phenomenon where the struggle for power is the key element, a whole series of methods that can be used to achieve this goal must exist. Often the basis for the mobilisation of people is a combination of the following factors: ideology, religion,²⁰⁹ a feeling of being subjected to an injustice, ethnicity and a rapid surging groundswell of national identity. A combination of these factors could lead to the formation of a constituency of interest strong enough to provide the recruiting ground for a major insurgency against the authorities and their

209 There are several variants of so-called ‘religious conflicts’. The conflict may be part of a struggle for national identity, as in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation and, later, in Chechnya in today’s Russia. During the conflicts in the Balkans, religious differences were particularly important to the Serbs in their wars against other ethnic groups. A third, and purer, variant of ‘religious conflicts’ is the ‘global religious war’ as al-Qaeda often portrays its struggle against the Western powers and their allies in the Second and Third Worlds.

forces. Seen in isolation, ideology is hardly of any decisive importance because it is too elite-oriented in form, and insurgents who have unilaterally invested in this factor have historically only become a marginal group. Such insurgents were therefore seldom able to mobilise people who were largely satisfied with the state of affairs, even if the insurgents resorted to a significant amount of terrorism. The people must feel that they have a good reason for becoming involved in insurgency. Ideology is probably never the only reason; there must be a more tangible basis, such as, for example, an unfair division of economic benefits and/or a lack of a future for a large percentage of the population. But it may also be a matter of a struggle between power elites who use religion/nationalism/ethnicity, etc., as a means of getting national groups to involve themselves directly as insurgents. Professor Ted Robert Gurr would probably argue that unrealised expectations would form a powerful driver for support of insurgency.²¹⁰

Often insurgencies of this type have led to problems for the conventional military forces that have been used in this type of warfare. Today there is much to suggest that this development will continue. In order to be able to deal with local or, at most, regional conflicts, it is important to understand what concepts such as asymmetry, asymmetric warfare, guerrilla warfare and terrorism actually stand for both in theory and in connection with local practice.

Insurgent wars may obviously be ‘war by proxy’, which was often spoken of during the Cold War, but this is not normally the case today.²¹¹ It is ‘normal’ for today’s insurgencies to have *local* causes.

Civil wars of the protracted variety, including the associated guerrilla campaigns and (local) use of terror against the civilian population, always constitute a great social problem. In addition to many human lives being lost in direct acts of war each year, wars of this type have a number of barely controllable extended effects. Some examples are shown below and the points also indicate a number of common features in these conflicts:

1. In contrast to wars between states, insurgencies/civil wars that are conducted as guerrilla wars normally last many years. Often the wars last for between 10 and 20 years, but some, such as the one that ended in Guatemala in the late 1990s, have lasted even longer. The first attempt at a major insurgency in Guatemala was started in 1962 by *Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes* (FAR), *the Rebel Armed Forces*, but it was, in practice, defeated during the period 1966–1967. In the 1970s, Guatemala saw a new insurgency, led by groups such as *the Guerrilla Army*

210 Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1969, Fourth Printing 1974), pp. 28–29. These theories are further developed in Gurr and Haff (1994), Chapter 1, pp. 1–14.

211 One exception may be the Hezbollah organisation, which some sources see as the extended arm of Iran in Lebanon, and which has traditionally received support from the ‘secularly’ governed country Syria.

of the Poor or *Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres* (EPG)²¹² and later also by the *Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity* (URNG). The URNG was only a formal merger of the FAR, the EPG, and a group called *the Organisation of the People in Arms* (ORPA).

2. Even though some Communist countries supported these attempted insurgencies, the insurgents were never successful in taking over government in Guatemala and the war was formally ended in 1996. As part of the counterinsurgency, we saw the government forces carrying out comprehensive 'counter-terror' by, among other things, kidnapping and killing suspected sympathisers of the guerrilla movement.²¹³ The government forces also committed major breaches of human rights, including regular massacres of the country's Indian population.²¹⁴
3. Ethnic wars, such as those seen in Burma, Congo, Mali and Laos, have also typically lasted a long time. The war in the eastern part of Burma between the regime and tribes like the Karen People, the largest of 20 minority groups participating in an insurgency against the military government of Burma, has been going on since 1950.

The acts of war are often combined with terrorist campaigns. Typically we see a combination of both state terrorism and terrorism on the part of the insurgents, directed at what they see as the 'reluctant' elements of the civilian population. This type of warfare often leads to streams of refugees (both internally and possibly over into neighbouring countries). It cannot be emphasised strongly enough that, in order to tackle the so-called 'glocal' problems of today, i.e. *which are both local and international at the same time*, we should also study our own multicultural society in the West. Over the course of the last few decades, large streams of refugees to Western Europe have created a number of small 'ghetto communities' where the ethnic minorities' cultures and languages dominate. Other refugees and immigrants who are more broadly integrated will often have ties within these micro societies. If one or more of these 'societies within society' were to introduce an LIC in a European country, the lessons from Third World countries with their more 'primitive' conflicts would probably be of reduced

212 *The Guerrilla Army of the Poor* is abbreviated as EGP.

213 Anthony James Joes, *Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical, Biographical, and Bibliographical Sourcebook* (Westport, CO: Greenwood Press, 1996), pp. 148–149. The amount of foreign support was probably not very large. The foreign support principally went to the FMLN in El Salvador, which had priority in the U.S. government at that time. Those providing support were probably thinking along the lines of 'Yesterday Nicaragua, today El Salvador, tomorrow Guatemala'.

214 According to calculations carried out by the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH), over 200,000 people were killed during the civil war in Guatemala. Of those breaches of human rights and killings that the Commission investigated, probably 93 per cent had been carried out by the country's security forces or their paramilitary groups. By comparison, the insurgents were responsible for 3 per cent. It is estimated that 83 per cent of the victims were Maya Indians. (See *Report of the Commission for Historical Clarification. Conclusions and Recommendations*, Guatemala. Memory of Silence. Tz'inil natab'al. <http://shr.aaas.org/guatemala/ceh/report/english/toc.html>.)

value.²¹⁵ The limited ability (and will) of most European countries to integrate foreign cultures is seen as a source of potential conflict:

1. Areas devastated by war have a tendency to become a sanctuary for extremely violent political groups. Today, some of these groups may often be ‘imported’ from abroad, e.g. what happened with al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and most recently in connection with the ongoing guerrilla and terrorist activity in Iraq and Afghanistan.
2. The war/conflict normally leads to poor economic growth in the area devastated by war. One important reason is that almost no one dares to invest in actual (or potential) areas of conflict.
3. Warfare in a country can directly or indirectly generate political instability in neighbouring countries.

War has often historically shown itself to lead to the spread of epidemic diseases – today the lack of control over several dangerous diseases in Africa in particular is a constant problem. The ability of the authorities to provide public health and other such services in war-torn areas is limited. The insurgents often see all activities financed and supported by the central authorities as part of the government’s counterinsurgency. At the same time, they have neither the capacity for nor an interest in implementing similar projects themselves. The civilian population is again often affected – it is difficult to be neutral in this type of internal war.

When a lengthy war has occurred in an area, the experience of history suggests that there is a great danger of new conflicts breaking out in the same area, even several years after a formal conclusion of peace. Much hatred and bad blood exist between the actual ethnic and/or political groups and it often does not take much before one sees a fresh outbreak of acts of war. It can also be noted in this respect that the conclusion of peace often results in an increase in *criminal activities* in the area when thousands of young men who only have experience of war are faced with the problem of making a living.

This categorisation of conflicts may also help to put the spotlight on the need for a fresh evaluation of the actual concepts of armed forces. If we are to understand the ongoing changes, we should discuss these in a wider context since many European countries are increasingly participating in warfare *outside* their traditional localities. Former colonial powers, such as Great Britain and France, have a certain experience of this type of warfare. However, for most other NATO or EU members, participation

²¹⁵ Consider, for example, the South Moluccas’ various frustrated ‘freedom movements’ that perpetrated several acts of terror in the Netherlands in the 1970s.

in this type of conflict is something new and neither their conventional training nor their equipment is always well adapted to the new situation.²¹⁶

As previously pointed out, there are many reasons for why this type of civil war breaks out and it is, in practice, difficult to identify any set pattern as to how it erupts and can be ended.²¹⁷ Some main types of conflict stand out and can provide some pointers with regard to what may contribute to bringing these conflicts to an end. Nevertheless, a locally acceptable and permanent solution must be created – or else it is likely that a fresh conflict will erupt again within a relatively short time.²¹⁸

Poor countries not only have the longest wars, but also living conditions are so poor that wars are very likely to flare up again, even if a (formal) peace agreement has been concluded between the warring parties.²¹⁹ The most important reasons for this trend are difficult to establish/document. One possible reason could be that the machinery of government in a poor country is normally weak, i.e., the government does not have an effective police organisation and military force available to quickly suppress an insurgency. Consequently, the regime is often indiscriminate about accepting offers of help from outside. Such help is most likely to trigger the provision of aid and resources to the other side in the conflict, often from states in the same region with a hostile attitude to the ruling regime.

Many governments also struggle with a lack of legitimacy and can be suspected of preferring to have a military apparatus that is weak but loyal in order to avoid an internal military coup. In other situations, governments will have problems mobilising the armed forces in an *internal* conflict due to loyalty problems. Tribal allegiance may be stronger than loyalty to the government.²²⁰ It has often been the case that African military forces have been shown to perform more effectively in conflicts with other countries than in internal conflicts.²²¹ A sluggish and barely effective national

216 It is perhaps possible to split this into three approaches: (1) National territorial defence (as we have traditionally focused on in the Nordic countries), (2) A 'laissez-faire' attitude, i.e. let others take the responsibility and burdens and be content ourselves to take 'the moral high ground' and (3) Actively take part in the defence of the country's interests abroad (in the current areas of conflict) in order to prevent the conflicts from spilling over into one's own country (this could be said to be Norway's new strategy – for the time being).

217 Ben Connable & Martin C. Libicki, *How Insurgencies End* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2010), pp. 154–56. Quote: 'With a few exceptions, lasting insurgency endings are shaped not by military action but by social, economic, and political change.'

218 There is comprehensive literature on insurgency and counterinsurgency. Examples of interesting books are: Marc Jason Gilbert (ed.), *Why the North Won the Vietnam War* (New York: Palgrave, 2002). Martin S. Alexander and John F. V. Keiger (eds.), *France and the Algerian War, 1954–62: Strategy, Operations and Diplomacy* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002). Robert Taber, *War of the Flea: The Classical Study of Guerrilla Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 1965/2002). Roger W. Barnett, *Asymmetrical Warfare: Today's Challenge to U.S. Military Power* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 2003). John Gray, *Al Qaeda and What it Means to Be Modern* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 2003). Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: The True Story of Radical Islam* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2003). Chris E. Stout, *Psychology of Terrorism: Coping with the Continuing Threat*, Condensed Edition (London: Praeger, 2004).

219 See, for example, the *SIPRI Yearbook 2003: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), Appendix 2, for figures regarding the various wars in Africa and Asia. Later versions of the SIPRI Yearbook give the readers updated statistics.

220 Many wars in Africa have a strong tribal affiliation.

221 The war between Eritrea and Ethiopia (May 1998–December 2000) is an example of how two previously allied African insurgency movements ended up in a protracted *conventional* war. The Ethiopian forces in particular demonstrated good

military mobilisation of the population in support of the government also gives well-led insurgents plenty of time to establish sources of finance and build up a relatively effective military organisation. If the insurgent movement has plenty of time during the critical initial phase to develop an infrastructure and can recruit relatively freely, the war against the insurgency will naturally be correspondingly protracted. It should be noted in this respect that conflicts in Africa not only last longer than conflicts on other continents, but they also end more seldom in a government victory. Another possible reason may be that it has often proved to be easier for insurgent movements in Africa and Asia to recruit 'angry young men' with bleak future prospects than in other parts of the world. Access to relatively simple handheld weapons, even to a modest extent, may, if the local authorities are weakly developed, provide a disproportionately strong basis for the execution of power by those who have access to such weapons, something that may contribute to conflicts dragging on. Taking part in an insurgent movement also eventually becomes a form of *lifestyle* and the only way that many 'angry young men' know how to live. Without war they would be unemployed. Those guerrilla groups that want the war to be concluded after negotiations often experience problems in controlling their own forces. At least parts of these groups may consider that their interests are best served by the continuation of warfare, as this enables them to have work and continue to enjoy financial security.

We have seen that insurgent wars have many different and complicated roots and occur in many forms. If a well-organised insurgency has acquired a good footing and the broad support of the people over a period of time, it is a very demanding task to suppress the uprising, even with a strong military force at one's disposal. That is why military means alone are seldom sufficient in such conflicts. Other measures must be cleverly used as well if one is to succeed in creating a lasting peace.

It is probably also difficult to find a modern conflict where the terrorising of the civilian population in areas controlled by insurgent forces has not been employed, often by both parties. Another question asked by some writers is whether there is a difference between so-called state-sponsored terrorism and state terrorism. In this regard, the term 'state terrorism' has been used for the force that a state employs against *its own civilian population* that is receptive to a guerrilla movement or that at least does *not* wish to support the government forces in their fight against the guerrilla. State-sponsored terrorism is terror sponsored by one state to harm another targeted state, but the term may also be used to refer to state-sponsored terror used by the regime against an internal grouping. We have seen the use of different kinds of 'counter-terrorism' (CT) or some kind of *state terror* against the regime's enemies in practically every single modern insurgency. It is then the civilian population that will face the majority of the government forces' CT and/or COIN operations. At the beginning of the 1980s,

military proficiency in this war.

Guatemala's army identified several ethnic groups of Maya Indians as 'collective accessories' of the EGP and classified the groups as 'internal enemies'. In the area populated by the Ixil Indians, between 70 and 90 per cent of all villages were burned. The Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) described the killings and massacres of Indians in this and other areas as '*acts of genocide*'. After several years of this form of *counterinsurgency*, the EGP, which was reckoned to be the strongest of Guatemala's insurgent movements in 1980, was no longer any military threat to the government.²²²

What will normally be the result of such a strategy, and can state terrorism function in connection with counterinsurgency? It is often keenly disputed in specialist literature what constitutes an acceptable (political) strategy for a threatened government.

2.5.1. Factors that influence developments

The consequences of so-called globalisation comprise another important set of relatively new factors that influence developments today. Over the course of the last 20 years or so, these factors have led to a significant transformation of social, economic and political conditions at a global level. Overall, globalisation has led to a need to develop new analytical concepts when trying to gain an overall view of experiences from the actual conflicts, at the same time as studying relevant theories about this type of warfare.

The American Thomas Barnett was one of those who addressed this trend. In his book *The Pentagon's New Map* (2004), he divides the world into those who embrace/are positive towards the ongoing globalisation ('connected'), and those who do not want to participate for various reasons ('disconnected'). The way he saw it, it would be a good American policy to establish a strategy to get onboard those states that are not involved in global development.²²³ The main idea behind his thinking was that nations that have intensive economic contact/trade with each other have established a certain economic interdependence, which makes it less likely that they will go to war with each other. The more countries that participate in this collaboration ('connected'), the less risk there is of conflict.

It obviously remains to be seen whether Barnett's thinking is realistic. A comment about the thinking in this book: Barnett, like his 'intellectual heroes' Thomas Friedman and Francis Fukuyama, tends to accept the universality of *rational-actor models* constructed on Western ideas. There is little room in Barnett's thinking for the *fanatic* religious enthusiasm that has been contemporary terrorism's main driving force. To date, these fanatic groups have been mostly indifferent to economic and political

²²² Text based on the author's interview with P. Refsdal in June 2005. See also Joes (1996), pp. 141–149.

²²³ Thomas P. M. Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map: War and Peace in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2004).

factors. That makes Barnett's analytical structure incomplete, and maybe more useful as an intellectual exercise than as a guide to policy development. It can hardly be expected that there will be any rapid transition to this type of concept in Europe, particularly when we see the scepticism that prevails within several leading EU countries and also in parts of the Third World towards this new thinking/concept. Even if new definitions of concepts such as insurgency, irregular war, revolutionary war, guerrilla war and (international) terrorism have been continually developed over a long period of time, there is nevertheless still no complete agreement as to what the individual definitions should describe. Today there is, however, widespread agreement that the concept of *insurgency* describes internal war within a state/nation.

Insurgency can be seen as the key overall concept in the many wars ongoing between an opposition or insurgent group and a ruling regime, but the concept says nothing of any external support from other actors. The assumption is that the parties have employed force in order to reform, revolutionise, transform or preserve the legitimacy of a state system. Political control is normally based on these four important political framework factors:

1. That one is in a position to secure one's own state's borders and the survival of the actual state.
2. Ensuring that the political systems of the state survive.
3. Safeguarding/protecting those who have the authority to govern the state (possibly on behalf of the people).
4. That politics can be conducted in a way that one can *lawfully decide* who is to get what in the community.

Much of the political struggle will normally be over who is to carry out the four points above and there are few if any rules laid down in this field. The different insurgencies will always have their basis in local conditions, and priorities will consequently vary from country to country. The following examples, all from conflicts from our own time, serve to illustrate the differences in objectives:

1. The 'Tamil Tigers' in Sri Lanka (until they were defeated in 2009), the Abu Sayyaf group in the Philippines and the Polisario guerrillas in the Western Sahara (still a *de facto* part of Morocco, even if several countries have acknowledged the area as a *separate* state), have all tried to break away from the three current nation states in order to set up separate (ethnic-based) states.²²⁴

²²⁴ Joseph R. Rudolph, Jr. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Modern Ethnic Conflicts* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003), pp. 94–99. A classic example of independence not necessarily leading to lasting peace and a balance between ethnic groups is provided by India. First, the British colony of India was split into two parts: India and Pakistan. Pakistan has since been divided again into Pakistan and Bangladesh and, during this entire time, small guerrilla wars or terrorism have gone on in what

2. The two insurgency movements the *Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia* (FARC) and the *Armed Islamic Group of Algeria* (GIA) in Algeria sought to replace the existing government in the states in question, i.e. to take charge themselves as the new governing party.²²⁵
3. A third form of insurgent activity is represented by what the *Ulster Defence Association* has stood for in Northern Ireland. This may perhaps be regarded as meeting terror with 'counter-terror', a counterinsurgency against an insurgency. It could possibly be asserted that violent Protestant paramilitary groups, such as the *Ulster Volunteer Force* (UVF) and the *Ulster Freedom Fighters* (UFF), had a similar function to the so-called death squads in El Salvador and Guatemala. Many of these groups in Latin America were not under the direct control of the authorities, either, but regarded themselves as a *tool* in the established counterinsurgency strategy. Such groups normally *wish to maintain the traditional* political system by preventing changes to this. (They fear that changes would weaken the group's *political* influence, as the leaders have interpreted the local situation.)
4. Insurgent movements of the nature of those seen in later years in, for example, Iraq and Chechnya all wish to remove the relatively recent occupation forces of their (ethnic) areas. But it has often proved to be the case that these types of insurgent groups have lacked clear plans as to what will happen *after* their goal of independence has been achieved. The result of such a lack of a perspective on the future is perhaps a new round of *civil war* when the first objective has been achieved – national independence.

In other words, the various forms of insurgent movements normally have extremely different objectives in connection to their war plans and use of violence.²²⁶ Some groupings want to set up a new state while others are primarily occupied with securing a better and more just (local) socioeconomic order. Over the last few years we have

has today become the regional superpower India. In federal states, such as Punjab, Kashmir, and Assam, ethnic tribes such as the Naga and Mizo kept a protracted insurgency going with the assistance of Communist organisational principles. Eventually, the Nagas were given their own tribal-based state – Nagaland – in 1963. Once one tribal area was given its freedom, the others demanded the same. During the period 1972–1987, Assam was divided into seven federal provinces. It has not, however, ever been possible to achieve a new and lasting stability in this north-eastern part of India. See also: Bhattacharji, Preeti, 'Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (aka Tamil Tigers) (Sri Lanka, separatists)', *Council on Foreign Relations*, <http://www.cfr.org/publication/9242/>, and 'Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)', *Discoverthenetworks.org*, <http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/groupProfile.asp?gpid=6435>.

²²⁵ Anthony James Joes, *Resisting Rebellion. The History and Politics of Counterinsurgency* (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2004), pp. 31–32, pp. 119–120. See Vriens, Lauren, Armed Islamic Group (Algeria, Islamists) (a.k.a. GIA, Groupe Islamique Armé, or al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah al-Musallaha), Council on Foreign Relations, <http://www.cfr.org/publication/9154/>.

²²⁶ It has been stated that almost 100,000 'soldiers' went to various training camps in Afghanistan during the period 1980 to 2001. The Pakistani intelligence service, ISI, for instance, ran several training camps in Pakistan during the war in Afghanistan (1979–1989) where the majority of participants were Afghans. Later, camps were also run by various warlords, the ISI and the Taliban regime when they took over power in the country during the period from 1990 to 2001. The terrorist

also seen the emergence of so-called *theocracies*, i.e. attempts to establish a new state order based on *religious laws*. Other groupings want the introduction of Western-inspired democratic arrangements and perhaps to go in a more social democratic direction, as we have seen in many authoritarian Arab countries during 2011. The changes we have seen in, for example, Egypt and Tunisia are maybe not a revolution, but have been carried out relatively peacefully. In contrast, the uprising in Libya has resulted in civil war.

However, a strong desire to avoid any changes in the social and economic *status quo* at all may be the cause of an insurgency to preserve a minority's privileges – and then it is obviously very difficult to see the insurgents as 'revolutionaries'. Seen in this light, it is necessary to study each individual case if one is to have any hope of understanding why and how an insurgency arises, and how it may develop.

The complexity of many insurgent and guerrilla movements makes it necessary to look at insurgent movements differently today than one did in the counterinsurgency literature written in the 1960s. Then, it was assumed that one was dealing with a form of social and nationalist insurgency directed at a ruling regime, with a Communist cadre normally forming the leadership. In short, the situation today requires a careful examination of each individual insurgency if the driving forces behind the insurgency are to be understood.

According to Professor Ted Robert Gurr, there are three stages in the development of a society that can lead to the people supporting insurgency or terrorism directed at the ruling regime. Gurr looks at the gap between aspirations and the ability to realise them. If one sees one's ability to, for instance, earn money suddenly disappear while continuing to expect the same lifestyle as before, the gap between aspirations and reality will increase. Similarly, if one gradually sees the situation improve, expectations will increase in step with this improvement. Then, if at a certain stage the opportunities to realise aspirations begin to lag behind, the gap will again increase. The third 'scenario' is a society where one actually has a stable relationship with one's surroundings and one's ability to earn money. If, under these circumstances, one is promised a bright, better future, one's expectations will rise. If reality does not then change, this aspirational gap will again increase, creating fertile soil for discontent, frustration and gradually less resistance to those who oppose the regime. The ruling regime will over a period of time be regarded as *responsible* for the lack of *personal* progression.²²⁷

group Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia is an example of such a group. Among other actions, members of this group carried out a series of bomb attacks in Indonesia in 2002 and 2003. The probably best-known attack in Indonesia so far was carried out in Bali in October 2002 when 202 people were killed.

227 Gurr (1974), pp. 28–29. These theories are further developed in a newer book written by Gurr and Haff (1994), Chapter 1, pp. 1–14.

2.5.2. Today's theories have a previous history

Before the First World War it was common in Western military literature to regard guerrilla warfare as a 'pure' military form of warfare, i.e. warfare based on swift attacks against the enemy's weaknesses. Guerrilla warfare was then regarded as a tactic and no political dimension was attached to this form of warfare. Those who made use of guerrilla warfare were, for example, tribal warriors battling against a colonial power's soldiers. Alternatively, they could be an armed group continuing the war after the country's conventional forces had been overcome by a foreign invasion force. During the Boer War (1899–1902) in South Africa, guerrilla warfare was used because British forces had developed a greater military capacity than the Boers. The use of guerrilla forces was actually less common in the three decades after the Boer War. One must move on to the 1930s and 1940s to find guerrilla forces that had developed into real revolutionary movements where the insurgents had clear political intentions of overthrowing the ruling regime and where clear ideological programmes had been developed, formulating objectives for the armed struggle.²²⁸

Key people in the development of the military and political capacity of revolutionary warfare are, for instance, Chairman Mao Zedong, North Vietnam's later President Ho Chi Minh, the North Vietnamese General Võ Nguyên Giáp and the Secretary-General of the Communist Party Truong Chinh. The essence of revolution is that a small cadre/group should over a period of time develop in such a way as to be able to combat the ruling regime and take over government itself. This involves making use of time and combining different subversive techniques, political mobilisation, propaganda and military battles. Such an insurgency, developed over a period of time, has also been shown to be able to take over states, as was first seen in China and later also in countries such as Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Before examining the different forms of insurgency, which I shall do below, it may be of interest to note some of the experiences drawn in the aftermath of the first so-called *counterinsurgency era*, in the form here of a summary written by Douglas S. Blaufarb:

The fundamental lesson to draw from our misadventures of the counterinsurgency era is the one already emphasized by many – the lesson of the limits of American power. It is also of importance that we should understand in what way our power, great as it is, can be challenged by a few thousand ragged jungle fighters armed with a dedicated leadership, a tested theory, and great patience. Too many have fallen back on the easy excuse that we failed in Indochina because our power was constrained and leashed, that more bombs,

228 Ian F. W. Beckett, *Insurgency in Iraq: A Historical Perspective*, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), U.S. Army War College, 2005), p. 2.

*more destruction, more firepower was the answer. At the end of this account of what we tried to do and why it fell short, it is to be hoped that some will be convinced that the failure was one of understanding, of inability to perceive the underlying realities of both our own system and that of the countries into which we thrust our raw strength.*²²⁹

If one is to study what is now going on within the many insurgent movements and terrorist organisations in the world, it may be useful to identify and categorise some of the trends that appear to dominate. It is, for instance, natural to study the reactions of states and other parties when they are subjected to insurgency and terrorism. It is particularly interesting how the U.S., as a superpower, has reacted to the acts of terrorism against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001. These acts of terrorism had an enormous psychological significance for the Americans and, in reality, led to the Bush administration changing its foreign policy with significant consequences, particularly in Europe and the Middle East.

(...) In a place like Iraq, you're dealing with the jihads that are coming in to raise hell, crime on the streets that's rampant, ex-Ba'athists that are still running around, and the potential now for this country to fragment: Shi'ia on Shi'ia, Shi'ia on Sunni, Kurd on Turkomen. It's a powder keg (...)

*This is a different kind of conflict. War fighting is just one element of it. Some people on this battlefield are different; they don't come in those formations and with that kind of equipment (as Westerners). And they come in many different forms. All their agendas are different.*²³⁰

As the above quote by the American Colonel Gary I. Wilson indicates, several theorists assert that an almost new form of warfare has arisen over the last few years, targeted at Western, and particularly American, political and economic interests. I am at the very least sceptical about this. It is probably more correct to see the new form as a further development of guerrilla warfare and terrorism – phenomena that have existed in similar forms for the last couple of hundred years. In the 1970s and 1980s, the IRA used an operational pattern that could be compared to that used by al-Qaeda on 11 September 2001. Instead of striking at the British in densely populated areas, such as Belfast or out in the rural districts in Northern Ireland, they began a terrorism campaign in London and other cities of Great Britain. The campaign was never, however, sufficiently heavy to create a demand from the British people for the withdrawal

229 Blaufarb (1977), pp. 310–311.

230 Wilson, Gary I., 'Judo of Fourth Generation Warfare', in INFOWARCON Conference, 1–3 October 2003, Washington, D.C. (quotations from Gen Tony Zinni), http://www.dnipogo.org/fcs/pdf/4gw_judo.pdf.

of troops from Northern Ireland. On the contrary, the bombing campaign created British ‘martyrs’, which actually indirectly led to increased popular support for taking a harder line against the IRA, and increased support for retaining Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom.

Muslim terrorist organisations had made clear (military/political) demands on countries such as the USA, Israel and Spain both before and after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. The Americans often describe terrorism as an expression of hatred towards American ideals. Seen from the standpoint of the terrorists, the attacks were, on the contrary, a punishment against the U.S. for what the terrorists believe the Americans have done, or are doing, in the Islamic areas. What al-Qaeda, for instance, has focused on in its propaganda since 2000 is that there were (previously) American troops in Saudi Arabia, that the United States provided support to Muslim dictators and Israel and, obviously, that al-Qaeda is against Western countries participating in the wars in Afghanistan/Iraq.

Seen in this light, what is new is not that extremist groups are willing to attack what they regard as legitimate targets, but that, on 11 September 2001, they were able to make a strong international impression with their attacks.

What can also be established is that the prevailing attitude to the use of war as a political means – and to the use of force – is generally changing in most Western countries. The secular but nevertheless official *Christian* Western countries have a different attitude to use of violence, if compared with the more radical Muslim factions. The latter have begun their mobilisation as a *reaction* to what they feel is Western decadence and suppression of their religious and political interests.²³¹ These developments will probably have consequences over time with regard to how and for what purposes armed forces may be used. This will, in the long term, also influence when the political elite will be willing to make use of violence, what type of military capacities are acceptable and what kind of military structure and type of troop are used.

2.5.3. Theories about the so-called ‘generations of warfare’

Over the last 15 or so years, a new military and academic interest in the various forms of insurgency and counterinsurgency has been seen, particularly in the United States. In connection with this, during the same period, a number of books and journal articles were published with regard to two relatively new concepts that have been intro-

²³¹ Examples of such events and attitudes were seen in connection with the killing of a Dutch anti-Muslim film producer in 2004 and in the demonstrations that led to a decision to cancel a controversial play in Birmingham, England, that same autumn. At the same time Western democracies are potentially attractive targets as scenes for terrorist attacks since one is presumably guaranteed dramatic media coverage and strong political reactions to a terrorist attack (e.g. the bomb attacks against trains in Spain in 2004, which had significant political consequences). Such acts are easier to carry out in Europe than in more totalitarian states due to the open internal European borders. (See the more detailed analysis in Chapters 5 and 6 of this book.)

duced into the military debate: 'Fourth-Generation Warfare' (4GW) and 'The Three Block War'. Perhaps these ideas are not as new as the most enthusiastic advocates have tried to make them seem, but this is, without doubt, a new twist in American military debate. Both concepts have their starting point in U.S. Marine Corps circles and both military and civilian theorists have contributed to their development. One of the first to start writing about 4GW was the American military theorist William S. Lind, previously a great champion of manoeuvre warfare. In an article published in the U.S. Marine Corps' journal *Marine Corps Gazette* in 1994, he describes a broad outline of the problems that advocates of these theories have later developed.²³²

Several military thinkers have attempted to understand the war against terror that began on 11 September 2001 in the light of the term 'Fourth-Generation Warfare', which was coined by William S. Lind et al. in 1989.²³³ At the same time, there are many people who have wanted to differentiate between Lind's military theories and his controversial and cultural points of view, something that this author feels is an essential distinction. He has answered his critics in an article.

William S. Lind is regarded as one of the founders of modern manoeuvre warfare theory. His book *Maneuver Warfare Handbook* (1985) is still required reading at many military academies. In addition to his work on manoeuvre theory/philosophy, Lind has written on a topic he calls 'Fourth-Generation Warfare'. As previously mentioned, this subject was first illustrated in an article he wrote with several other authors, 'The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth-Generation', as early as 1985.²³⁴ In light of what happened later, and particularly 11 September 2001, 'the day that changed the world', it might be interesting to read Lind's article again. It is particularly relevant in some areas. If we stick to the terminology that Lind uses, even states that adhere to 'Second-Generation Warfare' (2GW) or 'Third-Generation Warfare' (3GW) can successfully use/exploit 4GW techniques.²³⁵ According to Lind and like-minded people, the 'generations' can be described as follows:

First generation warfare reflects tactics of the era of the smoothbore musket, the tactics of line and column. These tactics were developed partially in

232 William S. Lind, 'Fourth Generation Warfare: Another Look', *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. 78, Iss. 12, December 1994, p. 34.

A more recent key article on the same theme was in print in the same journal a few years later: William S. Lind, 'The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation', *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. 85, Iss. 11, November 2001, p. 65, 4.

233 William S. Lind, Col. Keith Nightengale, USA, Capt. John F. Schmitt, USMC and Lt. C. Gary I. Wilson, 'The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation', *Marine Corps Gazette*, Volume 73, Issue 10, October 1989, pp. 22–26.

234 William S. Lind, *Maneuver Warfare Handbook* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985). Lind has also written a number of articles in, for instance, *Marine Corps Gazette*. William S. Lind has impressed many people with his knowledge of military history and strategy and with his analysis of modern military doctrines and training. But he has also been provocative with his radical political and cultural points of view, which have put him far to the right in American social debate, even if he does not see himself as a so-called NeoCon. In a 2002 issue of the magazine *The Atlantic Monthly*, it was pointed out in a commentary on the ongoing war in Afghanistan that a website associated with al-Qaeda quotes Lind's article as inspiration for the terrorists' strategy for fighting a new type of war against the West.

235 Lind (1994). Lind (2001), p. 69, 3.

response to technological factors – the line maximized firepower, rigid drill was necessary to generate a high rate of fire, etc. – and partially in response to social conditions and ideas, e.g., the columns of the French revolutionary armies reflected both the *élan* of the revolution and the low training levels of conscripted troops. Although rendered obsolete with the replacement of the smoothbore by the rifled musket, vestiges of first generation tactics survive today, especially in a frequently encountered desire for linearity on the battlefield. Operational art in the first generation did not exist as a concept although it was practiced by individual commanders, most prominently Napoleon.

Second generation warfare was a response to the rifled musket, breechloaders, barbed wire, the machinegun, and indirect fire. Tactics were based on fire and movement, and they remained essentially linear. The defense still attempted to prevent all penetrations, and in the attack a laterally dispersed line advanced by rushes in small groups. Perhaps the principal change from first generation tactics was heavy reliance on indirect fire; second generation tactics were summed up in the French maxim, “the artillery conquers, the infantry occupies.” Massed firepower replaced massed manpower. Second generation tactics remained the basis of U.S. doctrine until the 1980s, and they are still practiced by most American units in the field. While ideas played a role in the development of second generation tactics (particularly the idea of lateral dispersion), technology was the principal driver of change. Technology manifested itself both qualitatively, in such things as heavier artillery and bombing aircraft, and quantitatively, in the ability of an industrialized economy to fight a battle of materiel (*Materialschlacht*). The second generation saw the formal recognition and adoption of the operational art, initially by the Prussian army. Again, both ideas and technology drove the change. The ideas sprang largely from Prussian studies of Napoleon’s campaigns. Technological factors included von Moltke’s realization that modern tactical firepower mandated battles of encirclement and the desire to exploit the capabilities of the railway and the telegraph.

Third generation warfare was also a response to the increase in battlefield firepower. However, the driving force was primarily ideas. Aware they could not prevail in a contest of materiel because of their weaker industrial base in World War I, the Germans developed radically new tactics. Based on maneuver rather than attrition, third generation tactics were the first truly nonlinear tactics. The attack relied on infiltration to bypass and collapse the enemy’s

combat forces rather than seeking to close with and destroy them. The defense was in depth and often invited penetration, which set the enemy up for a counterattack. While the basic concepts of third generation tactics were in place by the end of 1918, the addition of a new technological element – tanks – brought about a major shift at the operational level in World War II. That shift was blitzkrieg. In the blitzkrieg, the basis of the operational art shifted from place (as in Liddell Hart's indirect approach) to time. This shift was explicitly recognized only recently in the work of retired Air Force Col John Boyd and his 'OODA (observation-orientation-decision-action) theory'.²³⁶

The three 'generations' above primarily describe the European way of conducting warfare. Very little is said in the theory about how people in other parts of the world fought their wars at that time. In Asia, the traditions were very similar to how 4GW is described today. We should ask ourselves – is there anything really new in this thinking? Of course, this is a difficult question to answer. But one of the most detailed descriptions of 'Fourth-Generation Warfare' so far is written by the retired USMC Colonel Thomas X. Hammes. In his book, he defines the phenomenon of 4GW in the following manner:

Fourth-generation warfare (4GW) uses all available networks – political, economic, social, and military – to convince the enemy's political decision makers that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly for the perceived benefit. It is an evolved form of insurgency. Still rooted in the fundamental precept that superior political will, when properly employed, can defeat greater economic and military power, 4GW makes use of society's networks to carry on its fight. Unlike previous generations of warfare, it does not attempt to win by defeating the enemy's military forces. Instead, via the networks, it directly attacks the mind of enemy decision makers to destroy the enemy's political will. Fourth-generation wars are lengthy – measured in decades rather than months or years.

Clearly, 4GW is a very different concept from the short, intense war the (U.S.) administration planned for and celebrated by declaring the end of major combat on May 1, 2003.²³⁷

These theorists often regard themselves as an *alternative* to those who have primarily had a *technological* basis for their military thinking with regard to future warfare.

²³⁶ Lind et al. (1989), pp. 22–26.

²³⁷ Hammes (2004), p. 2.

Those they have seen as their clear opponents – from the 4GW thinkers' own standpoint – have been theorists, such as John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, who in the early 1990s heavily supported the rapidly advancing data technology in particular as the basis for what they saw as a *new form of warfare* that they called 'cyber war'. They visualised that in the future there would be short wars where all forms of high technology would play a leading part, i.e. the development of what we today call military networks. This should be looked on as a central part of the development of the ideas connected to the at this time very important slogan 'Revolution in Military Affairs'.²³⁸

We may possibly interpret Hammes' thoughts in the following manner:

1. 'Idea-based warfare' – which means that groups that actually have/could have conflicting interests can nevertheless unite for a common goal. The actual tactics can be developed by the different groups individually.
2. '4GW' can possibly be seen as a further developed form of insurgency theory.
3. Progress is measured, as Hammes sees it, in decades and not years, something that is often difficult to understand for impatient Western politicians and military leaders.
4. Network-based insurgency or counterinsurgency (i.e. including all types of *network*, not just technological ones, is of importance to the warfare).
5. There is no strategic focus on the enemy's strengths, and the focus is instead on influencing the enemy's political will by means of steps taken by the *political* decision makers.
6. One communicates *simultaneously* (entirely deliberately!) different messages to different target groups, via *all* available distribution channels.
7. Great powers have all been defeated (several times) in this type of 'new conflict'. As it avoids exposing the *insurgents* as 'targets' for high technology weapon systems, 4GW is today the only current form of warfare that can succeed against a technologically superior opponent.²³⁹

In a draft from January 2005, Hammes additionally developed his theories. Here he describes what he called 'Characteristics of Fourth Generation Warfare':

Fourth generation war uses all available networks – political, economic, social, and military – to convince the enemy's political decision makers that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly for the perceived benefit. It is rooted in the fundamental precept that superior political will, when properly employed, can defeat greater economic and military power. 4GW

²³⁸ John Arquilla & David Ronfeldt, 'Cyberwar is Coming', *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Spring 1993), pp. 141–165.
²³⁹ Hammes (2004).

does not attempt to win by defeating the enemy's military forces. Instead, combining guerrilla tactics or civil disobedience with the soft networks of social, cultural and economic ties, disinformation campaigns and innovative political activity, it directly attacks the enemy's political will.

Fourth generation war spans the spectrum of human activity – political, economic, social and military. Politically, it involves transnational, national and sub-national organizations and networks to convey its message to the target audiences. Strategically, it focuses on breaking the will of decision makers. It uses different pathways to deliver different messages for different target audiences. The messages serve three purposes: break the enemy's will; maintain the will of its own people; ensure neutrals remain neutral or provide tacit support to the cause. Operationally, it delivers those messages in a variety of ways from high impact, high profile direct military actions to indirect economic attacks such as those designed to drive up the price of oil. Tactically, 4GW forces avoid direct confrontation if possible; while seeking maximum impact they use materials present in the society under attack. To minimize their logistics requirements they can attack using industrial chemicals, liquefied natural-gas tankers or fertilizer shipments. Finally, 4GW practitioners plan for long wars – decades rather than months or years.

In sum, 4GW is political, socially (rather than technically) networked and protracted in duration. It is the anti-thesis of the high-technology, short war the Pentagon is preparing to fight.²⁴⁰

As mentioned earlier, the 'Fourth Generation War' emerged as a theory in the late 1980s, but later become well known also outside military circles, mainly due to the developments during the war in Iraq after 2003 and the high-profile international terrorist attacks after 9/11.

In sum, 4GW is politically and socially (rather than technically) networked and is of a *protracted* nature. It is the antithesis of the high-technology short war the Pentagon was preparing to fight in the 'EBO years' around the year 2000. 4GW can accordingly be regarded as a starting point for both a counterinsurgency strategy and an insurgency strategy – something that could probably contribute to confusion among those with a Western cultural background who are attempting to acquaint themselves with this way of thinking. Mao Zedong's thoughts on *protracted war* have probably been an important starting point for much of today's revolutionary thinking.²⁴¹

²⁴⁰ Hammes, 'War Evolves into the Fourth Generation', draft from 31 January 2005, based on an electronic copy from Hammes to Rekkedal, October 2005.

²⁴¹ Mao Tsetung, *Om den langvarige krigen* [On Protracted War] (Oslo: Forlaget Oktober, 1976). The original was written

But Mao himself states in his writing, sensibly, that practice must be developed and refined so that military and political measures are adapted to local conditions.²⁴²

According to one of the critics of the 4GW theory, Dr. Antulio J. Echevarria II, the theory ‘has several fundamental flaws that need to be exposed before they can cause harm to U.S. operational and strategic thinking. A critique of 4GW is both fortuitous and important because it also provides us with an opportunity to attack other unfounded assumptions that could influence U.S. strategy and military doctrine.’ According to Echevarria, the theory holds that warfare has evolved through four generations: first, the use of *massed manpower*, second, *firepower*, third, *manoeuvre* and fourth, an evolved form of *insurgency* that employs all available networks, i.e. political, economic, social, military, ‘to convince an opponent’s decision makers that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly’.²⁴³ As Echevarria sees it, the 4GW theory does not examine the way terrorist groups actually behave, but rather misleadingly pushed the storm-trooper ideals as the terrorist of tomorrow. Instead of looking at the probability that such terrorists would improvise with respect to the weapons they used – box cutters, aircraft, and improvised explosive devices – it posited high-tech ‘wonder’ weapons.²⁴⁴

According to Echevarria, the theory went through what he called ‘a second incarnation when the notion of non-Trinitarian war came into vogue’, but it *failed* to examine these ideas critically. He claims the 4GW theory ‘is founded on the consequences of the so-called Westphalia state system and the German theory of *blitzkrieg*’. As Echevarria sees the development of 4GW thinking, the theory reinvented itself once again after 11 September 2001, when some of its proponents, according to Echevarria, claimed that al-Qaeda ‘was waging a 4GW against the United States’. The theory’s proponents, rather than thinking critically about future warfare, became more concerned with demonstrating that they had predicted the future. Echevarria wrote: ‘While their recommendations are often rooted in common sense, they are undermined by being tethered to an empty theory.’ Echevarria concludes his harsh criticism with these words in his Summary:

What we are really seeing in the war on terror, and the campaign in Iraq and elsewhere, is that the increased “dispersion and democratization of technology,

by Mao in the Yanan province of China in May–June 1938, and the translation is based on a certified English translation done on the orders of Beijing in 1963. *On Protracted War: Selected Military Writings of Mao Tsetung* (Beijing, 1963.) See the chapters ‘Hvorfor en langvarig krig?’ [‘Why a Protracted War?’], pp. 36–40, ‘De tre stadiene i den langvarige krigen’ [‘The Three Stages of Protracted War’], (pp. 40–51) and ‘Krig og politikk’ [‘War and Politics’], (pp. 61–63) in particular.

242 China may be seen as a great power that has concentrated on this type of military activity over the last few years. China’s National Defense in 2000 (2000), Gov.cn, Chinese Government’s Official Web Portal, Official Publications, White papers, http://english.gov.cn/official/2005-07/27/content_17524.htm. Details will be discussed later in this book.

243 Echevarria, Antulio J. II, ‘Fourth-Generation War and other Myths’, *Strategic Studies Institute (SSI)*, United States Army War College, November 2005, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=632>, pp. v–vi.

244 Echevarria (2005), *ibid*.

information, and finance” brought about by globalization has given terrorist groups greater mobility and access worldwide. At this point, globalization seems to aid the nonstate actor more than the state, but states still play a central role in the support or defeat of terrorist groups or insurgencies. We would do well to abandon the theory of 4GW altogether, since it sheds very little, if any, light on this phenomenon.²⁴⁵

Of course, Echevarria’s attack has been answered. The former U.S. Marine John Sayen has written an article called ‘4GW – Myth, or the Future of Warfare? A Reply to Antulio Echevarria.’²⁴⁶ He starts out with the view that nearly all the wars that have been fought in the last 15 years or so have had states involved on no more than one side (frequently the losing side), and that this fact changes everything. According to Sayen, modern items like warships or fighter jets become, if not altogether irrelevant, much less useful against the highly dispersed and decentralised opponents that characterise 4GW conflicts, making it much harder to justify their cost. Armies geared for conventional combat tend to have difficulty with unconventional forces. The latter require a completely new mindset than state-run forces. However, even if non-state entities acquire and use weapons like tanks or jet fighters (at least one Colombian drug gang actually did manage to acquire a submarine and Chechen militias even used a few tanks), they would still be engaging in 4GW because what really distinguishes 4GW from earlier generations is not the equipment or tactics but the identity and motivations of the people who fight it.

Echevarria’s reaction to the 4GW thesis is to dismiss it entirely, according to Sayen. He avoids talking about the essentials of 4GW by insisting on ‘using Col Hammes’ flawed and erroneous definition of 4GW as his straw man. It is, however, an easy straw man to demolish so the good professor spills buckets of ink in doing so’.²⁴⁷ After answering some of Echevarria’s attacks, Sayen concludes by claiming:

Echevarria’s silliest point by far is his assertion that the US military has it all under control (Iraq, of course, being the perfect counterexample). He even makes the quite breathtaking assumption that the world wars and the Cold War were really non-state conflicts because the states that exclusively fought them made (and, whenever they chose to, broke) alliances among themselves! Even today, states rarely obey international authority except when their rulers deem it to be in their own (though not necessarily their subjects’) best interests. Attempts by the United Nations to wield military power have almost invari-

245 Echevarria (2005), p. vi.

246 John Sayen, ‘4GW – Myth, or the Future of Warfare? A Reply to Antulio Echevarria’. See, http://www.d-n-i.net/fcs/sayen_4gw_reply.htm. Accessed 3 December 2005.

247 Sayen (2005).

ably ended in fiasco except where the United States was legitimizing its own policies by draping them in the UN flag (as in Korea, for example). Even if an international organization acquired real power of its own it would in effect become a 'super-state' (better known as an empire).

Far from eliminating the state system it would entrench it even more deeply. States, after all, are about the centralization of power, not its devolution. If a super-state were to fight recalcitrant states that it claimed authority over, it would do it as a state vs. state conflict. Both sides would field conventional armies whose members wore uniforms and presumably expected Geneva Convention treatment if captured. Today's non-state actors are less than states, not above states. (...) A non-state does not need discrete territory, a full-time military or formal government. They are the revolution that the 4GW model depicts. They come from below, not from above. Effective super-states, should any emerge, would not be part of this revolution but part of the reaction to it.²⁴⁸

What should we think about this debate and the realities behind it? It may be difficult to claim that the 4GW theories are something completely new, and it may be a little difficult to see a big difference between theories connected to earlier insurgencies, or theories connected to what was called *revolutionary war* between 1945 and into the 1980s, and the main body of theories presented as '4GW theories'. I myself am interested in examining the realities/the new trends: are we now leaving the European style of conventional warfare behind because that kind of warfare should be looked upon as 'history'? Is the view predicted by Lind, Hammes and other writers the only possible way ahead? Will all important wars from now on be similar to the wars we have seen in Iraq or Afghanistan? Will it be enough to study 'Fourth Generation War' as a theory going forward? I am afraid that the disputes described above do not tell the complete story of future warfare.

At various moments in history, and today may be one of them, conventional trained militaries have appeared to be relatively ineffective. U.S. military personnel in Iraq during the period 2003 to 2006, for instance, seemed to be 'just another target', not an effective counterforce to the wave of bombings and terror attacks that was sweeping Iraq. The U.S. and other coalition military forces had no efficient solution to the problem of guerrilla warfare and international terrorism.²⁴⁹ If the conflict moves away from conventional combat operations to other fields, the conventional military forces probably will have increasingly less influence on the outcome of the contest. And since the emergence of 'First Generation Warfare', war has continuously

²⁴⁸ Sayen (2005).

²⁴⁹ Ricks (2006), pp. 270–291.

enlarged its sphere of conflict away from traditional battlefields. Local populations have become increasingly politically mobilised and better informed over time, even in the developing countries, making it all the more likely that media images and political propaganda will influence the outcome of war. The so-called information revolution has now given individuals abilities to communicate, organise and travel around the world that were not even possessed by governments 50–60 years ago. The ‘ideology’ embedded in the new technology provides ‘super-empowered individuals’ or small groups of ‘angry people’ with the capability and sanction to take matters into their own hands (i.e. ‘Fifth Generation Warfare’).²⁵⁰ The surge in the number and variety of potentially significant new political actors is staggering and these actors may often emerge in unexpected ways and from unexpected places.

The unprofessional and badly led American soldiers who photographed themselves abusing Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq may have hurt the U.S. war effort in Iraq more than Iraq’s *conventional* military units did in the spring 2003 during the Allied invasion of Iraq. Who among the military planners thought that a few reserve soldiers could have that kind of impact on the war effort? The fact that people, events and images unrelated to battle itself may create extraordinarily effective combat forces gives military thinkers plenty to think about. Hammes’ description of Fourth Generation war should be understood in this context. Hammes has credited peasant armies, guerrillas, terrorist networks or individual fanatics with universal and *permanent* superiority over their more conventional opponents.²⁵¹

According to the philosopher of war Clausewitz, war is a dialectic process – the outcome is produced by the *interaction* of forces, ideas and wills. This Clausewitzian conception of war suggests that Hammes has overestimated the military and political strength of ‘Fourth Generation’ warriors by treating their effectiveness as a constant in the ever-changing struggle known as war. Clausewitz would probably have suggested that it is *imperative* to judge the *effectiveness* of Fourth Generation warriors against their opponents.

Mao’s armies faced Chiang Kai-Shek’s Kuomintang units during a long war period. Kuomintang’s units never achieved really high combat effectiveness even after decades of continuous war, first against Mao’s Communists and later against the invading Japanese Imperial Army. Later (during and after the Second World War), the USA strongly supported Kuomintang with material and technical support. By contrast, Mao’s ‘peasant armies’ later suffered devastating casualties when they encountered competent American units during the Korean War.²⁵² The North Vietnamese Com-

250 Several critics are discussing the ‘IO revolution’ or ‘Social Network revolution’. There is also a rich literature on the effect of the information revolution on society. Gene I. Rochlin, *Trapped in the Net: The Unanticipated Consequences of Computerization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). See also Theodore Roszak, *The Cult of Information* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986). Neil Postman, *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).

251 Ricks (2006), pp. 197–200, 290–97.

252 Mao Tse-tung, see f. ex. ‘Om motsigelsen’, in Mao Tsetung: *Skrifter i utvalg* (Oslo: Oktober 1972) and in Maotsetung, *Verker i*

munist effort to unify Vietnam under their leadership was undertaken at a horrendous cost in casualties, and succeeded because Hanoi could count on the Soviet Union for unlimited material support and China as a deterrent to a direct U.S. invasion of North Vietnam.²⁵³ Moreover, when the end finally came for the Saigon regime in May 1975, mechanised infantry units, not peasant armies, stormed the Presidential Palace.²⁵⁴ In any event, Hammes's claim in his book that 'Fourth Generation warfare' is an unstoppable problem for traditional militaries can hardly be based on a net assessment of the fighting prowess of *both sides* in the different conflicts he surveys. Supporters of 4GW have seen as their alternative to modern warfare what is, in the quotation above, called 'net war'.²⁵⁵ They see the actual war as a complex and protracted form of conflict that has its roots in, for example, the theories Mao asserted in what he called 'the way of the people's war'. As they see it, this will probably be the 'standard war' of the future.

This is a philosophy that is undeniably in contrast to the thinking behind terms such as *Revolution in Military Affairs* (RMA), *Network-Centric Warfare* (NCW) and *Effects Based Operations* (EBO),²⁵⁶ which dominated official rhetoric in the 1990s and up to around 2002/2003 in the United States²⁵⁷ and also in some European countries. William S. Lind formulated his opposition to the more 'technology-dominated' thinking as follows, in an article published in January 2004:

(...) Characteristics such as decentralization and initiative carry over from the Third to the Fourth Generation, but in other respects the Fourth Generation marks the most radical change since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. In Fourth Generation war, the state loses its monopoly on war. All over the world, state

utvalg, bind 1 (Oslo: Oktober 1977): Mao Tse-tung, 'On Protracted war' (A series of lectures delivered by Mao Tse-tung from 26 May to 3 June 1938 at the Yen-an Association for the Study of the War of Resistance Against Japan), Mao Tse-tung, 'All Reactionaries are Paper Tigers', excerpts from a speech at the Moscow Meeting of Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties, 18 November 1957.

253 General Vo Nguyen Giap, *Big Victory – Great Tasks*, introduction by David Schoenbrun (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1968). In this book he makes it clear that no loss of life was too big to achieve a decisive victory. Another important book analysing the war in Vietnam is written by William J. Duiker, *Sacred War: Nationalism and Revolution in a Divided Vietnam* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1995).

254 For a discussion of how the North Vietnamese slowly abandoned the doctrine of *People's War*, see Timothy J. Lomperis, *The War Everyone Lost – and Won: America's Intervention in Vietnam's Twin Struggles* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984).

255 Some of the best-known authors who have written about 4GW with a background in the U.S. Marines are: Colonel G. I. Wilson, Colonel T. X. Hammes, Colonel Mike Wylie, Major John Schmitt, Gunny John Poole and Gunny Bob Howard. Important high-ranking military officials from the U.S. Marine Corps who have written about the phenomenon are: General Al Gray (29th Commandant of the Marine Corps), General Anthony Zinni (former Commander-in-Chief, United States Central Command) and General Charles Krulak (31st Commandant of the Marine Corps). There is a lot of written material by these writers on the Internet.

256 See for example the small textbook produced for internal use at Swedish National Defence College; Nils Marius Rekkedal, *Central Features of the Debate on RMA and Network-Centric Warfare* (Second edition, Stockholm: Swedish National Defence College, Department of War Studies, 2004).

257 Besides the concepts mentioned, the concept documents '*Joint Vision 2010*' and '*Joint Vision 2020*' and the American Department of Defense's 'Transformation Planning Guidance' can also be seen as important symbols of the traditionally technology-oriented American philosophy of modern warfare. All concepts have conventional war as the theoretical basis for their military theory platform.

*militaries find themselves fighting non-state opponents such as al Qaeda, Hamas, Hezbollah, and the FARC. Almost everywhere, the state is losing. Fourth Generation war is also marked by a return to a world of cultures, not merely states, in conflict. We now find ourselves facing the Christian West's oldest and most steadfast opponent, Islam. After about three centuries on the strategic defensive, following the failure of the second Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683, Islam has resumed the strategic offensive, expanding outward in every direction. In Third Generation war, invasion by immigration can be at least as dangerous as invasion by a state army. Nor is Fourth Generation warfare merely something we import, as we did on 9/11. **At its core lies a universal crisis of legitimacy of the state, and that crisis means many countries will evolve Fourth Generation war on their soil.** America, with a closed political system (regardless of which party wins, the Establishment remains in power and nothing really changes) and a poisonous ideology of "multiculturalism," is a prime candidate for the home-grown variety of Fourth Generation war – which is by far the most dangerous kind.²⁵⁸*

Lind usually otherwise emphasises that 'Fourth-Generation opponents' are obviously not inclined to endorse the Western-dominated Geneva Conventions. Terrorist organisations or insurgents cannot formally endorse these either, because conventions can only be endorsed by states. But it should not be entirely ruled out that such groups would accept some form of 'soldier's code' as to how the actual warfare was to be conducted. He believes this is a feature of new war that should be assessed and investigated further – if nothing else, as a contribution towards keeping the use of violence down.

I think we have not yet seen the end of this debate, but the two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have moved the 'frontlines'. The U.S. Army of today is clearly changed if we compare it to the army that went into Iraq in the spring 2003. The long war against different groupings of insurgents in Iraq, and still in Afghanistan, forced the Americans to change both their basic soldier training and the education of officers.

2.5.4. Warfare for the 21st century?

The American General Charles Krulak, who served as Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps at the end of the 1990s, has discussed and written his views on future trends on many occasions. He has developed a slightly different system of concepts than the system used by Lind and later Hammes, for instance. Krulak was clearly of

²⁵⁸ William S. Lind, 'Understanding Fourth Generation War', *Antiwar.com*, <http://www.antiwar.com/lind/index.php?articleid=1702>, 15 January 2004. Accessed 15 February 2005.

the opinion that there has been a significant shift in thinking surrounding military use of force.

On one hand, you have to shoot and kill somebody; On the other hand, you have to feed somebody. And, you have to build an economy, restructure the infrastructure, and build the political system. And there's some poor lieutenant colonel, colonel, brigadier general down there, stuck in some province with all that saddled onto him, with NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] and political wannabes running around, with factions and a culture he doesn't understand. These are now culture wars that we're involved in. We don't understand that culture (...)

In one moment in time, our service members will be feeding and clothing displaced refugees – providing humanitarian assistance. In the next moment, they will be holding two warring tribes apart – conducting peacekeeping operations. Finally, they will be fighting a highly lethal mid-intensity battle. All on the same day, all within three city blocks. It will be what we call the three block war.²⁵⁹

Based on the texts of Krulak's speeches (which are still [2011] available on the Internet), we may summarise his thoughts as follows:

1. Americans prefer conventional war as this type of warfare is normally to the advantage of the party that is strongest technologically. For the same reason, an educated insurgent who uses 'Fourth-Generation Warfare' will prefer to use what Krulak has, on several occasions, called 'Fourth-Generation judo' in order to, in this way, be able to meet American and Western dependency on technology and 'throw us down' by exploiting our own bureaucratic heaviness and Western thinking against ourselves.
2. Our enemies' 'technological advantage' as regards the 11 September attacks in 2001 consisted of a few simple craft knives and tin openers combined with a fanatical will to die for a cause. It served its purpose as this put the significant American military and civilian security systems' bureaucracy in a hopeless position. The Americans were not able to do anything about what happened.
3. Today, the nature of the actual conflicts is changing. The previously clear dividing line between the contending parties, criminal elements and ordinary civilians is about to be erased. The modern urban soldier (and this fundamentally also

²⁵⁹ Charles C. Krulak, 'The Three Block War: Fighting In Urban Areas', presented to the National Press Club, Washington, D.C., 10 October 1997, *Vital Speeches of the Day*, Vol. 64, Iss. 5, 15 December 1997, p. 139.

applies to the guerrilla soldier out in the rural districts) may be anything from a religious fanatic to a child who perhaps fires an automatic rifle or RPG for payment. (...).²⁶⁰

There are, however, several similarities between what is asserted here and the thoughts that the military theorist Martin van Creveld, for instance, made himself a spokesman for in his 1991 book *The Transformation of War*, particularly if one looks at how he writes about future warfare in Chapter 5 of that book.²⁶¹ Seen from this perspective, there were several military thinkers who, in the 1990s, began to look around for new interpretation models. Supporters of 4GW are, seen in this light, only one group of several possible interpreters of the local wars/civil wars taking place. And to what extent the West should become involved in these conflicts is, of course, an important factor in their different opinions. (See also the bibliography with key sources on the many LIC/guerrilla wars and how these can be evaluated.)

If we are to attempt to briefly describe the existing trends with regard to the thinking surrounding today's guerrilla warfare and terrorist activity, the following points can be mentioned:

1. The currently ongoing wars tend to have more than one cause. Typically, there are two/three categories that are to be taken into consideration: the struggle for political power, ethnicity, religious differences, environmental factors (such as water shortages/desertification) and demographic pressure. There are many examples of situations in which poor people with a minimum of political influence have been pressured to give up their areas and move to less fertile places at the same time as the population figures rise. Emotive conflicts with some form of ethnic thinking or another are perhaps the most dominant cause of several of today's wars.
2. The struggles against what insurgents have seen as the occupations of their country (for example during the war in Iraq) can perhaps also be interpreted as 'ethnic conflicts' where the population opposes being governed by foreigners without an understanding of and/or respect for the local behaviour and culture. Economic conditions are also always lurking in the background, but there is much to suggest that these are not of vital importance as regards if/when a conflict breaks.²⁶²

²⁶⁰ The writer of this book has edited the English statements based on speeches given by General Charles Krulak during the period 2000–2002. See, for instance, 'Charles C. Krulak', *Encyclopedia*, *Nationmaster.com*, <http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Charles-C.-Krulak>. An example of this: in a specific small area of Belfast in Northern Ireland, a few too many British soldiers were shot in the head for this to be accidental. Contract killings in connection with terrorism therefore go back to at least the 1970s.

²⁶¹ Martin van Creveld, *The Transformation of War. The Most Radical Reinterpretation of Armed Conflict Since Clausewitz* (London: The Free Press, 1991).

²⁶² Jeremy Black, *War and the New Disorder in the 21st Century* (New York: Continuum, 2004). See, in particular, his discus-

3. An example of a local war is the as yet unresolved conflict between black farmers and Arab nomads in Darfur in Western Sudan. The antagonism has built up gradually and has been intensified by an ideological/ethnic crisis in the area. Under conditions like these, it is normally only a matter of time before a rebellion breaks out. The economic trends indicate that, in many countries, there are a few people who are becoming increasingly richer while the majority has the same or fewer resources – and this gap does not seem to be decreasing, particularly in the Third World.
4. Another factor is that the UN, which was established under the assumption that states are sovereign entities, is today faced with the paradox that it has supported, on several occasions, *insurgents* against formal governments, on the basis of self-determination for the people. According to the UN Statutes, states should not show aggression towards other states – on the basis of the hypothesis that if such aggression can be avoided, this will contribute to a more stable world.
5. However, since the Cold War ended, we have seen a series of intra-state conflicts or civil war-like clashes. One reason can be easily pointed out: if one tries to secure political autonomy for a national group and the host country does not accept such an attempt to break away, the outcome is war. The UN has then intervened to the advantage of insurgents in East Timor, which may contribute to encouraging other national groups that feel that they are more or less suppressed to launch an insurgency. This will obviously weaken those states subjected to insurgency, something that will hardly contribute to stability in the world. It is not easy to be nice to everyone. We can ask rhetorically whether it is only the UN that has developed an acceptance of some ethnic conflicts, but not of others, over the last few years. Perhaps it is important to take our Western image of the so-called international community into consideration in our evaluations?

We can obviously also ask why the international community needed three years (until 2007) before intervening in the brutal internal Sudan conflict – when the facts had been well-known all this time. It should also be noted that both the UN and the majority of existing states do not wish to allow new states to be formed. There are grounds for questioning how forward-looking it is to fear the forming of new states based on ethnic dividing lines. The majority of borders, even in today's Europe, were drawn up in keeping with ethnic/cultural dividing lines, not economic ones.

This UN *policy* is now, probably as a result of recommendations from the panel that assesses the UN's future role and organisation, in the process of being changed. In many ways, the UN system is now being given an internal 'reality check'. An interest-

sion of factors in Chapter 3, pp. 69–118.

ing UN initiative is connected to the relatively new term ‘responsibility to protect’, or R2P. The ideas behind R2P were primarily based on the experiences gained during the 1990s humanitarian disasters in Rwanda and Bosnia, and during the NATO intervention in Kosovo. At the UN World Summit in 2005, the concept of R2P was endorsed by representatives (most were heads of state) from about 150 states. In the so-called *Summit Declaration* it was recognised that states have the primary responsibility to prevent genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and war crimes. One of the most important observations behind the R2P concept was that states often fail to meet this responsibility. In theory, the international community, including the UN as an organisation, has a responsibility to protect the civilian populations, even during *enforcement action* authorised by the UN Security Council.²⁶³ But based on UN history, one or more of the great powers sitting in the UN Security Council have used their veto against an international intervention.²⁶⁴ One of the exceptions was the UN resolution from March 2011 preparatory to a primary Western intervention against the Gaddafi regime in Libya, in support of Libyan rebel forces. In a so-called background paper published on the Danish Foreign Ministry website we could read:

*In January 2009 the Secretary-General presented his report on the implementation of R2P which clearly stressed that the concept cannot be reduced to humanitarian intervention and emphasized that the implementation of R2P is largely about prevention. To counter opposition and scepticism regarding the concept the report underlined that R2P rests on three pillars: 1) each State's responsibility to protect its citizens, 2) the need for international assistance and capacity building, and 3) the international community's commitment to timely and decisive response. The report furthermore reflected the World Summit declaration by stating that the international community should contribute to States' capacity building to manage conflicts and atrocities against the population and support international efforts to prevent conflicts and protect civilians from harm. Efforts are now underway at the UN and in regional and sub-regional organizations to strengthen these institutions to enable the international community to anticipate, prevent and response to "R2P-crimes".*²⁶⁵

But as UN political activities are mainly based upon dialogue on the basis of generally approved norms, there is no automatic reaction if one of the UN member states

263 'RtoP in the 2005 World Summit', *ICRtoP International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect*, <http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/component/content/article/383>.

264 See the different sub-documents on *ICRtoP International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect*, www.responsibilitytoprotect.org.

265 Background Paper on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), *UNGA Side-Event Hosted by Foreign Ministers of Ghana and Denmark, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark*, Permanent Mission of Denmark to the UN, <http://www.missionfnnew->

breaks the intentions behind the R2P concepts. But since its launch in 2005, the strategy of R2P has gained some ground. But the great powers have very different views on the use of interventions, especially as states like China and Russia have their own internal insurgencies – and are accustomed to fighting the ‘rebels’ with all available measures and without external interference. Only time will show how efficient this new concept eventually will become.

The West, especially the USA, has traditionally placed emphasis on technology and advanced weapon systems. The ongoing wars in Afghanistan and the ‘continuation war’ in Iraq, however, may here serve as a ‘wake-up call’. In the real world, war is not waged by machines; rather, people and their ideas are the actual basis of the wars that arise.²⁶⁶ It is also a common notion that so-called ‘low-tech approaches’ apply with regard to what theorists such as the American William S. Lind and like-minded people have called ‘Fourth-Generation Warfare’. In this, the use of alternative solutions, such as the actual tactics of the weaker party, has prominence. This is, however, perhaps too simple an interpretation. Insurgents have, on several occasions, been able to successfully turn Western conventional military strategies and tactics into a handicap for Western forces. One should then, through independent analysis, develop and adapt one’s own tactical and strategic capabilities to meet the conditions in question.

Since the Cold War, the structures of the armed forces in many Western countries and also in the former Soviet Union area have as yet been able to adapt only to a limited extent. The question one should then ask is whether the armed forces one possesses have adapted to the missions they face today. In his book *The Art of War: War and Military Thought*, van Creveld discussed issues such as how an ‘empire’, i.e. a ‘hegemonial’ superpower, can combat threats to itself. These threats, according to Creveld, typically come from the periphery, i.e. from the edge of the superpower’s sphere of interest. They build up gradually and thus are initially *not* seen as constituting a threat. When they have become sufficiently serious, then the ‘hegemony’ may take action. Success against the ‘troublemakers’ may be achieved when the superpower takes the ‘fight’ to a local level, and attempts to isolate the events so that they will not spill over/spread to other parts of its own spheres of interest. The intervening forces from the superpower should then fight under conditions in which the local insurgent forces first use, and later *avoid*, asymmetry. It will always take time to defeat an insurgency. Creveld’s main point is that, in connection with COIN, sufficient military capabilities/capacities should be deployed to exploit the options (in time and space) that exist in the contested area. What is briefly outlined above is, according to

york.um.dk/NR/rdonlyres/D4D030DE-FBCE-436E-897A-B53495544B71/0/BACKGROUNDPAPEERR2P.pdf.

266 The U.S. internal debate in 2010 indicates the internal differences between ‘traditionalists’ both in Congress and in the Pentagon, who want to prioritise the big technological programmes (for example building new carriers and nuclear attack submarines, F-22s, F-35s and the now cancelled FCS), and others who want to prioritise equipment for the ongoing COIN-based war in Afghanistan – and the ‘new Afghanistan-like conflicts’ they see coming.

Creveld, the *method* that has proved to be historically most relevant – and COIN is then an effective ‘procedure’ for combating opposition forces. With the ‘global reach’ of the U.S. (i.e. the ability to project forces ‘everywhere’) this is at least a potential approach for the Americans, according to Creveld.²⁶⁷

In the U.S. in particular, since the invasion of Iraq in 2003, there has been extensive discussion about how the armed forces should be organised and equipped. The problem is that, after the conventional phase of war, they have had to maintain protracted operations in order to combat militant insurgents, who, together with criminal elements and foreign ‘soldiers’, made it very difficult to establish a stable Iraqi Government. This has obviously been particularly complicated as Iraq is very much split both ethnically and religiously. (The internal political problems had still not been completely resolved at the time of writing in 2011.)

Another factor that is often underestimated is that states cannot be seen as having a monopoly on warfare. This is also a basis for asking whether it actually ever has been so. But in European thinking with regard to warfare, we have, for about 350 years now, seen warfare as something that went on between states/countries and was both organised and recognised by them. This notion may perhaps be seen as a cornerstone of all Western political and military thinking on war and warfare since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648.

It is likely that a more correct explanation of this development is that not even during the ‘glory days’ of the nation states in the 17th and 18th centuries were all wars in the European cultural sphere conducted between states. In fact a number of civil wars also occurred during this period, for instance in France and Austria-Hungary.

In parts of the Third World, in particular, there is scarcely any state monopoly on power today of the type one would envisage as ‘normal’ in Western political thinking.

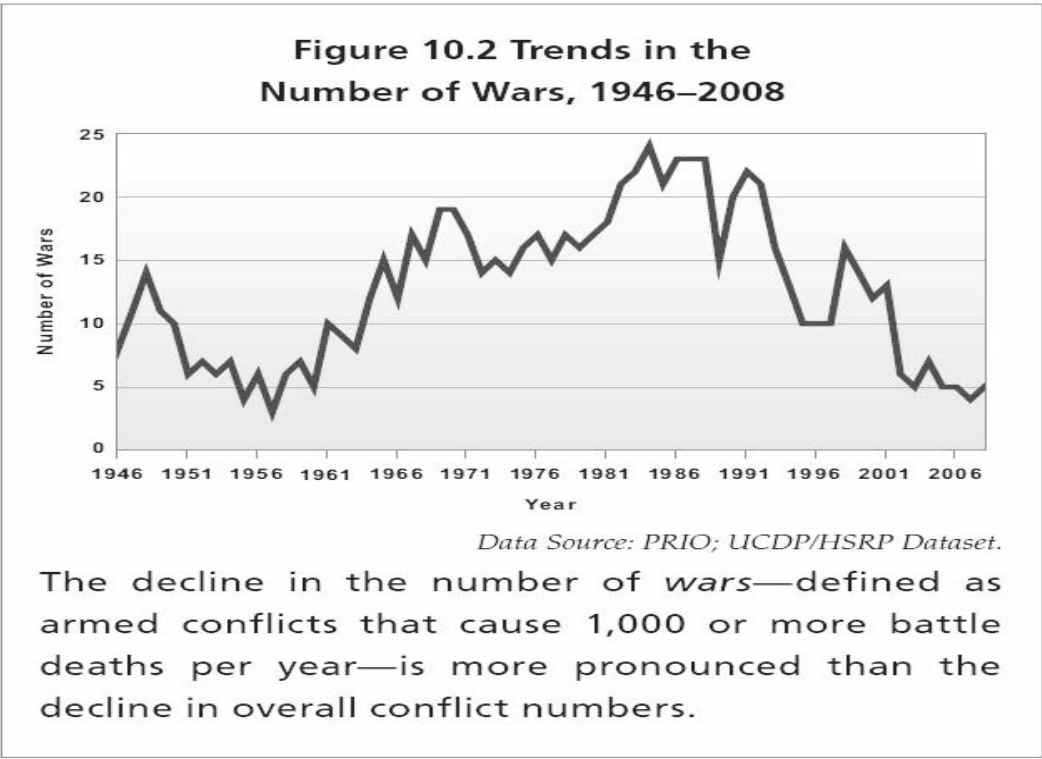
If one takes a more historical view of the developments, guerrilla warfare (including use of terrorism) and conventional warfare have often been used as political means to bring about changes within a nation state and to society as such. Democratisation and greater social justice have been part of a successful counterinsurgency strategy in several so-called ‘social’ insurgencies and the measures have, after a time, taken the edge off the insurgency, as in the case of El Salvador and Guatemala during the guerrilla wars of the 1980s. The insurgents had obviously wanted a total victory, but had to be satisfied with these ‘spin-off’ results when peace had finally been concluded. Otherwise it should be noted here that, even if resources and political support may come from other nation states that sympathise with the insurgents, they decide to stay out of the conflict themselves.

As some military theorists see it today, new trends are making their way into the traditional pattern. As regards ‘Fourth-Generation Warfare’, the insurgents like to use a mixture of terrorism, guerrilla warfare and other types of unconventional warfare as

²⁶⁷ Martin van Creveld, *The Art of War: War and Military Thought* (London: Cassell/Orion Publishing Group Limited, 2002).

tools for changing a given society, its culture and attitudes. The insurgents may also oppose the nation state with the necessary supranational measures and means.

The unusual thing is that it is often difficult to see that the insurgents have any clear ideology and/or declared objectives for what will happen if they are successful in taking over power. This particularly applies in ethnic or resistance wars where the insurgents are fighting *against* something (e.g. an occupation and/or what is seen as the ethnic predominance of another national group), more than where they are fighting *for* a new and more righteous social order (examples include Peru, El Salvador and, more recently, the Maoist-led insurgency in Nepal during the 1990s until 2006).²⁶⁸ See the graph below (developed by the Norwegian Peace Research Institute in Oslo).²⁶⁹



²⁶⁸ It is outside the scope of this book to examine the many ongoing conflicts in detail. Anyone who would like to study in greater detail what characterises the ongoing ethnic conflicts is advised to read, for example, Joseph R. Rudolph, Jr. (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Modern Ethnic Conflicts* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003). Today, Maoism has no significant long-term adherents in the Third World – a situation very different from the 1960s.

²⁶⁹ Graphs and tables, Figure 10.2, 'Trends in the Number of Wars, 1946–2008', *Human Security Report 2009/2010: The Causes of Peace and The Shrinking Costs of War*, Human Security Report Project (HSRP), http://hsrproject.org/docs/Publications/HSR20092010/Figures/20092010Report_Fig10_2_NumberOfWars.pdf.

'In general, in warfare what is referred to as the "unorthodox" means attacking where the enemy is not prepared and going forth when they do not expect it – in this fashion you will be victorious.'

– Anonymous, *One Hundred Unorthodox Strategies: Battle and Tactics of Chinese Warfare*

3 ASYMMETRIC WARFARE, COMPOUND AND HYBRID WARFARE

Kari-Petri Huovinen ²⁷⁰

Nils Marius Rekkedal

3.1. Introduction

Two terms that have been much used in connection with the description of so-called modern warfare, particularly after 9/11, are *terrorism* and *asymmetric* (or *asymmetrical*) *warfare*. The terms are, however, not particularly precise and quite a large number of different definitions exist. That said, the two terms describe phenomena that have to some extent acquired new meanings since the end of the Cold War.

The term *terrorism* (see Chapter 6 for a detailed presentation) is by no means a new phenomenon. However, it has, to some extent, taken new directions and has, for some of the groups that practise it, become more international than ever before. According to NATO terminology, terrorism (2010) is:

Terrorism

The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence against individuals or property in an attempt to coerce or intimidate governments or societies to achieve political, religious or ideological objectives. 01 Sep 1989. (AAP-6) ²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Captain Finnish Army Kari-Petri Huovinen and N M Rekkedal have together written this chapter.

²⁷¹ *NATO Standardization Agreement AAP-6 (2008)*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO Standardization Agency (NSA) 2008 – Organisation Du Traité De L'Atlantique Nord, Agence OTAN De Normalisation (AON) 2008, AAP-6(2008), NATO glossary of terms and definitions (English and French) – Glossaire OTAN de termes et définitions (anglais et français), Listing terms of military significance and their definitions for use in NATO – Liste de termes et définitions d'importance militaire à l'usage de l'OTAN, <http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/other/nato2008.pdf>.

In the NATO document AAP-6 on terms and definitions, *asymmetric threat* has now replaced asymmetrical warfare, and the term is given the following definition:

Asymmetric threat

A threat emanating from the potential use of dissimilar means or methods to circumvent or negate an opponent's strengths while exploiting his weaknesses to obtain a disproportionate result. (AAP-6) ²⁷²

One of the earlier definitions of asymmetric warfare was prescribed by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff at the end of the 1990s. At that time the Joint Chiefs defined the phenomenon in the following manner:

Asymmetrical Warfare is an attempt to circumvent or undermine an opponent's strengths while exploiting his weaknesses using methods that differ significantly from the opponent's usual mode of operations. ²⁷³

After 9/11 we have also seen the development of many theories, including more 'private' definitions made by military or academic researchers studying threat developments after the terrorist acts in the USA. One of the more workable descriptions of asymmetric warfare was developed by the American Roger W. Barnett (U.S. Naval War College). He has described the term asymmetrical warfare in this way:

"Asymmetrical warfare" is often used to describe a situation where an adversary can take advantage of its strengths or an opponent's weakness. (...)

But for the concept to be bounded reasonably, and to allow for conceptualizing about counters to it, asymmetrical warfare must be more finely tuned. Emphasizing one's strengths and exploiting an enemy's weakness is what strategy is all about. To view that as asymmetrical tends to trivialize a most vexing problem. True asymmetries, in contrast, are those actions that an adversary can exercise that you either cannot or will not. These asymmetries are the breeding ground for those strategists' nightmare, for they comprise the most troublesome problems with which to deal. True asymmetries pose grave difficulties for several reasons. First, because one cannot (or will not) respond in kind, offsetting tit-for-tat counteractions are

²⁷² NATO Standardization Agreement AAP-6 (2008), p. 2-A-20.

²⁷³ Franklin B. Miles, *Asymmetric Warfare: An Historical Perspective* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1999), 'Paper', pp. 2–3. We must probably go back to the beginning of the 1980s to find the starting point for the modern use of the concept. Until then the concepts of *insurgency* and *counterinsurgency* had mostly been used in English-speaking literature and debate. One of the first newer American doctrines to deal with the problems discussed in the chapter was Joint Publication 1: U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States*, Joint Pub 1, 10 January 1995.

*impossible at worst, problematic at best. Second, asymmetrical attacks and defenses lean toward the countercultural. It is abhorrent to Western strategists even to contemplate some of the techniques or weapons of asymmetrical warfare. For these reasons, finally, the perpetrator of asymmetrical warfare will undoubtedly have surprise on its side. (...)*²⁷⁴

The term asymmetrical warfare became very popular after 9/11, but the actual phenomenon – a weaker party making use of unconventional weapons and tactics against an adversary that is stronger in terms of technology and resources – can be regarded as a historical model with very long traditions. What is new is that we now see this form of thinking being used more systematically than before.

The terms *compound war* and *hybrid war* are relatively new. But the military phenomenon that the two different terms seek to describe is not new. During the long development of warfare, a recurring phenomenon has been the combined use of military forces trained and paid for by a state reinforced by the use of irregular forces like militias or guerrilla forces. The two terms were both created to describe this.

Compound war (warfare) is a military theoretical term and has no official definition in American or NATO doctrines. But some military historians and military thinkers have used the term in their writing. The term compound warfare was probably first used by the American Thomas M. Huber in an article published in 1996 called ‘Napoleon in Spain’.²⁷⁵ (A more detailed description of the term comes later in this chapter.)

A number of different definitions of *hybrid war* are in use. The term was probably coined by the former U.S. Marine Corps officer Frank G. Hoffman in 2006. To our knowledge, he first used the term in a short article published in February 2006,²⁷⁶ and developed his thoughts further in an article named ‘Complex Irregular Warfare: The Next Revolution in Military Affairs’, published the same year in the U.S. foreign policy journal *Orbis*.²⁷⁷ Other military-oriented writers who have used this military theory term are Anthony H. Cordesman and Erin K. Fitzgerald, both at CSIS in the USA. In a working draft published in August 2009, they wrote the following view (as a comment to the then upcoming U.S. 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review):

²⁷⁴ Roger W. Barnett (2003), pp. 15–16. Barnett is a former Captain in USN, and holds a Ph.D.

²⁷⁵ Thomas M. Huber, ‘Napoleon in Spain and Naples: Fortified Compound Warfare’, in Thomas M. Huber (editor), *Compound Warfare. That Fatal Knot* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Press, 2002, Honolulu, Hawaii: University Press of the Pacific, 2004), p. 91–112.

²⁷⁶ Frank G. Hoffman, ‘Complex Irregular Warfare’, *E-notes*, Foreign Policy Research Institute, January 6, 2006, <http://www.fpri.org/enotes/20060106.military.hoffman.complexirregularwarfare.html>.

²⁷⁷ Frank G. Hoffman, ‘Complex Irregular Warfare: The Next Revolution in Military Affairs’, *Orbis*, Summer 2006, pp. 395–411.

It is unclear the extent to which it will realize its potential, given the scale needed to make meaningful decisions, create an affordable force posture, fund credible levels of manpower, fully restructure DOD's failed procurement plans, and deal with the real world cost and impact of the two ongoing wars.

*The search for answers is being structured around the concept of "hybrid warfare," which requires the broadest possible range of force capabilities and flexibilities across the spectrum of operations. Hybrid warfare may be an intellectual improvement over the emphasis on conventional warfighting in past reviews, but so far the concept is so loosely defined, that it does not provide clear criteria for decision-making. Service efforts to define it have so far been little more than shopping lists for every possible contingency mixed with buzzwords that appear to have meaning only as long as they are not examined in any detail. In practice, any concept that effectively justifies anything ends in justifying absolutely nothing.*²⁷⁸

Hoffman's perhaps most interesting description to date of his theories was the article published by the U.S. National Defense University in April 2009. The title was: *Hybrid Threats: Reconceptualizing the Evolving Character of Modern Conflict*.²⁷⁹ (The term *hybrid war* will be discussed later in this chapter.)

3.2. Has war (really) changed?

When the World Trade Center (WTC) was destroyed by the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, few people had any doubt that there would be a clear military American response. After less than a month of political and military preparations, the attacks against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and their allies, al-Qaeda, began. The following points characterise some of the developments seen since 2001:

- The al-Qaeda terrorist group got the spectacular attack it wanted and 'shook' the existing 'world order', especially the Western world order.
- The thinking behind what later became 'war on terrorism' has in many ways dominated American foreign policy since 11 September 2001, and the USA now has a military presence in more countries (and areas) than before. This is still the case after a new political administration took office in Washington, D.C.

²⁷⁸ Erin K. Fitzgerald and Anthony H. Cordesman, 'The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review: A+, F, or Dead on Arrival?', Working draft August 27, 2009, *Center for Strategig & International Studies CSIS*, http://csis.org/files/publication/090809_qdrahc_revised.pdf.

²⁷⁹ Frank G. Hoffman, *Hybrid Threats: Reconceptualizing the Evolving Character of Modern Conflict*. *Strategic Forum*, No 240, April 2009, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, <http://bsu.ase.ro/oldbsu/anexe/lectures2010/SF240.pdf>.

- If the Americans and their allies are to be successful in combating international terrorism, the American administration must be able to deploy for protracted and complicated warfare for many years to come.

During his first months in his new post (2001), President George W. Bush did much to break international agreements that did not fit in with the new U.S. Administration's ambitions. The commotion was not limited to the so-called Kyoto agreement and the nuclear weapons agreement with Russia. Following the events of September 2001, the Republican administration adjusted its attitude to the surrounding world – at least for a while. The international community again became important to the Bush administration, even if the United States, with its significant military power, probably felt that it could deal with its enemies on its own.²⁸⁰ The second phase began with a steady increase in American political pressure on Iraq (2002). In his State of the Union address on 29 January 2002, President Bush branded Iraq as one of the three countries in the world's 'axis of evil'. During the course of 2002, it became increasingly clear that there would be a military invasion of Iraq.

Even if the United States had viewed Saddam Hussein as an enemy ever since the invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, an 'ideology-based invasion', such as the invasion we saw in the spring 2003, would have been almost unthinkable in the years before the acts of terrorism on 11 September 2001. After the acts of terrorism, American society was characterised by both patriotism and a *siege* mentality.²⁸¹ The Americans began to focus strongly on Iraq, rather than the other countries in the so-called 'axis of evil', mainly because intelligence sources had officially claimed that the Iraqi regime was again producing WMDs (or at least preparing to do so).

In the spring of 2003, the regime in Iraq was toppled after a short *conventional* war. The change of regime did not, however, lead to peace in the country. A short time after the conventional phase of the war was over, various insurgent groups appeared and all of them decided to start their own insurgencies against the Americans and their allies in Iraq.²⁸² In the spring of 2004, it became clear that the insurgents could

280 That said, the United States' so-called 'war on terror' since September 2001 has, at the same time, revealed that the U.S. needs allies, not primarily to conduct war on the ground, but to provide a campaign such as that in Iraq with broad international legitimacy, i.e. a legitimacy also accepted by others. It is only Europeans who have been willing to contribute significantly in connection with the modernisation and possible democratisation of Muslim society in the Middle East, an area that is Europe's and not the U.S.'s neighbour. Even if some commentators have asserted that a split is on the way between Europe and the U.S., one should not write off the possibility of better understanding and cooperation across the Atlantic in the future.

281 When we come to assess the military realities of today, it is important to note that the U.S. military budget is also equivalent to the military budgets of the world's ten largest nations put together. Today, the U.S. has less than 5 per cent of the world's population but accounts for about 40 per cent of the world's military costs.

282 An interesting book written by an anonymous author presented a very harsh critique of the Bush administration's leadership of the 'war on terrorism', and especially of the Defense Minister Donald Rumsfeld; Anonymous, *Imperial Hubris. Why the West is Losing the War on Terror* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, Inc., 2004), see p. 99, pp. 138-140, p. 182, and p. 192. A particularly grave error was that Rumsfeld and 'his man' in Iraq, Paul L. Bremer, did not listen to the recommendations to keep the Iraqi Army intact.

no longer be dismissed as ‘some remnants of the old regime’ – the occupation had created entirely new insurgent movements.

If we look back at the developments that led to the Iraq War in 2003, one point is that, prior to the invasion, Iraq was only an ‘irritation’ and posed hardly any serious military threat to either the U.S. or Iraq’s neighbours. It is, however, important to understand the underlying fear that the Americans had of a repeat of 11 September during 2002 and 2003. The Bush administration was clearly very preoccupied by the long-term strategic implications of not removing Saddam. In short, by going in early, the Americans wanted to exercise a positive influence and thereby avoid a ‘possible and probable’ major war in the region. In the U.S. administration, there is probably still a majority who believe that the attack on Iraq was necessary, but all the while there has been some disagreement about methods and strategies.

The so-called ‘War on Terror (-ism)’ is today in its third phase, and has been re-named *The Long War* in some quarters.²⁸³ The term ‘The Long War’ has been used by some military writers, though the term is absent from the formal policy document *2010 Quadrennial Defense Review*.

But the civil war in Iraq is still going on (2011), but without the heavy fighting we saw between 2004 and into 2009. Although Iraq today has a democratically elected government and its own security forces, the regime has had great internal political problems. The Iraqi regime has still a long way to go before Iraq eventually becomes a stable and well-functioning state. But we should remember the earlier development in Iraq. According to Dexter Filkins: ‘General Petraeus appears to be following a template that helped him pull the Iraq war back from the cataclysmic levels of violence that engulfed the country after the American invasion. Beginning in 2006, American commanders simultaneously opened negotiations with insurgent leaders while killing or capturing those not inclined to make a deal.’²⁸⁴ Even if this system had some success in Iraq, doing the same in Afghanistan may not create the same effect. Afghanistan is a very different country, and it is not clear that the tactics that brought success in Iraq will work there. The Afghan insurgency is today (2011) nowhere near to being as cohesive as the insurgency in Iraq, where guerrilla leaders could order their men to stop fighting with a reasonable expectation that they would obey. Afghanistan is still today a tribal society.²⁸⁵

283 Tom Hayden, ‘The ‘Long War’ quagmire’ *Los Angeles Times*, March 28, 2010, <http://articles.latimes.com/2010/mar/28/opinion/la-oe-hayden28-2010mar28>. Hayden wrote: ‘The term “Long War” was first applied to America’s post-9/11 conflicts in 2004 by Gen. John P. Abizaid, then head of U.S. Central Command, and by the retiring chairman of the Joint Chiefs of State, Gen. Richard B. Myers, in 2005.’

284 Dexter Filkins, ‘U.S. Uses Attacks to Nudge Taliban Toward a Deal’, *New York Times*, 14 October 2010. Quote: ‘Some Afghan experts believe that NATO’s two-track strategy is flawed – that bleeding the Taliban may actually make the insurgents less inclined to negotiate. Matt Waldman, an independent analyst who has worked extensively in the region, said that it was unlikely that many Taliban leaders could order their men to stop fighting.’

285 Filkins (2010).

The invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan and the following occupation (in Iraq) and 'support of the legal regime' (in Afghanistan) have, however, themselves contributed to creating a new generation of so-called *jihadists* who may be a threat to the United States, other Western states, and later also Asia and Africa, i.e. in the next round of these insurgencies. The following comment from 2005, at the height of the insurgencies in Iraq, gives a picture of the views at that time:

*The war in Iraq is creating a new breed of Islamic jihadists who could go on to destabilise other countries, according to a CIA report. The CIA believes Iraq to be potentially worse than Afghanistan, which produced thousands of jihadists in the 1980s and 1990s. Many of the recruits to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda had fought in Afghanistan. The sobering caution came as a senior British anti-terrorism source warned that those trained in terror techniques in Iraq could use their newly-acquired skills in Britain at the end of the war. The CIA report, completed last month, remains classified. But a CIA source yesterday confirmed that its broad conclusions, disclosed by the New York Times yesterday, were accurate.*²⁸⁶

Within the circles working on problems connected to modern terrorism, insurgency and counterinsurgency in particular, many experts understand that today's religiously motivated terrorists do not represent the only trends within Islam. Many use the term *jihadist* to distinguish between ordinary supporters of Islam and the more extreme sections. However, the accuracy or correctness of this term can be debated. We also see that extremists and often also political leaders with their own agendas use the term to promote their own interests. The true meaning of *jihad* is not 'holy war' as it is often translated, but 'struggle' or 'exertion', i.e. it is incumbent upon devout Muslims to make a great effort in all areas in order to ensure that God's will is executed in practice within social areas as diverse as the economic, intellectual, social and spiritual spheres. But, now and then, military efforts cannot be avoided if one is to ensure the accepted standards of decency as set out in the Koran. According to tradition, the Prophet Muhammad said after one of his military victories (here translated into English): 'We are coming back from the Lesser Jihad [i.e. the battle] and returning to the Greater Jihad.' By this is meant that, after military victory was secured, they would return to the day-to-day struggle of improving the society they lived in, which included trying to become a better person oneself.²⁸⁷

286 Ewen MacAskill, Duncan Campbell & Richard Norton-Taylor, 'Iraq creating new breed of jihadists, says CIA', *The Guardian*, 23 June 2005.

287 Wendy Doniger (editor), *Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of World Religions* (New York: Merriam-Webster, 1999), see for example *Jihad*, p. 571, Josef W. Meri, editor, *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Routledge, 2005), see *Jihad* p. 419, John L. Esposito & Dalia Mogahed, 'Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think', (New York: Gallup Press, 2008), p. 20 f. (PS! In modern Standard Arabic, *jihad* is one of the correct terms for a *struggle* for any cause, violent or not, religious or secular.)

The term *jihad* consequently represents more than warfare for the majority of Muslims, so there is no clear connection between Islam and the extensive use of violence against others. Even though the term *jihad* has now entered daily use and is probably viewed negatively by Westerners, there are perhaps grounds for reflecting on whether this use of the word could damage the cause – terms that have a negative connotation rarely help those the term is being used against to be seen in a more positive light. (We have, however, opted to use the term in this book – after this introductory explanation. The term is now in international use and we have not been able to find a good alternative.) It was actually among the so-called *jihadists* in Afghanistan in the 1980s that al-Qaeda had its origins. These groups gained their battle experience by fighting what could later be characterised as second-rate forces. Today, the Iraqi and Afghan *jihadists* are learning to fight against a considerably more sophisticated enemy and the hostilities are played out in cities rather than in mountain areas. The question is what kind of attacks we can expect to see from the new generation of Iraqi- or Afghan-trained *jihadists* in a 10–15 year perspective if they decide to conduct a *global* war on their enemies – especially the Western countries and the pro-Western Arab regimes in the Middle East, and also in states in Africa and Asia which have a dominant Muslim population. Jihadists from European countries are now joining these wars. In Britain, for example, the would-be jihadists are said to have been ‘radicalised’ by extreme clerics working in certain mosques.

What actually is ‘the big picture’? The short description of the situation above demonstrates the ongoing changes in the thinking about threat assessment over the next few years. One cannot *predict* the future, but one can project a number of *plausible alternative futures* against which to test new strategies (including force structures). To do so, U.S. and other Western planners must develop a representative set of plausible contingencies that encompass the possible/principal challenges. These need to take account of the existing support among European-based Muslims, and how best to prevent growth in Muslim support for extreme movements. Planners need a representative array of *contingencies* encompassing the principal military challenges they may confront over the planning horizon. As the American Andrew Krepinevich wrote in 2005, this will enable them to ‘hedge’ against uncertainty by testing concepts of operations and force structures against plausible alternatives and permit them to realistically assess the potential impact of a range of possible futures on relative military effectiveness.²⁸⁸ All qualified future adversaries will, at a minimum, attempt to employ all the dimensions of warfare to *asymmetrically* counter critical U.S. and Western military capabilities. Future opponents will probably attempt to impose untenable costs on the United States and their allies by relying on

288 Andrew F. Krepinevich, ‘*The Quadrennial Defense Review: Rethinking the US Military Posture*’ (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2005), pp. 56–59.

time-tested techniques against superior (conventional) forces – different kinds of protracted war of attrition. Time after time, it has been shown that an insurgent who can undermine the enemies' domestic public support may win. Insurgents have traditionally accomplished this by raising the level of violence and brutality, and, if possible, expanding and escalating the conflict by targeting the *supporters* of the threatened political regime. If the existing regime (as in Afghanistan) is dependent on foreign support, today some terrorist organisations may threaten important supporters, for example by using threats against the U.S. homeland and its key allies.²⁸⁹

Obviously, conventional warfare can not be ruled out as a political instrument, especially when great powers face each other or intend to combat another state's conventional armed forces (for example in Korea). Today, however, most warfare, conflicts and disputes are conducted by means of the use of different forms of irregular forces and terrorism. The use of non-military resources, such as diplomacy and economic support, is also important. We should also take into account the liberalisation we have seen in several previously autocratic states, which has led to significant challenges for the new (more democratic) regimes, most recently in Tunisia and Egypt.

Among other things, the reduction in the police and security forces in the former Soviet Union has paved the way for an increase in organised crime in these areas. This has again created a need for 'privatised' local security.²⁹⁰ As the government police forces are not able to safeguard the people and their properties in a satisfactory manner, those who can afford it hire private security. One example: In most Western countries, the trend has also been towards the 'privatisation' of security, even if there have been great local variations. The problem with the reduction of official security forces was illustrated in an editorial in the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*:

In Sweden the state is taking on more and more duties. On Stockholmsbörsen (the Stockholm Stock Exchange), the public sector is today the largest owner. At the same time, the state is neglecting its core business: the judicial system, the armed forces and education. We see here that the government is not able to concentrate on its main tasks – with major consequences for the state over a period of time. In contrast to this, as part of the political progress of the so-called NeoCons in the US, we have seen the ideological conception that 'private is better' where they, almost independently of the realities of the

289 See two examples of the Jihadist threats: Praveen Swami, 'Terror alerts play into the hands of the enemy', *Daily Telegraph*, 5 October 2010. Jon Swaine, 'Times Square bomber says US should "brace themselves" for war as he receives life sentence', *Daily Telegraph*, 5 October 2010.

290 See two texts on modern 'private security': P. W. Singer, 'Can't Win With 'Em, Can't Go To War Without 'Em: Private Military Contractors and Counterinsurgency', Foreign Policy Paper Number 4, September 2007, *Foreign Policy at Brookings*, <http://www.brookings.edu/-/media/Files/rc/papers/2007/0927militarycontractors/0927militarycontractors.pdf>. 'Blackwater and the business of war', editorial, *Los Angeles Times*, 30 September 2007, <http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/la-ed-blackwater30sep30,0,1421293.story?coll=la-opinion-center>.

*matter, want private investors and companies to take over former government activities. This phenomenon has led to 'corporate warriors'/civilian employed defence and security specialists having taken over many of the armed forces' traditional roles. This has been very apparent in Iraq today.*²⁹¹

This development has *indirectly* led to the weakening of the state's traditional monopoly on power. In other areas of the world, e.g. in parts of Africa, many states could be considered to be virtually lawless; with the consequences this has for the day-to-day situation for ordinary people.

3.3. Asymmetric warfare

3.3.1. An introduction

The text below will first and foremost discuss what *asymmetry* actually is and then go through how these forms of warfare may be put into practice. In addition, important aspects of modern terrorism will be briefly presented. The terms can be seen as variants of the more traditional terms for unconventional warfare, such as guerrilla warfare and revolutionary warfare.

Interestingly enough, NATO does not have any definition of asymmetric warfare of its own. As already mentioned earlier, the closest we come to this is the organisation's description of the term *asymmetric threat* in the (2010) NATO document Glossary of Terms and Definitions (AAP-6): '*A threat emanating from the potential use of dissimilar means or methods to circumvent or negate an opponent's strengths while exploiting his weaknesses to obtain a disproportionate result.*'²⁹²

Today, asymmetric warfare is not an unambiguous concept, but the term covers a broad spectrum of theories, experiences, attitudes and, last but not least, a number of definitions. As early as 1961 (English version 1964), the French officer and counter-insurgency theoretician David Galula wrote of asymmetry used in connection with what was then called *revolutionary warfare*. He described the phenomenon as follows:

*There is an asymmetry between the opposite camps of a revolutionary war. This phenomenon results from the very nature of the war, from the disproportion of strength between the opponents at the outset, and from the difference in essence between their assets and their liabilities.*²⁹³

²⁹¹ See editorial in the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, 28 December 2004.

²⁹² NATO Standardization Agreement AAP-6 (2008), p. 2-A-20, as at 30 October 2010.

²⁹³ Galula (1965), pp. 5–6.

A conflict can be termed 'asymmetric' when either the political/strategic objectives of opponents are asymmetric, or when the means employed are (very) dissimilar. Today, many writers are fascinated with concepts like asymmetric warfare, network-centric warfare and precision warfare, and some are convinced that heavy forces and the tank (yet again!) are passé. Perhaps so, but a more realistic view is that the soldiers may once again be riding into the guns rather than to the sound of the guns.²⁹⁴ The Jane's Defence Weekly correspondent Helmoed-Roemer Heitman wrote (2006):

*Asymmetry is not new. It is as old as warfare: mounted knights totally out-classed foot soldiers until faced with new weapons and tactics. The crossbow reversed things and declaring it 'unchristian' and attempting to ban it did not work too well. Both mounted and foot soldiers remain on the battlefield, however, despite the shifting advantage.*²⁹⁵

After the acts of terrorism on 11 September 2001, asymmetric warfare has been given many different interpretations and was one of the concepts that attracted strong attention in military journals in the period 2001–2004. What is common to most interpretations is that in asymmetric warfare, one is facing something unknown (or unexpected) when it comes to the opponent's goals, procedures or practical measures. The greater the differences in military strength and doctrines, the more difficult it becomes to predict the form of action of the weaker opponent. In order to take the right measures against a weaker and asymmetric opponent, one's own doctrine must therefore be flexible and predict the unpredictable. The doctrine must therefore be based on what means one thinks an asymmetric opponent may have, and developing the necessary countermeasures oneself.

Moreover, social changes have also led to greater vulnerability to so-called asymmetric coercion. The military thinker Edward Luttwak wrote in 1996 that the West is now in what he called a 'post-heroic age' where 'the prospect of high casualties, which can rapidly undermine domestic support for any military operation, is the key political constraint when decisions must be made on which forces to deploy in a crisis and at what levels'.²⁹⁶ Michael Mandelbaum has explained the problem through the following analogy:

The way the wars were officially remembered also reflects the shift. The style of war memorials from the nineteenth century through 1945 tended towards the

294 Unknown source – and with a touch of black humour: 'Asymmetry always works both ways – there is nothing quite as asymmetric as a tank driving over an infantryman.'

295 Helmoed-Roemer Heitman, 'Asymmetry and other fables', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, August 2006. (He was *JDW Correspondent* in Cape Town at that time.)

296 Edward Luttwak, 'A Post-Heroic Military Policy', *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 1996, pp. 33–44.

heroic: statues of commanders on horseback or, in the case of one such monument in Washington DC, the fighting men engaged in the heroic and symbolically powerful act of planting the American flag on the Pacific Island of Iwo Jima. By contrast, the Vietnam Memorial, a series of stark slabs of black marble with the names of all the US war dead engraved on them, represents the soldier not as hero, but as innocent and all but anonymous victim. ²⁹⁷

In a SIPRI report published in 2008, Ekaterina Stepanova wrote that, ‘The standard and in many ways outdated definition of asymmetry in armed conflict is narrowed by its excessively militarized nature.’ This is a statement most observers of war today will probably agree with. But what makes her contribution to the debate interesting is her observations under the headline ‘Two-way asymmetry’:

Asymmetry in conflict is not just, and not even mainly, about the stronger side making use of its advantages. The asymmetry does not work in just one direction. If that were the case, then the stronger side could easily use its superior military force, technology and economic potential to decisively crush its weaker opponent.

However, alongside its multiple superiorities, a conventionally stronger side has its own inherent, organic, generic vulnerabilities that are often inevitable by-products of its main strengths and are not minor, temporary flaws that can be quickly fixed. It is these objective weaknesses that allow a conventionally weaker opponent that enjoys a lower formal status to turn a direct, top-down one-way asymmetry into a two-way one which includes a reverse, bottom-up asymmetry.

In this kind of asymmetry, the protagonists differ in their strengths and weaknesses. A common way to address the two-way nature of asymmetry has been to make a distinction between positive asymmetry (the use of superior resources by the conventionally stronger side) and negative asymmetry (the resources that a weaker opponent can use to exploit the protagonist’s vulnerabilities). In this context, both power and status criteria are positive or, on a vertical scale, top down advantages of the state. What then are the weaker side’s reverse, bottom-up advantages that could qualify as negative asymmetry?

Unable to effectively fight on the enemy’s own ground and to challenge a stronger opponent on equal terms, the weaker, lower status side has to find

²⁹⁷ Michael Mandelbaum, ‘Learning to be Warless’, *Survival*, Vol. 41, No. 2, Summer 1999, pp. 149–152.

*some other ground and to rely on other resources to establish a two-way asymmetry. It is important to stress that the specific strengths of the weaker party cannot be simplified, as is often done with the militarized interpretation of asymmetry, to a mere reaction and conscious, opportunistic exploitation of the opponent's vulnerabilities. This approach fails to recognize that the conventionally weaker non-state actor may also have genuine advantages and strengths that, even if they are not as easily quantifiable, are not just reactive in nature and cannot be reduced to a distorted mirror image of the stronger party.*²⁹⁸

We also think the following part of her Conclusion may be very interesting, because it gives a somewhat different perspective to the debate about the future of *Jihadist* insurgency and its consequences:

*Unless transnational violent Islamism is first nationalized and then transformed in both ideological and organizational terms through its co-optation into the mainstream political process, it is highly unlikely to become amenable to persuasion. It is, indeed, unlikely to be susceptible to any external influence. It is even less likely to be crushed by repression, which it actually thrives on. In this sense, the most radical and the most perilous supranational al-Qaeda-inspired breed of violent Islamism is practically invincible, as its converts do not defend a territory, nation or state. They fight for an all-embracing mode of existence, a way of life, a holistic and global system through the establishment of the 'direct rule of God on earth' which, as they genuinely believe, would guarantee the freedom of human beings from any other form of governance.*²⁹⁹

Some of the American contributors to the debate about asymmetric warfare have looked upon it as a form of 'action-reaction-counteraction' cycle. Some writers have assumed that the enemy studies the American doctrine and wants to develop strategic and tactical countermeasures against it. As any competent enemy can be expected to come up with unexpected measures, this should be an assumption in one's own military planning.³⁰⁰ When the doctrine user understands what the enemy's counter-

298 Ekaterina Stepanova, *Terrorism in Asymmetrical Conflict. Ideological and Structural Aspects*, SIPRI Research Report No. 23 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), see p.14 and p. 20.

299 Stepanova (2008), p. 164.

300 But because of the change of terminology in U.S. military debate, you will find almost nothing under the headline *asymmetric warfare* published after 2007. See, for example, earlier articles like: Steven Metz, 'New Challenges and Old Concepts: Understanding 21st Century Insurgency', *Parameters*, Winter 2007–20008; John W. Jandora, 'Center of Gravity and Asymmetric Conflict: Factoring in Culture', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Summer 2005; John C.F. Tillson et al., 'Learning to Adapt to Asymmetric Threats', *Institute for Defense Analyses*, August 2005 (the text was posted on the Defense and the National Interest website as a pdf file); and Joseph Henrotin & Tanguy Struye de Swielande, 'Ontological-Cultural Asymmetry and the Relevance of Grand Strategies', *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Winter 2004.

measures will be against one's own doctrine and tactics, one's own doctrines should be adjusted. If an enemy has, for example, acquired *biological* weapons and the means to deliver them, this threat can be dealt with on several levels. One example: Measures may be taken to improve the protection level (*force protection*) of one's own forces, combined with *medical* countermeasures. Other measures may be to develop a systematic means of protecting the civilian population from a potential biological attack. It would also be an advantage to prepare the population so that it understands that such an attack could happen. Preparation could in itself be an obstacle to the use of biological weapons. Using information and preparative measures may reduce the enemy's original weapon advantage, the *asymmetric* advantage.³⁰¹ The best preparative measure is still to ensure that the regime is well anchored in democratic processes and that the rulers have the support of the people. Transparency and accountability thus become significant concepts in COIN considerations.

Historically, uncertainty and surprise have been important elements of the nature of war. Throughout the ages, however, many people have nevertheless allowed themselves to be blinded by their own warfare doctrines. The reasoning is often that, as long as one follows well-established procedures for the planning and execution of acts of war, this will ensure a victory. Obviously, good preparation is useful in war, but this has altogether too often been based on experiences from previous wars. If one is facing an inferior but competent opponent, the latter will probably have analysed earlier mistakes and will develop new measures based on these. Such measures will then often be characterised by asymmetric thinking.

It is a well-known fact that even the best battle plans must normally be changed after the first shot is fired. If an opponent unexpectedly uses asymmetric tactics, the battle plan should be flexible and open to allow for the use of countermeasures against the new threats. It often takes a disproportionately long time for the necessary changes to take place and, far too often, the first changes are barely thought through. Historical experience points to a lack of mental preparation for meeting the unexpected. Consequently, it is often the case that, when one is taken by surprise by something that one is not prepared for, one's own response is, by necessity, of an ad hoc nature and less effective.

As mentioned earlier in this book, the term 'asymmetric warfare' got a real boost in the military and political literature after 9/11. And as Rod Thornton wrote in the Preface to his book *Asymmetrical Warfare* (2007): 'This book is concerned with describing today's threats posed by the weak against the strong.'³⁰² Thornton was concerned about the new development that 'much smaller and weaker opponents' would practise what he saw as asymmetric warfare against the strong and powerful Western

301 Clinton J. Ancker III and Michael D. Burke, 'Doctrine for Asymmetric Warfare', *Military Review*, July-August 2003, pp. 18–25.

302 Rod Thornton, *Asymmetric Warfare. Threat and Response in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), p. vii.

states. And he also wrote that: ‘The point is that asymmetric warfare means something different in different realms of security and defence analysis.’

We see a different approach in Gil Merom’s book *How Democracies Lose Small Wars*.³⁰³ He often uses different terms in his description of the insurgents than Rod Thornton. Although he occasionally refers to ‘asymmetric conflict’, he mostly avoids the term ‘asymmetric’. Gil Merom argues that modern democracies fail in wars of insurgency because they are unable to find a winning balance between expedient and moral tolerance of the costs of war. He wrote: ‘(...) this book explains how democracies fail in small wars in spite of their military superiority. Yet this book is not so much about military matters and the interaction between unequal parties on the battlefield. Rather, it is largely about societal process within democracies that are engaged in COIN and about how these processes affect world politics.’³⁰⁴ Merom’s book is very different from Thornton’s, but the problems concerning how governments may intervene to counter insurgencies in the Third World, given the internal political life in democratic states today, are important topics in both books. Small wars, Merom argues, are usually lost at home. This happens when a critical minority shifts what he calls the Centre of Gravity (CoG) from the battlefield to the marketplace of ideas. He also argues that ‘this minority, from among the educated middle-class, abhors the brutality involved in effective COIN, but refuses to sustain the level of casualties that successfully combating COIN requires. Government and state institutions further contribute to failure as they resort to despotic patterns of behaviour in a bid to overcome their domestic predicament.’³⁰⁵ This is an important observation.

In the space of a few years, the term asymmetric warfare became a slogan covering a range of very different activities. Over time, its meaning became so nebulous that it could mean ‘almost anything’ and thus it became a difficult term to use. Thornton’s main point is that the West today is being challenged ‘in a new way by significantly smaller and less powerful entities’.³⁰⁶

Some of the ‘new challenges’ covered by the term ‘asymmetric warfare’ will be presented in brief and commented upon in the text below.

3.3.2. Weapons of mass destruction, ‘cyber-terrorism/cyber warfare’

In the situation we face today, the risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) may give the world an entirely new dimension to mass destruction.

The United States in particular has focused on the danger of terrorists or ‘rogue states’ getting hold of and using such weapons.³⁰⁷ An increasing number of actors have

303 Merom, (2003).

304 Merom (2003), p. 3.

305 Merom (2003), here quoted from the first page of the paperback edition.

306 Thornton (2007), p. vii.

307 *Rogue states* was an expression the Bush administration used for undemocratic and anti-Western states. The term has also come into use for countries like North Korea, Iran, Syria and Sudan. (Libya is now off the list.)

such weapons available, also in the Second and Third Worlds. Furthermore, several countries in the Middle East and in Asia are developing both weapon systems and cheap delivery systems. The rapid proliferation of long-range ballistic missiles in states with anti-Western attitudes is a particularly serious potential threat.³⁰⁸

As a growing number of states are acquiring weapons of mass destruction, it would be naive not to believe that terrorist groups will be able to acquire such weapons at some point. The likelihood of this happening will increase within the next 5–10 years. Before 9/11 it was a common view among observers of terror development that although it was most likely that terrorists would use simple chemical weapons, biological weapons could not be ruled out entirely.³⁰⁹ The nerve gas sarin has already been produced and used by the Japanese religious sect *Aum Shinrikyo* in two different terrorist attacks. The best known of these was carried out in Tokyo's underground system in 1995.³¹⁰

Alternatively, a terrorist group could detonate a so-called 'dirty bomb' containing radioactive material and ordinary explosives. In contrast to a 'genuine' nuclear bomb, the explosive only has the function of spreading the radioactive material as a dust cloud over the greatest possible area – in a major city, for example. Leaders within al-Qaeda have spoken of acquiring weapons of mass destruction since the 1990s. They have had little observable success in achieving their goals of obtaining a nuclear bomb or biological weapon capable of producing mass casualties. Fortunately, it is extremely difficult, but not impossible, for a terrorist group to acquire weapons of mass destruction. The al-Qaeda leadership has worked on this aim in the hopes that time and opportunity will enable them to overcome the challenges. Osama bin Laden issued a so-called *fatwa* to declare war on the United States in 1998. This set the stage for terror attacks inside Western countries. Ayman al-Zawahiri, his deputy, issued a fatwa in 2008 to herald a 'prospective next stage' in the conflict. According to Rolf Mowatt-Hansen in an article printed in the U.S. periodical *Foreign Policy*:

308 This threat has already led to the U.S. resuming its plans for developing an anti-ballistic missile defence system, although, so far, they have come up against significant technological and economic challenges. NATO decided to support this development at its top meeting in November 2010.

309 Kevin A. O'Brien & Joseph Nusbaum, 'Intelligence Gathering Asymmetric Threats - Part One', *Jane's Intelligence Review* 12, no. 10, Oct. 2000, pp. 50–55. Kevin A. O'Brien, & Joseph Nusbaum, 'Intelligence Collection for Asymmetric Threats - Part Two', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol. 12, no. 11, Nov. 2000, pp. 50–55. The two texts have no footnotes, but give an interesting view of the thinking about so-called 'asymmetric threats' pre-9/11, see especially p. 2 and 5. (Page references are based on the *Internet edition* of the article, accessed 5 October 2001.)

310 O'Brien & Nusbaum (2000, Part One). Background: On 20 March 1995, liquid sarin in plastic bags was left at five different locations in the Tokyo underground system. Even though about 6,000 people were injured in the attack, only 12 people died. A probable reason for the low number of fatalities was that the sect *Aum Shinrikyo* had not managed to produce sarin with a sufficiently high concentration. The year before, seven people had been killed in a less well-known terrorist attack using sarin in the city of Matsumoto in Japan, but it was not until after the attack in Tokyo that the Japanese authorities chose to pounce on *Aum Shinrikyo*. Although the motives for the attacks were never established with certainty, these are the only known occasions where a terrorist group has carried out attacks using some kind of 'modern' chemical weapons.

Zawahiri raises key Quranic themes to sweep away all potential objections to the use of WMD. He offers answers to questions about the legality of killing women, children, and the elderly; the justice of environmental destruction; the morality of harming noncombatants; the tactical prudence of attacking at night; and analyses of deterrence. Zawahiri adopts Fahd's examples verbatim: The Prophet Mohammed's attack on the village of al-Taif using a catapult, for instance, permits the use of weapons of "general destruction" incapable of distinguishing between innocent civilians and combatants.

The take-away from Zawahiri's book is that the use of weapons of mass destruction should be judged on intent rather than on results; if the intent to use WMD is judged to be consistent with the Quran, then the results are justifiable, even if they clearly violate specific prohibitions under Islam. The same reasoning is applied in a detailed explanation of such matters as loyalty to the state, contracts, obligations, and treaties; the permissibility of espionage; and deception and trickery. For example, on the topic of Muslims killed in combat unintentionally in the fight against infidels: "When Muslims fight nonbelievers, any Muslim who is killed is a martyr."

Aside from its general endorsement of WMDs, we should pay special attention to two operational messages embedded in Zawahiri's book.

First, America is a special object of Zawahiri's attention when discussing a nuclear attack. Zawahiri explicitly ties U.S. crimes to the alleged need to use WMD, quoting Fahd: "There is no doubt that the greatest enemy of Islam and Muslims at this time is the Americans." (...) ³¹¹

For those groupings that wish to strike at a modern society, there are, however, also methods other than the direct use of violence. Modern states are, to a greater extent, dependent on advanced communications and information technology. This dependency on modern technology also makes these societies vulnerable. In 2010, it was 24 years since the first data-virus – named 'Brain' – was built and used.³¹² But back in 1986, data viruses were not a big threat. The internet worm 'Melissa' really frightened the IT world in 1999. This was probably the first attack able to do expensive damage to computers and with economic consequences for many firms and institutions. The person behind these attacks was arrested and spent a short time in jail.

³¹¹ Rolf Mowatt-Hansen, 'Al Qaeda's Nuclear Ambitions. Ayman al-Zawahiri promises to make his next smoking gun a mushroom cloud', *Foreign Policy*, November 16, 2010, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/11/16/al_qaedas_nuclear_ambitions.

³¹² Pontus Janhunen, 'Dataviruset fyller tjugo år', *Dagens Nyheter*, 24 January 2006.

But the big so-called ‘wake-up-call’ came at the beginning of May 2000 when the ‘I love you’ email virus reportedly caused several billions of dollars worth of damage.³¹³ The virus was developed by an at that time 23-year-old Filipino hacker who had no clear political motives. The fact that a single person with a computer and programming skills could cause such great economic damage has presumably not gone unnoticed in those circles that would like to strike at the Western world.³¹⁴

In this context, the rapidly growing importance of information systems and electronics in general may be of great significance in the somewhat longer term. Although the West is the clear leader in this field, this is, in itself, no guarantee that information technology cannot be used against the West. There is much to indicate that the world has barely seen the start of what could develop into regular ‘cyber war’ during the course of the next decade.

For more than a decade, American governmental organisations such as the Pentagon and NASA have been popular targets for hackers. Daily attempts at hacking obviously lead to this type of organisation developing a high level of security to safeguard communications and information technology. But the development of different forms of cyber attacks is not only a U.S. problem. All Western states must today be able to confront the different forms of ‘hacker warfare’ and the increased level of criminal activities in cyberspace.³¹⁵

If an insurgent movement really wants to conduct *cyber warfare*, it will probably avoid such difficult targets. By striking instead at information technology associated with, for example, a modern society’s electricity supply, transport system, telecommunications network or banks’ payment systems, a *cyber terrorist* could probably cause great damage. What is maybe more important than the actual damage is the *uncertainty* that such an attack could lead to in the society. In connection with the activities of WikiLeaks and their publication of thousands of documents belonging to the U.S. State Department, the so-called ‘US embassy cables/Cablegate’, we also saw some other new activities.³¹⁶ According to an article in *The Financial Times*:

313 O’Brien & Nusbaum (2000), p. 7.

314 John J. Fialka, *War by Other Means: Economic Espionage in America* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997). In his book, Fialka describes how a group of Dutch hackers offered to hack the logistics system of the American forces for the Iraqi Government prior to the Gulf War in 1991. Even if the story has never been officially confirmed, it shows the danger of competent hackers being able to offer their services as *cyber mercenaries*. In a discussion of the book, *Kirkus Reviews*, for example, stated: ‘An investigative reporter’s cautionary overview of a persistent problem for American industry: the theft of its vital technology by friend and foe alike.’

315 One example is the situation in Finland. See Jussi Pullinen, ‘Urkkijat iskevät suomalaisyriyksiin ja valtion virastoihin. Verkkohyökkäykset ovat jo arkea’, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 14.10.2010, p. A 5. This well-written article describes the development of the threat from different kinds of cyber attacks, including so-called Stuxnet. (Stuxnet is a Windows-specific ‘computer worm’ first discovered in June 2010.) See Falliere, Nicolas, ‘Stuxnet Introduces the First Known Rootkit for Industrial Control Systems’, 19 Aug 2010, website *Symantec, Official Blog*, <http://www.symantec.com/connect/blogs/stuxnet-introduces-first-known-rootkit-scada-devices>.

316 On Sunday 28 November 2010, WikiLeaks began to publish about 250,000 leaked/stolen United States embassy cables, the largest set of classified documents ever to be released into the public domain. WikiLeaks was originally launched as a user-editable site, but has progressively (2010) moved towards a more traditional publication model, and no longer accepts either user comments or edits.

Internet subcultures rarely make front page news. But when the mysterious forces of Anonymous took it upon themselves to attack opponents of WikiLeaks, the whistle-blowing website, their success took everyone – not least victims such as Visa, MasterCard and PayPal – by surprise.

This year has seen military and security experts often warn about the prospects of “cyberwarfare”. Few expected the most prominent assaults against large companies to come from a scattered group of anarchists and idealists with no identifiable leader, membership or nationality.

The loose internet grouping that calls itself Anonymous has been notorious in web circles for years, particularly for its apparently random attacks on the music industry, Kiss singer Gene Simmons, YouTube and the Scientologists. Its wilfully illiterate grammar and black humour has permeated the internet far beyond the 4chan message board, which originally spawned it.

Even as the more serious matters of attacks on big companies were plotted this week, Anonymous followers in 4chan’s open chat rooms chimed in with insults and jokes. But with what it has dubbed “Operation Payback” the group has mounted its most ideological crusade yet.

Attempts to scupper WikiLeaks last week, as payment and web hosting companies pulled their support for the site amid intense political pressure, have made Julian Assange, the whistle-blowing website’s imprisoned founder, the pin-up for Anonymous’s campaign against censorship.

“WikiLeaks is a litmus test for freedom of speech and freedom of information,” one Operation Payback participant told the Financial Times.

Anonymous actively tries to avoid an easy definition, writes Tim Bradshaw in London.

Originally an offshoot of the 4chan message board, its activists do not like to be referred to as hackers or even as a single group.

As an “internet gathering”, they are simply whoever decides to sign up to their cause on any given day – and they follow the lead of whoever comes up with the latest online attack or prank.

The main thing that unites “Anons” is the willingness to lash out collectively at organisations they see as threatening the free flow of information and ideas online. Attacks on WikiLeaks, the whistle-blowing site, have acted as a rallying cry and recruiting sergeant for “Operation Payback”, an offshoot within Anonymous.

Anons hail from all over the world, and though many live up to the teenage-boy stereotype, they like to see themselves as “average internet citizens” – albeit with the technical wherewithal to disrupt global payment processing groups.

“When you screw with Anonymous, you screw with the public,” one Anon told the Financial Times, “because Anonymous is the public.” (...) ³¹⁷

If nothing else, the massive publication of internal U.S. documents depended on access to insiders. Without insider(s) to collect and smuggle out the documents,³¹⁸ this case could not have become as massive as it did. The other factor is how the U.S. internal flow of secured information had developed after 9/11. Their internal security system for classified documents was obviously not good enough. As *The Washington Post* reported earlier in 2010 in its illuminating article series ‘Top Secret America’, the U.S. government had expanded secrecy so much that 854,000 people (in 2010) hold top-secret security clearances. This number of people is in itself an obvious problem for American security, as almost every item of information or analysis is easily available for anyone with a security clearance and access to the internal server system.³¹⁹

For some European commentators, the fierce reaction of the U.S. to the release of secret diplomatic cables by WikiLeaks displays American ‘arrogance and hypocrisy’, indicating a post-9/11 obsession with secrecy that contradicts American free press principles, etc. But others are very critical of WikiLeaks’ behaviour. The editor of the French newspaper *le Figaro* called the publication of cables like the one listing resources considered strategic by Washington ‘a precious gift’ to terrorists. He wrote that the leaks serve ‘those who decided to harm American power, to destabilize the world’s large industrial nations, to put in place a maximum of disorder in international relations’.³²⁰

317 Tim Bradshaw, Mary Watkins and Joseph Menn, ‘Anonymous cyberwarriors stun experts’, *The Financial Times*, 10 December 2010.

318 In 2010, the 22-year-old intelligence analyst Bradley Manning was charged with leaking many documents, along with a gun-camera video of an Apache helicopter crew mistakenly killing two Reuters news agency employees in Baghdad in 2007, which was subsequently posted by WikiLeaks. Manning is facing a court martial in the USA. See for example David Leigh, ‘US embassy cables leak sparks global diplomacy crisis’, *The Guardian*, Sunday, 28 November 2010.

319 Arthur S. Brisbane, ‘What if the Secrets Stayed Secret?’, *The New York Times*, 4 December 2010.

320 Erlanger, Steven, Europeans Criticize Fierce U.S. Response to Leaks, *New York Times*, December 9, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/10/world/europe/10wikileaks-react.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=a22>.

Here we also must introduce the term social networking.³²¹ According to the website Social Networking:

*When it comes to online social networking, websites are commonly used. These websites are known as social sites. Social networking websites function like an online community of internet users. Depending on the website in question, many of these online community members share common interests in hobbies, religion, or politics. Once you are granted access to a social networking website you can begin to socialize. This socialization may include reading the profile pages of other members and possibly even contacting them.*³²²

And according to Wikipedia:

*A social network is a social structure made up of individuals (or organizations) called “nodes”, which are tied (connected) by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as friendship, kinship, common interest, financial exchange, dislike, sexual relationships, or relationships of beliefs, knowledge or prestige.*³²³

The development of new networks will probably be a very important part of all future rebellions and internal wars. Networks have been important, together with mobile phones, as part of the rebels’ ‘command system’ during the so-called Arab revolts in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya in 2010 and 2011. Networks were also important for the rioters during the mass riots in London and some other big UK cities, in support of rioting, looting and arson, between 6 and 10 August 2011.

If we go back to 9/11, the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 clearly showed how *psychological factors* affected the society’s economy. The finance and stock exchange markets in particular were heavily hit after the attacks. However, we did not see a similar impact in London after the bomb attacks of 7 July 2005. The damage to the underground system was obviously limited, but it is probably just as likely that the authorities were, as a result of earlier IRA activities, quite simply better prepared mentally for something happening in London. Terrorism was nothing new.

One of the well-reported modern cyber attacks was the case of Estonia being attacked in 2007 by the Russians. These cyber attacks on Estonia highlighted the severe effect cyber warfare assaults against a (small) state can provide at minimal cost for the attacker. Attacks were launched on a significant number of Estonian websites in

³²¹ See, for example, ‘What Is Social Networking?’, website *Social Networking*, <http://www.whatissocialnetworking.com/>. See also ‘Social network’, *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_network.

³²² ‘What Is Social Networking?’, p. 1.

³²³ ‘Social network’, *Wikipedia*.

retaliation for the contentious removal of a Russian monument to Soviet soldiers in Tallinn.³²⁴ Estonian official websites suffered a surge of so-called *Distributed Denial of Service* (DDoS) attacks from large *botnets*, jamming Estonian servers and disabling data sites.³²⁵ In addition to attacks managed by botnets, Russian activists (no confirmation exists that the official Russian state was behind the attacks)³²⁶ distributed batch files and scripts that enabled individuals to launch their own assaults (typically unsophisticated ‘ping floods’) against lists of targeted Estonian websites and e-mail addresses.³²⁷

Another example from modern conflicts is the Russian cyber attacks during their invasion of Georgia in August 2008. Cyber attacks on Georgia during the brief war with Russia in August 2008 were more sophisticated and intense than in the Estonian example, suggesting a maturation of the process.³²⁸ The Russians in Georgia also provided the first example of cyber assaults being *coordinated* with a military action – even if these attacks were not necessarily done by a Russian government agency. As soon as conventional fighting had begun, Russian cyber ‘hackers’ had created the forum StopGeorgia.ru, where visitors were able to view large lists of Georgian websites being targeted, those which had been successfully taken down, and access simple instructions and programs to download to join in the attack.³²⁹

The U.S. government is now taking the new threats more and more seriously, and after ‘Cablegate’ we will probably see changes in the protection of classified documents. But this is only part of a new development creating new kinds of security threats against especially Western interests, both civilian and military. The introduction of so-called ‘Cyber Warriors’ as a new form of military forces has been described in open literature. One example:

Today, U.S. national security planners are proposing that the 21st century’s critical infrastructure – power grids, communications, water utilities, financial networks – be similarly shielded from cyber marauders and other foes.

324 The Estonian responsible for the Estonian ‘cyber defence’, Heli Tiirmaa-Klaar, speaking at the IQPC Cyber Warfare 2010 Conference in London, 27–28 January 2010. From copy of text.

325 A so-called Botnet is a group of computers infected with malware and remotely controlled via a command and control server by a so-called ‘botherder’. He can use the botnet for a number of purposes, including DDoS attacks. (Multiple botnets may be used simultaneously in an attack.)

326 See also Jason Richards, ‘Denial-of-Service: The Estonian Cyberwar and Its Implications for U.S. National Security’, *International Affairs Review* Volume XVIII, No. 1: 2009.

327 Tiirmaa-Klaar (2010). The Russian Ambassador in Brussels, Vladimir Chizhov, denied any wrongdoing by the Russian official authorities, but the attacks were not carried out by just ‘a small number of unconnected individuals’.

328 Shaun Waterman, ‘Analysis: Russia-Georgia cyberwar doubted’, *Space War*, August 18, 2008, http://www.spacewar.com/reports/Analysis_Russia-Georgia_cyberwar_doubted_999.html.

329 ‘Network Threats Evolving, Danger Growing’, *DT Defensetech*, <http://defensetech.org/2009/08/21/network-threats-evolving-danger-growing/>, also see descriptions of the conflict on the two Internet sites www.hacker.ge & www.warez.ge (accessed 20 August 2009).

The ramparts would be virtual, their perimeters policed by the Pentagon and backed by digital weapons capable of circling the globe in milliseconds to knock out targets.

An examination by Reuters, including dozens of interviews with military officers, government officials and outside experts, shows that the U.S. military is preparing for digital combat even more extensively than has been made public. And how to keep the nation's lifeblood industries safe is a big, if controversial, aspect of it.

"The best-laid defenses on military networks will matter little unless our civilian critical infrastructure is also able to withstand attacks," says Deputy U.S. Defense Secretary William Lynn, who has been reshaping military capabilities for an emerging digital battlefield.

*Any major future conflict, he says, inevitably will involve cyber warfare that could knock out power, transport and banks, causing "massive" economic disruption.*³³⁰

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security leads the American efforts to secure U.S. federal non-military computer and communication systems. It also has the lead in protecting critical infrastructure. NSA and the new Cyber Command provide support when asked to do so. Pentagon has installed an U.S. Army General as head of the military's Cyber Command – the new 'cyber warriors'. The duty of the new command is to lead the day-to-day protection of the more than 15,000 U.S. defence networks. The new command is also designed to mount offensive computer/electronic strikes – if ordered to do so. The command has already more than 40,000 military personnel, civilians and contractors, nearly half the total involved in operating the U.S. Defense Department's information technology base.³³¹

It should be noted here that so far probably no one has been killed as a result of *cyber-terrorism*. As long as the terrorist movements of today measure their success by the number of 'enemies killed', we will continue to see traditional terrorist attacks using weapons and explosives. It cannot, on the other hand, be ruled out that in the future, more sophisticated terrorist and/or insurgency leaders will measure their success by the *financial losses* inflicted on a Western state. Seen in this light, we may assume that

330 Jim Wolf, 'Special report: The Pentagon's new cyber warriors', *Reuters*, 5 October 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE69433120101005>.

331 Wolf (2010). See also Jim Wolf, 'Cyber Command slips behind schedule', *Reuters*, 1 October 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6905AL20101002>. Quote: 'More than 100 foreign intelligence organizations are trying to break into U.S. networks, Deputy Defense Secretary William Lynn wrote in the September/October 2010 issue of Foreign Affairs. Some "already have the capacity to disrupt" U.S. information infrastructure, he said.'

as long as terrorists wish to both scare and kill people, they will make use of various forms of damage/destruction, as they have already demonstrated, including weapons and explosives, and (possibly) weapons of mass destruction in the longer term.

As regards weapons of mass destruction (WMD), active and forward-looking intelligence and security work could make it difficult for a terrorist group to gain access to the necessary components, means of production or people with the necessary technical skills. At the same time, a number of defensive measures can be taken to protect a society from this type of attack. Such measures could involve anything from more effective border controls to deploying sensors in strategic locations, to the constant raising of skills within support services. But few experts think today that terrorists would not use some kind of WMD if they can acquire them. According to Ambassador P. Burian, Chairman of UN SC 1540 Committee, in a speech held in April 2007:

*Nobody doubts today that there are few greater threats than a terrorist attack with weapons of mass destruction. The series of terrorist attacks of the past decade, ranging from massive embassy bombings in East Africa, the indiscriminate bombings in trains in Europe and Asia and resort areas in Asia and the Middle East, the terrorist attacks in the Russian Federation, the plots to blow up passenger planes, and the massive terrorist attacks of 9/11, all clearly indicate that terrorists will not hesitate to use even the deadliest weapons if they acquire them.*³³²

According to this report, a particularly important contribution would be to ensure that society's political and administrative leaders have real knowledge of what characterises terrorist movements and organised crime. It is these leaders who will have to carry out and direct any anti-WMD action. During the earlier mentioned sarin gas attack in Tokyo in March 1995, for example, the management at several hospitals refused to admit patients because they thought they were dealing with an epidemic. This happened despite the fact that an area in Japan had been subjected to a similar terrorist attack with sarin the year before.

³³² Judith Miller, 'Obama Gets "F" on Stopping Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction', *FOXNews*, January 26, 2010, <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2010/01/25/obama-gets-f-stopping-spread-weapons-mass-destruction/>. For a more official evaluation: Burian, Peter, 'Curbing the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Related Knowledge: What more should be done?' Statement by Ambassador Peter Burian, Chairman of UN SC 1540 Committee, North Atlantic Alliance's Seminar on WMD Proliferation Issues, 18-19 April 2007, Vilnius, Lithuania, *United Nations Security Council, 1540 Committee, Chairperson's Statements at Outreach Activities*, [http://www.un.org/sc/1540/docs/chairstatements/NATO%20Vilnius%20Statement%20\(final\).pdf](http://www.un.org/sc/1540/docs/chairstatements/NATO%20Vilnius%20Statement%20(final).pdf).

3.3.3. Asymmetry, asymmetric warfare and asymmetric threats

In an article with the title 'The 10 top stories you missed' published in the American journal *Foreign Policy* (FP) in December 2007, we can read the following evaluation:

The year 2007 will be remembered as the beginning of the cyberwars. In late April, Western experts were caught off guard when a barrage of cyberattacks emanating from Russia crippled the banking, police, and government offices of Estonia. Many called it the world's first full-scale cyberinvasion. Then in June, Pentagon officials accused the Chinese military of hacking into a computer network used by top aides to U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates. Near the end of the year, Britain's MI5 intelligence service sent a confidential letter to the CEOs of major multinationals warning them that the Chinese army was probing the cyberdefenses of their companies.

This emerging threat may explain why in September the U.S. Air Force quietly decided to form a Cyberspace Command. The new Cyberspace Command, due to become fully operational by October 2009, will be charged with helping to guard against such threats. But officials are quick to point out that merely playing defense against hackers and hucksters will not be enough. Instead, the 500 or so cyber warriors who will be assigned to the command will train for full-scale cyberwar against a host of potential enemies. (Read: China and Russia). This month, top-ranking U.S. military officers began work on a Cyberspace Warfare Doctrine. (...) ³³³

Do we see a new kind of war emerging here? Or is this only a *new twist* on the growing military and civilian threats caused by the development of advanced electronic equipment intended for peaceful civilian use? Probably the last question is the 'most correct' to put forward when seeking an explanation for the development.

As pointed out in the introduction to this chapter, there are several definitions of asymmetry and asymmetrical warfare. As recently as in 1999, the term *asymmetric warfare* was not in the official glossary of the U.S. Department of Defense.³³⁴ Following the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, the challenge has been to find the most relevant definition of the term. The U.S. Joint Forces Command used the following definition as late as January 2007:

³³³ 'The Top 10 Stories You Missed in 2007', *Foreign Policy*, <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/top10-2007/index.html>. Text can be found also in, among others, <http://www.timawa.net/forum/index.php?topic=10577.0;wap2>.

³³⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Dictionary of Military Terms, New Revised and Expanded Edition* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1999).

*Asymmetric Warfare – The waging of unbalanced or un-proportioned armed or unarmed war against the enemy.*³³⁵

But as mentioned earlier, this definition has now been *deleted* from the list in Joint Publication 1-02, updated in 2009, i.e. the term asymmetric warfare has now become ‘history’ in official U.S. military documents.³³⁶

Although there is a huge technological gap between modern Western states and developing countries, elements of new technology after a relatively short time become accessible to different states (including insurgent groups) in the Third World. This applies to both weapon systems and technology with so-called ‘dual purpose characteristics’, i.e. a specific advanced technology that can be used for both military and civilian purposes. Additionally, almost anyone with access to PCs can gain access to military knowledge on the Internet such as, for example, how to produce simple but relatively effective explosives.³³⁷

One likely reason for the increased effectiveness of even small terrorist groups is that new technologies such as advanced mobile phones, computer equipment and satellite telephones are on the way to becoming available to almost everyone. This will help the planning, training and supreme command and control of modern terrorist campaigns. But as we have seen when terrorist leaders have been caught – the PCs, discs, telephones, etc are very important sources for the counter-terror forces in their fight against terrorist or insurgents.

As mentioned earlier these new, and often very scrupulous, actors have today easy access to a much better range of technology and effective light weapon systems that can be used against Western targets than was the case for similar groups during the Cold War period, when military technology (and technology in general) was often well guarded by the two superpowers. It is not uncommon for insurgents, terrorists and criminal gangs to have better equipment than the local police and military forces they are up against, particularly in the Second and Third Worlds.³³⁸ In addition, the rapidly increasing international availability of ‘cheap’ air transport and the increasingly freer transfer of knowledge and information via the Internet have made it

335 Definition as at January 2007, (U.S.) Joint Forces Command Glossary, <http://www.jfcom.mil/about/glossary.htm>, accessed 1 June 2008, under update 21 November 2010.

336 U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Publication JP 1-02, 12 April 2001, amended through 31 October 2009.

337 O'Brien and Nusbaum (2000), p. 3.

338 Here we will give the reader some sources to look into: On the ongoing Drug War in Mexico, Andrew Selee, David Shirk, and Eric Olson, ‘Five myths about Mexico’s drug war’, *The Washington Post*, March 28, 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/26/AR2010032602226.html>; Jason Beaubien, ‘As Drug War Turns Into Quagmire, Fear Rules Mexico’, *NPR* August 2, 2010 <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=128804488>; and about terror in Columbia: Cameron Sumpter, ‘US vows to continue drug war’, *Colombia Reports*, 25 October 2010, <http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/12563-us-legalizing-marijuana-california.html>; and Columbia/Ecuador: Hearn, Kelly, ‘Colombia’s drug war spills across Ecuador border’, *Washington Times*, August 24, 2010, <http://www.washington-times.com/news/2010/aug/24/colombias-drug-war-spills-across-ecuador-border/?page=all>.

much easier for today's 'asymmetric actors' to use this new ability to fight against their enemies.³³⁹ We should also note, in this respect, that a series of military handbooks and books on producing your own explosives can be bought (or downloaded) quite openly over the Internet. And the sellers are often companies in the United States and United Kingdom.

Perhaps there is a lot of truth in what two Chinese officers wrote in their book in the late 1990s:

*When a nation state or national armed force, (which adheres to certain rules and will only use limited force to obtain a limited goal), faces off with one of these types of organizations [the Japanese Aum Shinrikyo cult; and... terrorist groups like Osama bin Laden's] (which never observe any rules and which are not afraid to fight an unlimited war using unlimited means), it will often prove very difficult for the nation state or national armed force to gain the upper hand.*³⁴⁰

Generally, asymmetric means are used when one party in a conflict realises that it is *not* capable of taking on an adversary using more conventional resources. There may be several reasons for this. Inability to obtain the necessary political or military strength to directly take on the adversary is probably the main reason for the use of asymmetric methods. By acting unconventionally and using means other than pure military strength, the asymmetric actor hopes to be able to withstand pressure from the enemy.

In an article published in 2008, the British author and journalist Jason Burke formulated it in this way: 'The Taliban are waging a simultaneous three-front war: information, media and military, in a dazzlingly modern insurrection.'³⁴¹ Burke in his article also pointed to another fact:

*Their (the Taliban's) day-to-day media operation targets four audiences – international western, international Islamic, local and regional – in at least five different languages. They are careful to avoid statements that play on Afghanistan's complex identity politics – though support for the movement remains overwhelmingly drawn from the Sunni Pashtun tribes and the history of the Taliban is replete with examples of persecution of Shia or Afghanistan's less numerous ethnic minorities.*³⁴²

339 O'Brien and Nusbaum (2000), p. 3

340 Written by two Chinese colonels, Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare* (Beijing: PLA Literature and Arts Publishing House, 1999). Taken here from a quote in Roger W. Barnett (2003), p. 1.

341 Jason Burke, 'The Art of Asymmetric Warfare', *Guardian*, 27 July 2008.

342 Burke (2008).

These facts must be seen in the right context. For example, the Taliban movement is far from a homogeneous organisation. These splits go way beyond the division into three tiers, i.e. hardcore leadership, ideological fellow-travellers and paid, coerced or ignorant rank and file, that the ISAF has used. Burke describes the dissent within the Taliban ranks and factional fighting including public declarations regarding policies such as the burning of schools (especially schools for girls), the targeting of Western reporters and/or aid workers and conflicting claims of responsibilities for successful attacks by different groups owing loyalty to different leaders.³⁴³

The right choice of asymmetric approach can, at least in theory, make it possible to take on even a great power like the USA, something that would be an almost hopeless undertaking with conventional military resources. In its purest form, asymmetric warfare is, as already indicated, exploiting one's own competitive advantages by using the available unconventional means against the opponent's assumed weaknesses.

In today's political reality, challengers from Second and Third World countries seeking to fight a ruling regime often decide to take the asymmetric route. Other challengers have great ambitions and want to inflict damage on or fight what they see as the Western world in general.

Here, one should note the following objection: if there is to be any real value in explaining the concept of asymmetric warfare, we have to say more than just that it involves emphasising one's own strengths and exploiting the enemy's weaknesses. This is actually a matter of course in all forms of strategic and tactical thinking. 'Genuine asymmetry', in contrast to the more common explanation, refers to a situation in which the attacks an opponent carries out are of such a nature that his adversary either cannot perform the same actions or is unwilling to perform them. This type of asymmetric action can create two major problems for the adversary for (at least) two reasons:

1. As one is not in a position to reply effectively to the challenge, this is an obstacle to mounting a counterattack, something that will always be seen as problematic or directly dangerous.
2. Many asymmetric measures are difficult to evaluate and follow up – they do not fit the Western cultural context.. The majority of Western military and political leaders will then also consider many of these possible asymmetric means as ethically unacceptable. The feeling that an adversary is not 'fighting clean' may in itself lead to one being more easily surprised. The events of 11 September 2001 can be seen as an excellent example of this type of 'strategic surprise'. The use of large, fuel-laden passenger planes as 'bombs' was clearly a breach of what we see as legal weapon systems according to Western norms.

³⁴³ Burke (2008).

Asymmetric thinking and attack methods could possibly also be relevant in other contexts than those dealt with so far in this chapter. Asymmetric means could, for example, be an actual tool for combating a multinational company, transnational financing companies or other forms of international organisation, also including the UN. A well-organised user of such methods will normally employ a course of action where tactics and the use of weapons are adapted to the target and, at the same time, include an element of surprise. The intention is that the attacker's intended target should not be able to meet the attack in a planned and structured manner.

According to theories now dominating discussions, a person or group employing asymmetric means, including the choice of well-suited forms of combat, succeeds in reducing the significance of the opponent's real technological superiority. If they are lucky, the terrorists (or insurgents) will succeed in turning the enemy's technological superiority against himself. In today's society, the arsenal of methods and technologies used by the so-called *inferior combatant* in connection with asymmetric attack will more than likely include plans for either cyber attacks or a campaign using the internet. These internet applications might include news, blogs or viral messaging. Very often the intended target is too slow, or even unable, to counter such attacks over a prolonged period.

Forms of asymmetric attack assume, however, that the attacker wants to exploit the adversary's weaknesses and vulnerabilities, and that he has knowledge of these. A clever actor using asymmetric means will formulate his strategy with the intention of fundamentally changing the battlefield on which battles are fought. The attacker may, among other things, decide to operate in environments that make it difficult for the adversary to use his heavy weaponries effectively, including modern air forces. He may, for example, choose to fight in urban areas, a battleground more challenging than open landscapes for modern equipped Western armies. (There were a number of these types of activities in urban areas in Iraq during the period from early 2004 to late 2009.) By using asymmetric methods, the insurgents' force the enemy to fight in an environment that is unfavourable to him in order to achieve his military goals, and the enemy must accept the price, which might be a sudden drop in popularity, including the loss of human life – especially civilians. This conscious degradation of a strong adversary by making it difficult for him to effectively use his full military capacity, in terms of weaponry, renders the initially clearly superior military capacity that he had to begin with less relevant. It might, on the other hand, reduce the losses if the military forces are prepared for some kind of so-called 'three block war',³⁴⁴ and

³⁴⁴ The term 'the three block war' is a concept that was first described by U.S. Marine General Charles Krulak in the late 1990s. He wanted to illustrate the complex spectrum of challenges likely to be faced by Western armies in today's warfare. In Krulak's example, soldiers may be required to conduct (almost simultaneously) full-scale military operations and peace-keeping (or stabilisation) operations, while giving humanitarian aid to the civil inhabitants – within the space of what he called 'three contiguous city blocks'. Krulak's main point was that today's soldiers must be trained to operate in all these three conditions.

have the relevant *non-military actors* ready and capable to deploy to repel or confront the attacks. And we must also remember: the stronger party has fewer possibilities to fight efficiently as long as he wants to keep his own and the civilian population's losses down. An example that could perhaps illustrate this type of problem is Iraq, which tried to take on a U.S.-led coalition with conventional resources during the Gulf War in 1991. Over the course of two months of warfare, Iraq was beaten militarily and had to accept Kuwait re-emerging as an independent country. The regime in Baghdad did not, however, ever accept that it was politically defeated and consequently decided to continue the confrontation with the USA/West by other means. Iraq ignored, for instance, the criticism of the international community and a great number of UN resolutions. Despite sanctions and sporadic military efforts against the country, the regime continued to oppose the Western powers. This led to the U.S. having to maintain a large and expensive military force in the region and, on the part of the Americans it looked as if there could be no peaceful solution to the Iraq problem. This long political confrontation ended with the new war in 2003.

If, on the other hand, we define asymmetric warfare too narrowly, we may end up with a description of only the type of actions normally deployed by terrorist groups. Such a definition should obviously be avoided. One of the potentially new features of an asymmetric 'philosophy of war' may well be this lack of physical demarcation lines around the theatre of operations.

One may have a geographic dimension associated with one's final goal, but there is a risk that these limitations must be abandoned in order to maximise the effect when it is time to take action in front of a global audience, e.g. in New York, Madrid or London.³⁴⁵ In a situation like this, one can easily lose sight of what one had actually planned to achieve – and then start acting instinctively.

Asymmetric threats is now (2011) the preferred U.S. term (see earlier discussion). So-called asymmetric threats can manifest themselves in many ways. At a strategic level, those employing asymmetric, unconventional means often play on fear or dissatisfaction within the civilian population. So-called 'asymmetric threats' with many different actions and means have been utilised time and again throughout history, mainly in conventional conflicts. It is also important to recognise that asymmetric actions have also been employed by the *superior* force in a conflict to impose a loss to the *inferior* opponent that could not be achieved by more conventional means.

For example, it is the general understanding among Europeans that the countries that took part in the occupation in Iraq were more likely to be terrorist targets than

³⁴⁵ Professor Eric Swyngedouw has, in his social perspective construction, described a concept that combines the local dimension in social belonging with the global context one must often take a position on – or operate within. He describes it as 'glocal'.

other European states.³⁴⁶ According to some observers, the terrorist attacks in Madrid in March 2004 and in London in July 2005 appear to confirm this assumption. So the actual *fear of terrorism* may become an important motive if the population demands a country's forces to be pulled out of, for example, Afghanistan. (The views of so-called peace movements are not included here, because they have very differing motives for their involvement.) Another course of action may be to try to undermine popular support for a regime over a period of time. This method is probably particularly applicable in an undemocratic country. Normally, the local opposition will use human rights arguments and the unfair distribution of benefits as arguments for a change of regime. In 2005, we saw the rapid and non-violent fall of unpopular governments in countries such as the Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Lebanon. After a long period of dissatisfaction with a regime, a clearly 'rigged' election, for example, can trigger popular resistance. In Lebanon, the assassination on 14 February 2005 of the popular opposition politician Rafik Hariri was such a triggering factor, something that led to Syria seeing itself forced to pull its *military* forces out of the country. Lebanon had reached a 'tipping point'.

Clever insurgents seek to compromise the ruling regime's alliances and partnerships with other groupings and adversaries of the insurgents. In this context, the use of threats can have a strong psychological effect, and in most cases, the use of physical destruction will obviously frighten the sections of the population that are less affected or involved. If people begin to feel that the government cannot give them the necessary protection, loyalty to the ruling regime will also be quickly undermined. An example of a simple form of 'asymmetric warfare' with victory for the anti-Western tribal coalition is UN operations in Somalia in the period 1992 to 1994. As previously mentioned, this debacle ended with the United States, and thereby the West, giving up when the Clinton administration decided to pull its military forces out of the country.³⁴⁷ Here, one of the clan factions became able, through a conscious campaign directed at the international forces, and particularly against the American element, to prevent the normalisation of the situation, which would have threatened the faction's position of power.³⁴⁸ To this day, the long war is ongoing among factions based on

³⁴⁶ For example, in an opinion poll carried out by the Danish market research institute Vilstrup in March 2004, 60 per cent of the surveyed Danes said that the country's involvement in Iraq had increased the risk of terrorist attacks. Only 32 per cent were of the opinion that this involvement had reduced the risk. Denmark left Iraq as all Western nations now have done, but not because of "internal pressure" in Denmark.

³⁴⁷ Ralph Peters, 'In Praise of Attrition', *Parameters*, Summer 2004, pp. 26–27. Quote: 'We hit a low point in Mogadishu, when Army Rangers, Special Operations elements, and line troops delivered a devastating blow against General Aideed's irregulars – only to have President Clinton declare defeat by pulling out. One may argue about the rationale for our presence in Somalia and about the dangers of mission creep, but once we're in a fight, we need to win it – and remain on the battlefield long enough to convince our enemies they've lost on every count.' See also Clark, *Against All Enemies*, p. 88. His account is that the Americans had never intended to remain there. Peters and Clark are therefore 'at two different ends of the scale' when it comes to their interpretation of the administration under President Clinton.

³⁴⁸ In the book that he wrote with USMC General Zinni, Tom Clancy provides another picture of the situation. Zinni was a so-called 'envoy' with the intention of finding a basis for a political solution. He wrote that this situation could have been avoided if General Aidid had been accepted as an important other party. But the UN's Pakistani envoy would not accept

factors like tribal background, Islamist extremism, warlordism and an in reality non-effectual formal state leadership.

When international military forces are deployed, insurgent attacks are targeted at these forces or in general against citizens with a Western background (particularly Americans). We also see attacks against Western property, or against territory that belongs to great powers, using so-called asymmetric means that insurgents can play on. The mere threat of such insurgent campaigns can increase the need to use unconventional measures from time to time in order to provide the necessary security for the forces deployed. Possible forms of action where asymmetric measures are likely are, for instance, in connection with Peace-Support Operations (PSO) (see Chapter 7). Today, all Western states and their military forces should be prepared for being subjected to various forms of asymmetric measures, not least with regard to all forms of military participation in current areas of conflict. An additional problem with this is that the measures implemented to establish an acceptable degree of protection could tie up such a great amount of resources that the deployed forces are no longer able to perform their original mission.

At a tactical level, an opponent can force an actor to rearrange his tactics by, for example, playing on the Western political fear of having to sustain military losses, or by carrying out attacks that are difficult for the Western forces to deal with or prevent. One example could be carrying out sporadic terrorist activities or major attacks, both physically and electronically, on national infrastructure critical to the West. The perhaps most spectacular attack so far is the terrorist attack on American symbols such as the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in September 2001. Threats and terrorist activity, propaganda against Western-dominated crisis management and Peace-Support Operations, activity that supports economic collapse, civil disobedience and organised crime are all examples of less drastic activities that could nevertheless function as asymmetric measures in order to confront a stronger opponent.³⁴⁹

As indicated previously, large armed forces are required in order to counter the types of traditional threats posed by a well-organised insurgent movement. It will normally take years rather than months to combat such an insurgency. For the same reason, ensuring popular support at home for this type of long-term effort outside the West poses mounting problems. It is particularly difficult to forecast the role that the modern media will play. While there was initially much popular support for the war in most countries

this. Aidid was identified as the problem, and a pragmatic solution was subsequently not possible. But, as pointed out above, Somalia was never of strategic significance to the U.S., and they pulled out after the 'Black Hawk Down' episode. Tom Clancy (with General Tony Zinni (ret.) and Tony Koltz), *Battle Ready* (New York: Putnam Publishing Group, 2004), pp. 273–285.

349 The colonial wars of the 1950s and 1960s can perhaps be used to illustrate not only the potential of asymmetric warfare/guerrilla wars, but also their limits. Today, there are also similar challenges in about 20 ongoing insurgencies/small wars. It is, however, likely that the main threats of the future will be of a somewhat different nature than what we have seen previously. What is totally new is that we can no longer count out the use of weapons of mass destruction by guerrilla movements, and terrorists in particular.

in the West during the run-up to and execution of the war against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, there are today few people who write in a positive way about what is now going on in the country. Perhaps we are getting fed up with the whole war? There are grounds for believing that it will thus eventually become politically difficult to continue to actively support the regime in Kabul. Protracted wars are difficult to sustain for Western democratic states, given the 'around-the-clock' media coverage that focuses on events with next to no analysis, an approach whose main exponent is modern television.

Political and military leaders do not communicate strategies and objectives well enough to the public at home. Public opinion is therefore subject to the influence of the adversary's resolve. Is the question quite simply: is there a lack of insight into and understanding of the conflict and a lack of knowledge (or skills) regarding the necessary decisions and activities involved in a commitment such as this? Or is the question rather whether the political leadership, whose window for action is all too often no longer than one election period (about four years), is really able to see the consequences of shrinking political support from a 10–15 year perspective (normally the length of an insurgency today)?

A grouping or an organisation (e.g. a terrorist group) that masters a simple technology can implement well-adapted tactics with the intention of weakening the adversary's superior weapon systems and associated communication technology, thereby avoiding a direct battle with 'the main forces', i.e. the insurgents decide to attack the adversary's weaknesses and 'wear out' his forces over a period of time. Both high and low technology countermeasures may exploit any known weaknesses, even in advanced Western weapon systems. One should, for example, as previously indicated, be prepared for the eventuality that information operations will be used to damage critical infrastructures in the West, including major computer networks, which could lead to the paralysis of communications and transport systems, electricity production and industrial production for at least a period of time. Other possible forms of information operations could, for example, involve the manipulation of media and psychological warfare, i.e. the enemy benefiting from the basically 'uncontrollable' international news industry. It has already, with regard to several conflicts in the 1990s, proved to be relatively easy to influence Western decision-makers through the use of the mass media, as was demonstrated, for instance, in connection with the Kosovo conflict in 1999 and by al-Qaeda's use of the Arab-speaking news media to communicate threats to execute hostages in Iraq and warn of forthcoming terrorist campaigns in order to weaken confidence in government authorities in Western countries: threats that make it easy for either politicians or sympathisers to argue, in a populist way, for pulling out of conflict areas 'to avoid being attacked by terrorists', etc.³⁵⁰

³⁵⁰ It may be interesting here to remember what a U.S. officer stated in the aftermath of the Kosovo conflict. In his view, NATO had a clear superiority as regards information but, in many ways, this became irrelevant for the outcome of the war. (Based on the author's own notes from an IO technical conference in London on 23 May 2000.)

One possible nightmare scenario is so-called non-conventional attacks carried out by specially trained forces equipped with chemical or biological weapons. If such weapons were to be deployed against Western military operations, for instance, they would wreak havoc. But this form of warfare is, in practice, much more dangerous if so-called 'rogue states' were to find it expedient to give terrorist groups access to such weapons.³⁵¹ The fear of Iraq having developed weapons of mass destruction was also one of the arguments for the British supporting the U.S. desire to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq. Seen in this light, there is an element of fear in the entire Western world that terrorist groups will use weapons of mass destruction, something that is employed as an argument for further strengthening security forces in Western Europe, among other places, but particularly in the United States.³⁵²

The U.S. Department of Defense did during the period 2008 to 2010 (post-Rumsfeld) an extensive review of the entire basis of the U.S. defence strategy (2010).³⁵³ The review was carried out partly due to the bitter experiences the Americans have had in Iraq and Afghanistan and a change in the U.S. assumptions after 11 September 2001. Another reason was the increasingly higher costs of acquiring high technology defence materials. Many states have a tendency to copy American solutions and the American way of thinking, although on an infinitely smaller scale. Those critics, including those in Sweden, who think, for example, that the army is too small to deal with both national and international assignments will now find some support for their perception in leading defence circles in the United States. The realities of Iraq and Afghanistan have turned some of the earlier theories on their head. The Americans, supported by Great Britain, easily won the campaign against the Saddam regime with the assistance of their high technology but small forces. The problems arose afterwards, as previously demonstrated. With about 170,000 soldiers in Iraq in late 2007, the Americans still had problems managing to deal with their opponents. But a strong American military force in Iraq is no solution to the insurgency problem in the long run. The Iraqi political leaders must develop their own political system, including security forces loyal to the regime. If not, the Iraq regime can not survive after the Americans and their allies have

351 O'Brien and Nusbaum (2000), p. 6.

352 Ralph Peters, *New Glory. Expanding America's Global Supremacy* (New York: Sentinel HC 2005). Peters in his book tried to look at some of the real effects of information operations – especially the effects in Iraq and Afghanistan. Peters argues that so-called 'information warfare' has been a fiasco, and the lead has been taken by sometimes-hostile media. 'Presidential administrations,' he wrote, 'whether Republican or Democrat, have developed a deadly case of big-mouth disease (...) No war was ever won by a government press release.' Peters' point is that, in the wars of the 21st century, acting is more important than claiming or threatening to act. He wrote: 'In the peculiar conflicts already scarring this new century – wars of perception as well as flesh and blood – it is crucial not to issue threats that we might not fulfill.' Peters may have an important point here. But on the other hand, to ensure maximum deterrence, threats must be credible, viable and well covered in the news media.

353 U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR)*, February 2010, in website *Commonwealth Institute*, <http://www.comw.org/qdr/fulltext/1002QDR2010.pdf>. See the debate, for example, Lawrence J. Korb, Sean Duggan, and Laura Conley. 'Quadrennial Defense Review Fails to Match Resources to Priorities', *Center for American Progress*, 4 February 2010. http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/02/qdr_fail_resource.html.

left the country. According to General David H. Petraeus, the U.S. military commander in Iraq in 2007:

(...) there are now nearly 140 Iraqi Army, National Police, and Special Operations Forces Battalions in the fight, with about 95 of those capable of taking the lead in operations, albeit with some coalition support. (...) As counterinsurgency operations require substantial numbers of boots on the ground, we are helping the Iraqis expand the size of their security forces. Currently, there are some 445,000 individuals on the payrolls of Iraq's Interior and Defense Ministries. Based on recent decisions by Prime Minister Maliki, the number of Iraq's security forces will grow further by the end of this year, possibly by as much as 40,000. Given the security challenges Iraq faces, we support this decision, and we will work with the two security ministries as they continue their efforts to expand their basic training capacity, leader development programs, logistical structures and elements, and various other institutional capabilities to support the substantial growth in Iraqi forces.³⁵⁴

In 2011, we still see infighting among the Iraqi leadership. And with the Americans on their way out, the regime will be in dire straits if the political leaders can not produce a viable and stable political system.

In both Iraq and Afghanistan, the insurgents have demonstrated an ability to adapt themselves and their tactics as the situation develops. This has forced the United States and their allied forces to once again adjust their way of conducting war.

It can otherwise be noted that there is a relatively common argument that many writers have put forward that asymmetric or unconventional threats are primarily due to extremists from the Middle East. Another common argument is that terrorist organisations have a limited ability to inflict damage upon Western interests. In the real world, the picture is obviously a bit more complicated. It has also been common to see the different terrorist campaigns as a manifestation of locally and/or regionally triggered conflicts, primarily targeted at the ruling regime locally. After the events of 11 September 2001, opinions have probably become more varied, particularly as a result of growing insight into how terrorist organisations recruit and form networks between themselves. According to Nicholas Kristof in *The New York Times*:

After the Oklahoma City bombing, American law enforcement authorities cracked down quite effectively on domestic racists and militia leaders. But Mark Potok of the Southern Poverty Law Center, which moni-

³⁵⁴ General David H. Petraeus, 'Report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq', 10–11 September 2007 (at that time he was Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq), *U.S. Department of Defense*, <http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/Petraeus-Testimony20070910.pdf>.

*tors 760 hate groups with about 100,000 members, notes that after 9/11, the law enforcement focus switched overwhelmingly to Arabs. The Feds are right to be especially alarmed about Al Qaeda. But we also need to be more vigilant about the domestic white supremacists, neo-Nazis and militia members. After all, some have more W.M.D. than Saddam.*³⁵⁵

We did not plan to give the readers a detailed description of the Chinese military thinking about different kinds of asymmetric threats, but below we will provide the reader with some information about the more theoretical Chinese thinking in this field. An important source in English about Chinese military power is the U.S. booklet *Annual Report to Congress. Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2009*.³⁵⁶ Since the early 2000s, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has also begun focusing on building a military based on 'informationalisation' and mechanisation.

Today, China is also developing so-called 'new thinking' about how to use technical, sophisticated so-called unconventional warfare. For example, in the year 2000, China's PLA published a series of military theory studies looking more closely at their versions of theories regarding asymmetric warfare and tactics adapted to new developments. The use of this form of warfare and means was put forward as potentially important in any future conflict with the West (read: United States). Among other things, the authors describe possible tactics in the following manner:

*(...) hacking into web-sites, targeting financial institutions, terrorism, assassinating US financiers, using the media and conducting urban warfare are among the methods considered by the People's Liberation Army (PLA), these studies are driven by the efforts of the PLA to modernize their IW/IO capabilities.*³⁵⁷

According to the military thinking described, the Chinese authors claim that China is not today able to cope with the strength of the West's conventional and nuclear capability. This is probably the reason why the People's Liberation Army has placed such great emphasis on developing new information technologies for so-called *cyber warfare*. This includes, among other things, the use of computer viruses to neutralise and possibly wipe out the enemy's political, economic and military information and

355 Nicholas D. Kristof, 'Homegrown Osamas', *The New York Times*, 9 March 2005.

356 Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress. Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2009* (Washington, D.C., 2009).

357 China's National Defense in 2000 (2000), *GOV.cn, Chinese Government's Official Web Portal*, Official Publications, White papers, http://english.gov.cn/official/2005-07/27/content_17524.htm. Document published 16 October 2000: 'Year 2000. China Defense White Paper Document'. Translated by World News Connection, <http://wnc.fedworld.gov/subscription.html>, accessed 5 May 2001. This was a good source that described the modern Chinese view and their opinions in, for instance, journals and official documents published around year 2000.

his command and control infrastructure. The Chinese term used in connection with the new military theories has been translated as ‘unrestricted warfare’ into English. The People’s Liberation Army’s spokesmen argued that China could, in this manner, outmanoeuvre the West’s *high technology* sensors and electronically guided weapon systems and the associated countermeasures by making systematic use of information operation methods.³⁵⁸

According to Kevin O’Brien and Joseph Nusbaum the People’s Liberation Army claims in some of its papers that China may be able to put the potential enemy’s population in a kind of state of panic through an advanced and well-prepared information campaign, combined with systematically carrying out attacks on the enemy’s computer networks.³⁵⁹ The aim could be, among other things, to paralyse the enemy’s supply of electricity, banking system and financial system, telephony and communications and mass media.³⁶⁰ This form of asymmetric thinking could, theoretically, influence most conditions in a modern society and also require the development of adapted strategies and tactics. The aim is to create a battlefield where one’s own contribution of various forms of weapons and weapon systems and associated trained personnel seeks to compensate for the adversary’s recognised strengths.

These challenges, which can be characterised by the concepts of weapons of mass destruction, information operations and non-conventional operations, have probably always existed in some form for as long as organised warfare has been practiced. What is new is that these options have obviously increased in the last 10 years and the importance of this form of unconventional warfare has thereby increased correspondingly.

3.3.4. Asymmetric warfare or threat – are these terms now ‘obsolete’?

It is probably useful to define asymmetric threats as attempts to turn an adversary’s strengths around so that they become his *weaknesses*, including making use of meth-

358 Martin Andrew, ‘PLA Doctrine on Securing Energy Resources in Central Asia’, *China Brief*, *The Jamestown Foundation*, May 9, 2007, [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=3953&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=196&no_cache=1](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=3953&tx_ttnews[backPid]=196&no_cache=1). In this brief we find the following evaluation: ‘In order to adapt to “informationalized warfare” and to enable more rapid decision-making on the battlefield, the PLA has decided to increase the number of army corps by removing the division and instead will adopt a three-level command system of corps, brigade and battalion. Under the previous organizational system, the regiment acted as the basic tactical unit, subordinate to the division as it lacked command personnel and power within its headquarters to act independently of the division. In a modern brigade, the company is the tactical unit. Moving from the previous Russian-style corps and division structure requires few changes at the battalion or even regimental level, but it does mean a radical change in command and control arrangements since the brigade is expected to act independently once committed into operations, requiring a whole new way of thinking. These new army corps will provide the PLA with an independent intervention force, able to breakthrough and rapidly exploit enemy defences and allow it to take control of energy sources, copying the successful maneuvers by U.S.-led coalition forces that quickly regained the Kuwaiti oilfields in Operation Desert Storm.’ See also: ‘Military to be restructured: Paper’, *Xinhuanet*, 13 July 2005. Sun Xuefu, ‘Forge a military force commensurate with China’s international status’, *PLA Daily Online*, 28 April 2006.

359 O’Brien and Nusbaum, p. 5.

360 Michael Pillsbury (ed.), *Chinese Views of Future Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1997). See articles written by Major General Wang Pufeng, ‘The Challenge of Information Warfare’, and Senior Lieutenant Colonels Wang Baocun and Li Fei, ‘Information Warfare’.

ods that are clearly different from the enemy's normal manner of carrying out operations. In the future, two enemies that clash in a war will have to be able to deal with a great number of threats. If one is to be able to protect oneself, one must be prepared to, for instance, distract, take on, weaken or directly combat the adversary's military power. The American Michael Rubin wrote in an article in 2007:

Asymmetric threats are not new, nor are strategists' attention to them. In every era, from the pre-modern to the present day, weak forces utilize surprise, technology, innovative tactics, or what some might consider violations of military etiquette to challenge the strong. The 1991 Iraq War and subsequent al-Qaeda terrorism shattered notions that the collapse of the Soviet Union would usher in an age of peace or an end to history.

In the same article he also wrote:

*Identifying the existence of asymmetrical threats is far easier than to define them. While asymmetry focuses on how to place one strengths against an adversary's weaknesses, even where the overall correlation of forces may favor the adversary, there remains no consensus about the nature of the asymmetric threat concept.*³⁶¹

As earlier discussed, conventional forces frequently use the term *asymmetric* to describe the challenges and characteristics of an insurgency conflict. (The term is in most cases both valid and appropriate.) Nevertheless, the 'overuse' of the term between 2001 and 2007 and lack of mutual understanding have to some degree distorted the true meaning of asymmetric in reference to conflicts in general, and insurgencies in specific.

The notion that insurgencies are *asymmetric* conflicts because an insurgency is not 'a fair way of fighting' a conflict is of course of no practical use. Some writers have pressed the view that the insurgents are 'exploiting' the vulnerabilities of a stronger enemy. This should be looked upon as a misinterpretation of the term. Different kinds of asymmetric means and tactics have also been utilised by conventional trained and organised units throughout military history. We will argue that the notion of asymmetric conflicts/warfare as an 'unfair way of fighting' is a meaningless interpretation – this is only a different way of waging war.

The alternative for the insurgents is to face a technologically and numerically superior enemy in a duelling situation – a battle that they are destined to lose. No qualified insurgent leader will commit this blunder. Through the eyes of the insurgents such an

³⁶¹ Michael Rubin, 'Asymmetrical Threat Concept and its Reflections on International Security', *Middle East Forum*, 31 May 2007, <http://www.meforum.org/1696/asymmetrical-threat-concept-and-its-reflections>.

alternative is naturally perceived as certain defeat. And according to a statement written by the American researcher C.A. Primmerman, 'warfare is not conducted and has not been conducted as fair sporting events'.³⁶² In a newer version of this text (2006), Primmerman made it clear that his definition must satisfy three criteria. They are:

1. It must involve a weapon, tactics or strategy that a state or non-state enemy both could and would (use) against (a country)...
2. It must involve a weapon, tactics or strategy that (the threatened country) would not employ...
3. It must involve a weapon, tactics or strategy that, if not countered, could have serious consequences...³⁶³

The essence of all modern warfare is to manipulate the battle space in order to attain (overwhelming) superiority at a critical point in time and/or space. This is done by utilising the element of surprise and the vulnerabilities of the enemy/adversary to create a state of so-called 'unfair advantage'.³⁶⁴

If we take the starting point in the newer studies that I have previously discussed with regard to asymmetry, we could possibly divide up the problems into the following five groups:

1. The increasing number of Second and Third World countries that have weapons of mass destruction at their disposal is today a significant challenge to Western military dominance, especially when these weapons are combined with long-range ballistic missiles or cruise missiles. Even if there are grounds for believing that the states in question do not, in the short term, have the knowledge to be able to use these weapon systems effectively, their very existence is a great challenge to regional security.
2. Even allied nations would hesitate to intervene militarily against regional aggression if they themselves could be subject to the threat of weapons of mass destruction. This type of thinking is an important driving force behind the attitudes of the U.S. and other Western nations towards countries like North Korea and Iran, which they fear would be able to use such weapons in a future crisis situation. This fear is also important if we are to understand the American

362 C. A. Primmerman, *Thoughts on the Meaning of 'Asymmetric Threats'*, Air Force, Lincoln Laboratory, Massachusetts Institute Of Technology, Lexington, MA, 2006, available at Commonwealth Institute, <http://www.comw.org/rma/fulltext/asymmetric.html>. and DTIC Online, <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA444192>, p.5. (This text was written in the summer of 2000; thus, it predates the attacks of 11 September 2001 and the subsequent 'War on Terrorism'. A new version of this text was published under the same title.)

363 Primmerman (2006), p.5.

364 Gordon H. McCormick, Steven B. Horton, and Lauren A. Harrison, 'Things Fall Apart: the endgame dynamics of internal wars', *Third World Quarterly*, 28(2), 2007, pp. 321–367.

attitude to the Saddam regime in Iraq, and why they decided to go to war against the regime in Baghdad in the spring of 2003.

3. The use of so-called *cyber-based warfare* and the amassing of a selected range of high technology sensors and communications systems with the associated weapon systems are themselves a significant challenge. (See, for example, one early description written by O'Brien and Nusbaum, 2000.)³⁶⁵ Cyber-based warfare may function as an offensive 'niche strategy', and could, if successfully carried out, possibly destroy important parts of the information-based Western economies.
4. By choosing the correct asymmetric strategy, an adversary could, at least in theory, possibly take on the superior Western military capacity with the hope of a good result. The insurgent leaders could take the decision to fight in large cities with millions of inhabitants, or in inaccessible jungle areas. In large built-up areas, it is difficult to use traditional trained and organised conventional forces equipped with heavy firepower effectively.³⁶⁶
5. The ease of access to a large multinational audience for any group interested in, and capable of, using modern international media. This entirely decentralised way of planning and directing operations and distributing the results should not be underestimated. An interesting example of this kind of 'leadership by mobile phones' is the terror action that took place in 26–27 November 2008 in Mumbai, India. This became an international mega event.³⁶⁷

These new challenges probably require the reconsideration of the concept of command and control warfare. The term is certainly associated with levels today, i.e. operational and tactical levels. Nevertheless, when combating guerrilla warfare and terrorism, the most effective approach is normally to go after the leaders of a terrorist organisation.

The leadership will, in this case, be the opponent's operational and militarily strategic *Centre of Gravity*. This particularly applies to the organisations where the killing/arrest of the leader would have a great psychological effect on their members, i.e. organisations with a strong cult of the individual such as those we have seen earlier in the Kurdish PKK, within al-Qaeda, the 'Tigers' in Sri Lanka (which is now completely defeated) or within the Maoists (PCP) in Peru. Both the PKK and the PCP 'lost their crowds' once their leaders ended up in prison, but PKK is now 'back in business'.

³⁶⁵ O'Brien & Nusbaum, p. 5–6.

³⁶⁶ In reality, major restrictions will probably be placed on the use of Western air forces (with the possible exception of the use of so-called precision weapons). So-called 'targeting', i.e. the ability to find and analyse target data before attacking tangible targets, is extremely difficult under such circumstances.

³⁶⁷ 'Terror in Mumbai, India under attack, A terrorist onslaught of stunning scope and horror', *The Economist*, 28 November 2008, <http://www.economist.com/node/12708194>.

As regards the huge focus on the terrorist leader bin Laden in the media after 9/11, the key issue was not whether he himself planned the terror, but that his person – and he probably also saw himself in this way – appeared as a ‘god-like figure’, a sort of Arab ‘Saladin character’ or a rallying symbol for many extreme Muslims. It is this form of charismatic leadership, which, adapted to its own environment, often inspires ‘angry young men’ in particular to become foot soldiers in terrorist and insurgent movements. Unless this type of leadership can be neutralised, the insurgency is likely to continue.³⁶⁸

3.4. Compound warfare, hybrid warfare and full spectrum operations

3.4.1. Introduction

In the following section we will discuss and compare military theories called *compound warfare* and *hybrid warfare*, where hybrid is defined as something heterogeneous in composition of different elements of ways to wage war. *Compound warfare* theory is the predecessor of *hybrid warfare* theory. Neither is part of the United States formal doctrine writing, but the latter has been an inspiration for the ongoing debate among military thinkers since the turn of the 21st century, as the conflicts of today are becoming more and more complex. *Hybrid warfare*, although there is no universal agreed definition, aptly describes the nature and multi-modality of the conflicts the Western militaries are part of in Afghanistan or Iraq. This is probably also a kind of warfare Western militaries will face in the future, and therefore should be prepared to tackle. we would describe *hybrid warfare* as a cocktail of conventional military capabilities, insurgencies, terrorism, guerrilla warfare, organised crime, cyber warfare and advanced military technology. This kind of warfare may also include violations of international laws of war, and will often also involve non-state actors and organisations, supported by states with dubious agendas. All these ingredients may be blended together with an equivocal number of ingredients simultaneously affecting the outcome. The magnitude of each ingredient may vary significantly during the war depending on the phase of the war or its immediate effectiveness.

The wars Western militaries are involved in today are different from those that were fought before the turn of the 21st century. The two Gulf Wars were probably like a dream come true for the advocates of military theories like the Revolution in Military

³⁶⁸ A distinction that is important to emphasise here is that killing a charismatic leader is not always enough to suppress an insurgency. If it is well organised, the insurgency will acquire new leaders and could additionally play on the previous leader now being a martyr. Seen in this light, it is not easy to know how the measures one takes will pan out in the long term without having a thorough insight into the culture and the rules of play that apply in a given area. Perhaps nothing is better than arresting the leader. This had major consequences for the Kurds in Turkey and for Peru’s Communist Party. Leaders who die in battle will often become martyrs at a time when the movement needs rallying symbols (for example, Adem Jashari, belonging to the Kosovo Albanian guerrilla organisation, the UCK).

Affairs (RMA), which included use of large numbers of regular forces, heavy armour, air supremacy, cruise missiles and technological advantage over the adversary. It seemed warfare had become everything Western armies had developed themselves to handle.

All this changed after the 11 September 2001 attacks on the Twin Towers and Pentagon. As a result the United States invaded first Afghanistan, and then later attacked Iraq with the help of a Western coalition. The campaigns in both Afghanistan and Iraq were well executed up to the point that the two countries were conquered and occupied. But no clear exit strategy had been planned for either campaign.

After the President of the United States, George W. Bush, on board the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln on 1 May 2003³⁶⁹ claimed 'Mission Accomplished' in Iraq, little by little the U.S. and the coalition forces became involved in an escalating and changing conflict. The unstable internal development in Iraq, with development of extreme political and religious groupings, and a difficult social and economic situation for the inhabitants of the occupied state, together became the starting point for a growing insurgency. The occupying forces were unable to meet the requirements for local security, political stability and economic development – all important factors if the occupation forces hope to gain the respect and confidence of the residents in an occupied territory.

In both Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. forces and their allies faced diverse local groups with different agendas (ethnic, political, religious, criminal, terrorism, etc.) that were trying to reach their conflicting goals with all means possible. Some of them were willing to use violence, not just regular gunslinging, but any method of warfare available. To undermine the law and order supported by the allies, their way to wage war included 'advanced conventional weapons, irregular tactics, terrorism, and disruptive technologies or criminality'.³⁷⁰

The Americans were not the only ones facing unexpected ways of how to wage war. The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) faced a similar *modus operandi* used by Hezbollah during their Second Lebanon War in the summer of 2006. The IDF underestimated Hezbollah's capability to fight and to adapt to the changing environment. The Hezbollah were no longer just badly organised gunmen, but rather a highly motivated, well-trained and equipped force with, for example, advanced anti-tank weapons and long-, mid- and short-range missiles.³⁷¹

To describe these new developments of warfare in the 21st century, the term 'hybrid' was introduced to military discussion, eventually leading to the term *hybrid warfare*.

Since the term was adopted into the military debate, theories about so-called *hybrid warfare* have served as the background for a number of articles in military periodicals

369 'White House pressed on 'mission accomplished' sign', *CNN Politics*, 29 October 2003, http://articles.cnn.com/2003-10-28/politics/mission.accomplished_1_aircraft-carrier-conrad-chun-banner?_s=PM:ALLPOLITICS.

370 Hon. Robert Wilkie, 'Hybrid Warfare; Something Old, Not Something New', *Air & Space Power Journal*, Winter 2009, Volume XXII, No. 4 ARFP 10-1, <http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj09/win09/wilkie.html>.

371 Avi Kober, 'The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War: Why the Poor Performance?', *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Volume 31, Issue 1, 2008, pp. 3–40, website Taylor and Francis Online, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/>

around the world over the last few years. The theories have inspired some researchers in the American military thinkers' community, and the issue is *indirectly* discussed in different Field Manuals of the U.S. Armed Forces that mostly deal with counterinsurgency. To create a picture of what *hybrid warfare* is, we must familiarise ourselves with other types of warfare discussed over the last 30 years, namely conventional warfare, irregular warfare, compound warfare and asymmetric warfare.

- *Conventional warfare* can be described as the kind of war two or more states wage against each other, using their regular forces and national armies to reach their respective political or military goals. These armies fight battles and follow the rules of war, at least to some degree, and the warring parties expect their counterparts to abide by these rules.
- *Irregular warfare* is a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s). Irregular warfare favours indirect and asymmetric approaches though it may employ the full range of military and other capacities in order to erode an adversary's power, influence and will.³⁷² Irregular warfare includes acts of terrorism, insurgency and other unconventional methods, as well as the countermeasures for each, i.e. counterterrorism and counterinsurgency.
- *Compound warfare* is the simultaneous use of a regular or main force and an irregular or guerrilla force against an enemy. In other words, the compound warfare operator increases his military leverage by applying both conventional and unconventional force at the same time.³⁷³ Compound warfare is discussed at length in Chapter 1.4.2. It is a combination of conventional and irregular warfare, including elements of both used to reach the common goal.
- *Asymmetric warfare* describes an alternative way to fight a war, enabling the weaker party to counter the stronger opponent. In asymmetric warfare the weaker party uses his own strengths to strike at the enemy's characteristic weaknesses. So-called unconventional or unorthodox tactics are typically included in the weaker party's toolbox. The approach includes surprise and unpredictability. The weaker party tries to deny the stronger party of the ability to use his strengths and countermeasures effectively by forcing him to fight in unfavourable circumstances. Asymmetric warfare can be seen to include irregular and hybrid features of warfare, but as a term it is not clearly defined.

abs/10.1080/01402390701785211. pp. 15–16.

372 *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, JP 1-02.

373 Huber (2002), p. 1.

In the text ‘Countering Irregular Activity within a Comprehensive Approach’, Rear Admiral Chris Parry (retired) of the UK Royal Navy describes *hybrid warfare* as follows:

*Hybrid warfare is conducted by irregular forces that have access to the more sophisticated weapons and systems normally fielded by regular forces. Hybrid warfare may morph and adapt throughout an individual campaign, as circumstances and resources allow. It is anticipated that irregular groups will continue to acquire sophisticated weapons and technologies and that intervention forces will need to confront a variety of threats that have in the past been associated primarily with the regular Armed Forces of states.*³⁷⁴

In addition to the types of warfare mentioned above, significant additions to *hybrid warfare* are the elements of criminality and cyber warfare. These two elements make it even more comprehensive than the other types of warfare mentioned before. *Hybrid warfare* can be seen in context with other forms of warfare in Figure 3.1.³⁷⁵

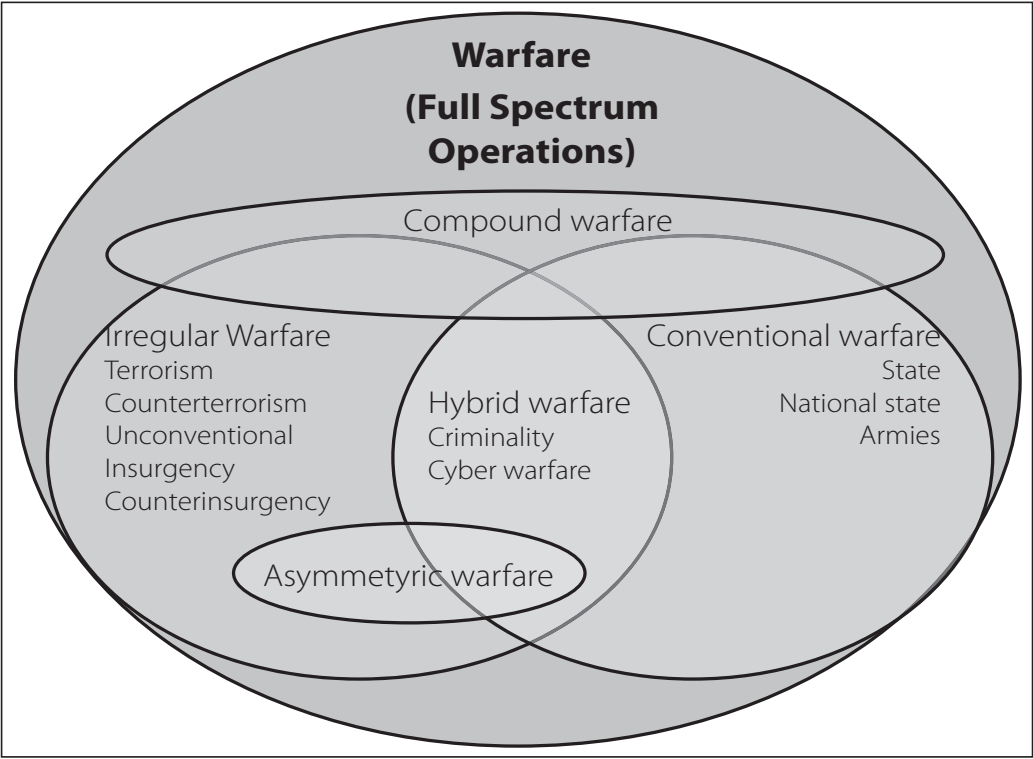


Figure 3.1: Hybrid warfare seen in context with other forms of warfare.

³⁷⁴ Wilkie (2009), p. 1.

³⁷⁵ This frame of reference is a developed version and influenced by Government Accountability Office report on hybrid warfare. United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), *GAO-10-1036R Hybrid Warfare*, 10 September 2010, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d101036r.pdf>, p. 16, Figure 2, ‘The Hybrid Warfare Concept’.

In this part of the chapter, we will use two *case studies* to make it easier to explain and understand the similarities and differences of *compound warfare* and *hybrid warfare*. Here we will also briefly introduce the U.S. Field Manual 3-0 *Operations* and the slogan *full spectrum operations*, and thus present the views of the U.S. Army of its operations of today and tomorrow.

As Case Study 1, we will use the Vietnam War (1965–1975) to further define *compound warfare*. Why will we use the Vietnam War? Experiences from this war may be looked upon as the starting point for the development of the military thoughts leading to today's concept of *hybrid warfare*. The Communist side's use of both conventional and irregular forces under the same command (provided by the North Vietnamese leadership) ensured that they were fighting for a clear political and military goal. The North Vietnamese strategy of using a 'long war' against its enemies, ultimately led to the U.S. (and South Vietnamese) defeat in Vietnam. The Vietnam War may be looked upon as an example of a modern form of *compound warfare*. The Vietnam War involved the American military, which represents the angle we have chosen for this section – the American point of view.

The Americans possessed all the most up-to-date weapon systems of the time, and during the Vietnam War conventional weapon systems dominated. The Communist side also had access to modern weapons received from the Soviet Union and China. But the long 'local war' for control over the South Vietnamese hamlets and villages depended on the use of well-trained cadres equipped with small arms and the use of political pressure, terror and persuasion in a fight for influence over the population. Here the guerrilla forces had an important function, and were a very important support to the main forces sent to South Vietnam from North Vietnam. This combination of irregular and conventional forces is the centre of *compound warfare* as a *theoretical* concept. Compound warfare may be looked upon as an American concept in military thinking, created to better understand the effects of combining conventional and irregular forces in war, and was developed using analyses of earlier historical conflicts. It is 'historically tested' so to speak, and it works provided that the circumstances are right.

As Case 2, we will use the Second Lebanon War (2006). Why use this war as a case study? This war did not involve U.S. forces, but was fought by the Israeli armed forces. It may serve as an excellent example of what *hybrid war* can look like in the future. Among American military writers, it is considered a good example of *hybrid warfare*, since it involved multiple dimensions of war, thus fitting into the description of *hybrid warfare*.³⁷⁶ *Hybrid warfare* as a term may be looked upon as a new military

376 Frank G. Hoffman, 'Hybrid Warfare and Challenges', *Joint Force Quarterly*, issue 51, 1st quarter, 2009, (F. Hopffman 2009a), p. 37.

theory with the aim of better understanding the conflicts of today. It is not yet a practically tested and clearly defined term like *compound warfare*.

By comparing these two cases and *full spectrum operations*, noting the similarities and differences, if there are any, we will demonstrate the development of thought behind *hybrid warfare*, and the American need to understand the conflicts of today. In both of the case studies presented before, there is the stronger, overpowering force and then the underdog that should not have any chance to win the conflict. The analysis of these two conflicts should also give answers to why there was a need to bring a new term into discussion and how it came to be.

3.5. Case study 1: the Vietnam War³⁷⁷

*War is the highest, most comprehensive test of a nation and its social system. War is a contest that not only tests the skill and strategy of the two adversaries, but also their strength and will. Victory goes to the side which has the correct military strategy, which makes the best use of the art of military science and which most successfully limits the war-making capacity of its adversary.*³⁷⁸

3.5.1. Background

The Vietnamese people have fought against their neighbours, among themselves or against the French colonialists in a long series of wars. France occupied Annam and Tonkin after the French-Chinese War (1884–1885). Indochina was established in October 1887, and included Annam, Tonkin, Cochinchina and Cambodia. In 1893, Laos was included. This federation existed to 1954, and had Hanoi as its capital.

There was a long tradition in Vietnam for popular uprisings against the official authorities prior to the American involvement in Vietnam from the late 1950s. The French rule in Indochina ended as a result of the First Indochina War (1946–1954). The French empire had been significantly weakened during the Second World War and in the end it could not resist the Vietnam Independence League (Vietminh), a Communist organisation, formed by the Communist intellectual Ho Chi Minh. After the declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) in September 1945, the French began a military campaign to topple Ho's declared nation. Both sides demonstrated violence and brutality, but even with the superior numbers of French and Vietnamese troops and despite winning most of the many battles,

³⁷⁷ K-P Huovinen is the main author of the following two Case Studies and the text about *Full Spectrum Operations*.

³⁷⁸ According to Senior General Van Tien Dung, People's Army of Vietnam, in Randall M. Briggs, 'Compound Warfare in the Vietnam War', in Huber, Thomas M. (ed), *Compound Warfare. That Fatal Knot* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Press, 2002, Honolulu, Hawaii: University Press of the Pacific, 2004), p. 221.

the French were never able to secure control of the countryside. The war culminated in the French defeat at the battle of Dien Bien Phu in May 1954.³⁷⁹

At the Geneva Accords in July 1954, Indochina was divided into four independent states, namely Cambodia, Laos, and both North and South Vietnam. The division of Vietnam was intended to be temporary, pending nationwide elections. The Communists, led by Ho Chi Minh, were especially strong in North Vietnam, and the French and their Vietnamese installed leadership had some popular support in South Vietnam (especially among the Catholic minority and city dwellers). Eventually South Vietnam was renamed the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) by the existing government. The elections to be held in accordance with the Geneva Accords were cancelled; the French were evicted and replaced by the Americans as supporters of the non-Communist South Vietnam. The regime in Saigon had problems gaining strong support among the rural population, since the peasantry saw the regime as an alien urban elite, the heirs of the French. Moreover, it did not help that in the eyes of the peasants the existing non-Communist government seemed to be more interested in staying in power rather than correcting the inequities created by the French colonial rule or improving the living standards of the peasants. By 1960, the then existing South Vietnamese government had made many mistakes, and had lost the support of the majority of the people. Corruption, lack of economic progress, theft and extortion of private individuals, torture of prisoners, and falsifying elections were real problems. The seed for the upcoming new conflict was planted.³⁸⁰ The Americans were now the main supporters of the Saigon regime, but they did not run the country, and were not in a position to politically control the developments.

As early as in the mid-1950s, the Communists of North Vietnam had started planning an insurgency in South Vietnam with the aim of eventually unifying the divided country. They planned to execute this by toppling the South Vietnamese leadership through a three-phase insurgency. First, they were to establish a political organisation in South Vietnam and gain the support of the rural population in particular. Second, they would advance into guerrilla warfare against carefully selected targets, and finally they would combine the guerrilla warfare operations and the use of conventional (full time) main force.³⁸¹ All of these may be seen as typical elements of *compound warfare*.

379 Briggs (2002), pp. 221–223. Philip B. Davidson, *Vietnam at War: The History: 1946–1975* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1988), p. 269, 280.

380 Briggs (2002), pp. 224–225.

381 Briggs (2002), p. 226.

3.5.2. National Liberation Front (NLF)

In the battle against the French in the First Indochina War, Vietminh demonstrated its capability to fight successfully against a Western colonial power. The purpose of Vietminh had been to attract non-Communist nationalists and other democratic elements into a combined effort against the French to unify and liberate Vietnam. The support of these other elements was not based on the Communists' political long-term aims, but rather built on their *temporarily* adopted *nationalist* aims. Vietminh was thus seen as representing the entire people of Vietnam, rather than just the Communists.³⁸² As a result of the Geneva Accords, Vietminh was to withdraw its troops North of the 17th parallel and as a result about 80,000 troops were moved to the North, but about 10,000 clandestine cadres remained in the south and eventually were to play an important role in the Communist insurgency during the Vietnam War against the regime in South Vietnam and later also against the Americans.³⁸³

From the mid-1950s the Communist insurgency in South Vietnam included assassinations of government officials, anti-Communist teachers, secret police agents, etc. Bad government officials were often left in office just to advertise the inefficiency of the existing government. The South Vietnamese government responded to these rising numbers of assassinations by laying down tighter anti-insurgency laws prescribing harsh punishments for anti-government activity. This, in contrast, was one of the reasons behind the official birth of the National Liberation Front (NLF) in South Vietnam in 1960. The core of the NLF cadres was formed from the Vietminh cadres left in the South after the First Indochina War. The NLF also included Southern Communists and some representatives from several non-Communist opposition factions. Because of this, it easily gained support among the South Vietnamese reformers as well as Western liberals, as it was not recognised entirely as a Communist party, but rather a party with a nationalist agenda to unify the two Vietnams, and thus representing a broad spectrum of Vietnamese society. Eventually its sub-organisations the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the military wing of the NLF, and the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) were established. The South Vietnamese government called these organisations Vietnamese Communists, or 'Vietcong'. In the eyes of Vietnamese people, the NLF was the heir of Vietminh, and it was controlled by North Vietnam.³⁸⁴

The members of the NLF cadres worked hard to win the support of the peasants, since initially the Communists were forced to develop their own logistical support in South Vietnam. The Communists had realised that the support of the rural class was

382 Anthony James Joes, *Victorious Insurgencies: Four Rebellions That Shaped Our World* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010), p. 81. Thomas L. Ahern, Jr., *Vietnam DECLASSIFIED: The CIA and Counterinsurgency* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010), pp. 1–2.

383 Briggs (2002), pp. 224. Ahern (2010), p. 16.

384 Briggs (2002), pp. 226–227, 230.

necessary to reach their goal. It helped that the South Vietnamese society, landlords and ARVN had suppressed and disrespected the peasants over time. The NLF emphasised that the land belonged to the peasants (but did not say anything about the ultimate goal – all the peasants should work on collectives). Although the Saigon regime had tried to re-enforce its authority over the landlords, they did as they wanted, and these unsuccessful attempts made it difficult to gain the support of most ordinary peasants. The NLF representatives and Saigon government appointees were often seen among the peasants as opposite forces. The NLF respected and brought status to the peasants who had not received respect in the past, whereas Saigon's appointees came from a different social class that the peasants could not relate to. In the early 1960s, the NLF provided better future prospects for the peasants and their children than the Saigon government, and thus the NLF kept gaining support among the peasants.³⁸⁵

The military wing of the NLF, the PLA, was organised in two levels, namely full military force units (main force) and paramilitary or guerrilla force units. The guerrilla force units were divided into two types, regional or territorial guerrillas and local guerrillas. From the very beginning, the PLA was directed from Hanoi. The idea was that the PLA was self-supporting and self-contained in terms of supplies and personnel. It was not until 1968 that Hanoi began openly supporting the PLA; until then the support was quite limited.³⁸⁶

From the point of view of the theories behind the concept of *compound warfare*, all the elements were in place: the North Vietnamese government had its own conventional force (PAVN – People's Army of Vietnam, North), and the NLF's military wing was organised as a guerrilla force (PLA), with a developed political ideology and a clear goal to unify the two Vietnams. In order to improve its odds of succeeding, the Communist regime in North Vietnam needed foreign strong allies to back up the effort. Allies were found in China and the Soviet Union. Hence the war in Vietnam is categorised as *fortified compound warfare* – *compound warfare* with external supporters. Of the two foreign supporters, China was in the 1960s the most important, providing Ho Chi Minh's troops with training camps and advisors, and a show of force of 200,000 troops across the border. Yet North Vietnam's relationship and attitude towards these two supporters was complicated, due to the fact that neither had worked in favour of North Vietnam's interests in the Geneva Accords negotiations back in 1954.³⁸⁷

385 Briggs (2002), pp. 228–229.

386 Briggs (2002), p. 230.

387 Briggs (2002), p. 231.

3.5.3. Early American involvement

President John F. Kennedy took office in 1961 and brought new spirit and hope to the American people. Yet the Cold War was at its peak and the confrontation between the West and East was at the centre of U.S. policy making. The United States and the Soviet Union fought fiercely in the world of international politics to maintain the positions they had acquired and to increase the support for their own ideology. Vietnam was, from the American point of view, an important stage in the effort to stop the spread of international Communism.³⁸⁸ Although the Kennedy Administration saw that the problems were mounting in South Vietnam, the withdrawal of support from South Vietnam was rejected.³⁸⁹

The more direct American involvement in South Vietnam started with limited military assistance to the regime. With the help of the so-called Military Assistance and Advisory Group (MAAG) the Americans helped South Vietnam reorganise its army. With strong American influence, it was organised into divisions and corps and was partly mechanised. It was not well suited for fighting insurgents or guerrillas, but rather to meet the American threat scenarios, meaning that it was intended to have the capability to defend against a conventional invasion from North Vietnam – the same way as the North Korean Communists had started the Korean War. Thus the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) was designed primarily for conventional warfare, i.e. for meeting a conventional attack from North Vietnam, which was a likely scenario at that time. The insurgents were to be fought by the police, secret police and local security forces. Of these, the latter actually ended up more or less protecting provincial administrations, thus demonstrating the nonexistent support for the South Vietnamese government, since there was a clear need to protect local administration offices.³⁹⁰

Regardless of the MAAG help, the ARVN was not very successful in fighting the PLA. A typical ARVN operation of the early 1960s did not accomplish much and often gave a *propaganda victory* to the NLF due to heavy damages to civilian structures and many civilian casualties. Even when the ARVN outnumbered the PLA in every aspect in the battlefield, the results were poor. The ARVN had problems with its leadership and badly motivated troops. ARVN officers were inexperienced and frequently disobeyed orders that did not suit them. The South Vietnamese leadership misused troops, ordering them to avoid decisive contact with the guerrillas. The incompetence of the ARVN became evident throughout the war in Vietnam. The internal problems were seen already during the era of French rule and were

388 President Kennedy needed to demonstrate American credibility and resolve to stop the spreading of Communism in South East Asia, or retreat to 'Fortress America'. He had fumbled in his earlier diplomatic engagements with the Soviet Union and Vietnam offered an opportunity to correct that.

389 Briggs (2002), pp. 227–228. Davidson (1988), pp. 291–292.

390 Briggs (2002), p. 232.

never completely solved even during the American involvement in the war. Worst of all, the nature of the problems was misunderstood by the ARVN itself and by the South Vietnamese leadership. The PLA was successful because it had the support of the rural population. The ARVN's battle tactics emphasised air and artillery attacks (the use of firepower), which worsened the situation and alienated people even further. The artillery and air strikes were supported by the U.S. Air Force and resulted in tens of thousands of refugees hostile to the Saigon government.³⁹¹

The U.S. Army faced guerrilla warfare in Vietnam from the beginning to the end. This threat was recognised by the Kennedy Administration in the early 1960s. The analysis of the necessary steps to be taken in South Vietnam in order to meet the Communist threat was correct to some degree. Yet the most fundamental fact was not understood: the fact that the South Vietnamese Government during the 1960s did not have the support of its own people. In order to gain the support of its own people, fundamental reforms by the Saigon regime were essential.³⁹² The early American involvement included significant interest in counterinsurgency (COIN), but this was eventually overpowered by a way of thinking focusing on conventional warfare. The American military leadership favoured firepower, using artillery and airpower as the answer to the Communist insurgency, which, of course, scored no points in the eyes of the people of South Vietnam.

3.5.4. U.S. expanded commitment

In 1963, the United States covertly participated in a military coup that included the assassination of the President of South Vietnam (Ngô Đình Diệm). After the coup South Vietnam plunged into chaos during a succession of unstable military governments.³⁹³ Being part of the disposal of the earlier South Vietnamese leadership, the U.S. was forced to support his successors. President Kennedy was assassinated the same year (1963). Kennedy's legacy of foreign policy was an expanded commitment to South Vietnam as an experiment in counterinsurgency. President Lyndon B. Johnson succeeded Kennedy and he continued in the footsteps laid out by his predecessor in terms of assisting the South Vietnamese against the Communist conspiracy.³⁹⁴ Initially, President Johnson was reluctant to commit American combat troops to South Vietnam, but little by little he increased the American effort in South Vietnam, from military advice and support to direct military action. By mid-1965, the United States

³⁹¹ Briggs (2002), pp. 232–234. Davidson (1988), pp. 413–414, 652–654.

³⁹² Briggs (2002), pp. 234–235.

³⁹³ Davidson (1988), pp. 303–304.

³⁹⁴ Davidson (1988), pp. 313–314.

was committing ground forces to the war, with no clear victory at hand or even visible. From the American perspective, the conflict kept escalating.³⁹⁵

The Americans faced four major restrictions connected with their military involvement in the war in Vietnam. First, the RVN government was not legitimate in the eyes of the population, as it had a limited support among the population. The Americans failed to realise this. Second, from around 1964, the NLF was widely supported in the *rural areas*. The young and bright peasants had better future prospects if they became a member of the NLF rather than of the government organisations. Third, the Americans recognised the necessity to gain support in the rural areas, and thus tried to improve the RVN position there, but found it very difficult to obtain results. And finally, the ARVN was no match for the PLA in the mid-1960s, and was losing on all fronts. It was evident that the ARVN could not defeat the PLA alone, meaning that a considerable contribution of American forces was needed to defeat the PLA before successful nation building could begin. To defeat the PLA, the Americans had to use firepower, which caused great destruction and loss of civilian life. The war against the PLA worked counterproductively in terms of the second and third restriction mentioned above, but it was a precondition for the fourth and indirectly for the first restriction, since the Americans caused casualties and destruction to the Vietnamese areas controlled by the NLF. And all of this was done in support of the not very popular RVN government.³⁹⁶

In 1965, as the American troop numbers grew, the PLA in South Vietnam, supported by infiltrated cadres and military units from North Vietnam, responded to the growing pressure by moving to the third phase of the insurgency, meaning conventional, large unit confrontations. The PLA leadership estimated that they could destroy the ARVN and encourage the American withdrawal. This was a miscalculation and the PLA suffered heavy casualties that year. The step to phase three was taken too early. The PLA's unconventional warfare had previously worked well, and the new conventional warfare did not. Both sides learned important lessons that year. The insurgents realised that they could fight the American troops and 'win', by their own definition (which included accepting heavy casualties). The Americans could win a battle physically in the jungle, but they would soon retreat from the area, and then the insurgents would reoccupy it.³⁹⁷ If the PLA could 'win battles' according to their own definition, they could win the war. The Americans on the other hand learned that regardless of favourable kill ratios during the battles (12:1 at best), a growing part of the American public was not ready for the increased casualty rate of the war, regardless

395 Briggs (2002), pp. 237–241. Davidson (1988), pp. 302–303, 314–317, 350.

396 Briggs (2002), p. 242.

397 In operation CEDAR FALLS in the Iron Triangle, once the U.S. troops pulled out, the Vietcong forces returned in two days. Davidson (1988), p. 428.

of how many enemies were killed at the expense of the lives of their sons. The idea of attrition warfare, bleeding the enemy to death, was suffering serious blows.³⁹⁸

The Americans increased the volume of air campaigning along with the increase of operations on the ground. Operation ROLLING THUNDER was carried out against North Vietnamese targets. It was supposed to last for eight weeks, but ended up lasting three and a half years (from March 1965 to November 1968).³⁹⁹ During this air campaign, one million tons of bombs were dropped, about eight hundred tons a day, without any significant favourable political results. One reason was that the DRV had anticipated the American air campaign, and had received material and technical assistance from the Soviet Union to build a modern air-defence system. The DRV had received modern jet interceptors, and Soviet technicians were setting up surface-to-air missiles and a sophisticated Soviet-built radar-control system.⁴⁰⁰ The DRV's air-defence system was updated to the most complex and capable any nation had had since World War II. By late 1967, ROLLING THUNDER had inflicted an estimated \$300 million in damages to North Vietnam and had cost more than seven hundred aircraft worth \$900 million – not a very flattering cost-benefit ratio. This is another example of the effectiveness of *fortified compound warfare* when a major supporter, here the Soviet Union, is willing to supply the forces with modern technology.⁴⁰¹

The Americans failed to nullify *compound warfare*. Hanoi was not just supporting the PLA, but directing it, the end state being a unified Vietnam under Communist leadership. As soon as the Americans entered the theatre, the *conventional* war between the United States and the DRV started. The Americans imposed restrictions on themselves, restrictions that had not been in place during WWII against the Germans. The American political system would not accept, for example, carpet bombings of major cities, or destruction of the dikes upstream along the Red River, both of which would have caused significant damage to the infrastructure of the DRV, and civilian casualties as well.⁴⁰² The Johnson administration limited the ground fighting to South Vietnam alone, leaving the support lines and staging bases in eastern Laos and Cambodia (almost) untouched. All this was due to the fear that China or the Soviets could directly enter the war.⁴⁰³ Thus the DRV had powerful allies, China and the Soviet Union⁴⁰⁴, sanctuaries and supply routes in Laos and Cambodia, and the

398 The American military leadership had decided that attrition warfare was the answer to winning the war. In their opinion, the PLA could not replace casualties endlessly, since it had such a small pool of personnel and would thus eventually 'bleed to death'. Briggs (2002), pp. 243–244. Davidson (1988), p. 350.

399 Davidson (1988), p. 336.

400 Davidson (1988), p. 363.

401 Briggs (2002), p. 245.

402 Davidson (1988), p. 341, p. 438.

403 Davidson (1988), p. 340.

404 Davidson (1988), p. 439.

support of the rural people in South Vietnam – all elements for successful fortified compound warfare.⁴⁰⁵

The American forces in South Vietnam relied on heavy firepower and use of modern technology. They wanted to engage the enemy at long range rather than close in as the PLA preferred. It was typical of the American forces to use massive artillery shelling and air support during their battles with the PLA. According to Military Assistance Command in Vietnam (MACV), the PLA had suffered significant losses by the end of 1967, but these numbers can be questioned, since the casualty figures caused to the PLA were either inaccurate or too optimistic, or a number of the killed were civilians. Many outsiders questioned the American approach of fighting insurgents with massive firepower. Since the guerrilla war in South Vietnam was mostly fought in the countryside instead of in the cities, parts of the rural Vietnamese society were being heavily bombed and partly destroyed. It is questionable if this was the best political solution. Much needed social reform could probably have had a better effect during this early part of the war.⁴⁰⁶ Again, the destruction in the countryside worked counterproductively for the Americans.⁴⁰⁷ The American military leadership at MACV doubtlessly thought that their strategy of attrition warfare against the Communists was working and that the only problem was time. The captured insurgents unilaterally claimed they were willing to fight for ten, fifteen or twenty years, if needed.⁴⁰⁸ Were the Americans prepared for that? For the Americans this meant that to achieve speedier results, it would need more troops and remove the political restrictions on the war.⁴⁰⁹

The Tet offensive of 1968 shifted the focus of the war. Towards the end of 1967 the situation on the battlefield was at a deadlock, which favoured the Communists. In Hanoi's opinion, the Americans could not increase their efforts without overextending themselves. Thus the continuing strategy would be to keep the United States bleeding until it was ready to negotiate, according to Hanoi's terms. Other goals of the North Vietnamese-led Tet offensive were to drive a wedge between the Americans and the RVN and to cause considerable damage to both, to demonstrate the vulnerability of the Americans regardless of their military strength and to start the uprising of the rural population.⁴¹⁰ The PLA forces, reinforced with troops from North Vietnam, launched simultaneous attacks against more than a hundred cities and towns, U.S. and ARVN supply dumps and headquarters during the Tet lunar New Year holiday (which the Communists had pledged to observe). The PLA forces fought ferociously, but at the same time terrorised people in the areas they seized. In most places, the American and ARVN troops crushed

⁴⁰⁵ Briggs (2002), p. 246.

⁴⁰⁶ Bernard Hall, a veteran French observer of Indochina, commented on the war while visiting American officers in Vietnam in early 1967). Briggs (2002), p. 250.

⁴⁰⁷ Briggs (2002), p. 249.

⁴⁰⁸ Davidson (1988), p. 421.

⁴⁰⁹ Briggs (2002), pp. 250–252.

⁴¹⁰ Davidson (1988), pp. 445–446.

the PLA forces with devastating power. Militarily the Tet offensive was a disaster for North Vietnam and the PLA, as the PLA's main forces were almost annihilated.

But *politically* the PLA disaster became very important for the Communist cause. U.S. public opinion was stunned by the Communist feat. According to the official U.S. assessments before the Tet offensive, the war was now being won, but the live footage from the television screens showed otherwise – the reality of the war seemed totally different.⁴¹¹ The Communists had been able to achieve a near-total surprise for their massive attack.⁴¹² American public support for the war declined dramatically after the Tet offensive, as the true realities – the destruction of the PLA main forces – were hardly reported in the Western press. Again, in *compound warfare* the battlefield results are not the only thing that counts.⁴¹³

The Tet offensive changed American policy in Vietnam. The attrition strategy was no longer considered the only way to go and alternatives had to be sought, since the American military leaders were not sure whether the Communists could match any troop build-up or not. The opposition to the war was growing in the Congress as well. By the end of March 1968, President Johnson announced the stopping of the bombing of North Vietnam as a gesture of good will and he was now open for beginning peace negotiations. He also announced he would not run for president for another term. Peace talks began in six weeks, but neither party could agree on the terms, and thus the peace talks continued for another five years.⁴¹⁴

3.5.5. Withdrawal of U.S. troops

President Richard M. Nixon won the elections in November 1968 and took office in January 1969. He realised the United States could not obtain a military victory, but he believed he could achieve a diplomatic settlement favourable to American interests. This meant the RVN should take more responsibility from the American forces and carry more of the burden of war. President Nixon and his administration planned a different approach, and decided to attack the Communist effort by cutting off the guerrillas from their safe havens and the support they received from allies. First, the Americans began secretly bombing the Communist headquarters and bases in Cambodia with some good results, but ultimately failed to prevent PAVN operations in the area.⁴¹⁵ The second part of the plan was to disrupt the support North Vietnam was receiving from the Soviet Union and China. The Soviets were reluctant to put pressure

⁴¹¹ Davidson (1988), p. 484.

⁴¹² The level of surprise of the Tet offensive has been a question of debate among scholars over the years. It could be concluded it was not a strategic, but a tactical surprise. Davidson (1988), pp. 477–478.

⁴¹³ Briggs (2002), pp. 252–254. William Weir, *Guerrilla Warfare: Irregular Warfare in the Twentieth Century* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2008), pp. 201–203.

⁴¹⁴ Briggs (2002), p. 255. Davidson (1988), pp. 533–535.

⁴¹⁵ Davidson (1988), pp. 595–596.

on North Vietnam, since they feared it would merely cause the DRV to seek closer relations with China.⁴¹⁶

Although the political negotiations and alternative efforts for a favourable solution began, nothing had changed in the battlefield. The Americans still relied on firepower, even more than before, and attrition warfare. During the period from late 1965 to the Tet offensive in early 1968, battles were mostly fought in the countryside and large amounts of bombs and explosives were used. Peasants were removed from their villages; the American forces would go in, fight the battle and then retire back to their bases in populated areas. The American casualty rate grew steadily and few results were achieved. This in turn raised strong criticism in the U.S. Congress and the American press towards the American war efforts in Vietnam.⁴¹⁷ During his presidential campaign, President Nixon had promised to reduce American involvement in Vietnam.⁴¹⁸ At the same time, he tried to disturb the *compound warfare* effort of the DRV by affecting DRV supporters politically and the North Vietnamese supply routes and safe havens militarily. Orders were given to the commander of the U.S. forces in Vietnam to diminish operations to avoid heavy casualties (late 1969). Troop reductions were announced. A strategic withdrawal from the war had begun.⁴¹⁹

In 1970, President Nixon decided to hit Communist sanctuaries in Cambodia. The American and ARVN troops invaded Cambodia with the mission to destroy Communist staging areas.⁴²⁰ Militarily the operation was a temporary success but the Communists quickly shifted to operating in another area, regrouped and resumed action as before. In America, this was seen as an escalation of the war rather than de-escalation, contrary to President Nixon's stated policy. Antiwar demonstrations and college student strikes across the continental United States caused unrest. The Congress passed a bill that prohibited U.S. ground troops from operating in Laos or Cambodia.⁴²¹

Over the next two years the 'Vietnamisation' process was pushed forward in South Vietnam, with some success. But the ARVN could not easily take over the responsibilities from the American forces; it was simply not capable of doing so. President Nixon tried to influence the fortified *compound warfare* supporters of the DRV, the Soviet Union and China, by making official visits to both countries, and at the same time to demoralise the DRV. The bombing of North Vietnam was resumed and intensified, while the number of American troops in Vietnam kept declining.⁴²²

416 Briggs (2002), pp. 256–257.

417 An example of a typical battle: In May 1969, a battalion of the 101st Airborne Division assaulted a PAVN position on Aphia mountain ('Hamburger Hill') eleven times in ten days. When the hill was captured about 500 dead enemies were counted, but own casualties were 476, including fifty dead. The Air Force dropped 500 tons of high explosives and 76 tons of napalm to support the attacks. Briggs (2002), p. 257. Davidson (1988), pp. 614–615.

418 Davidson (1988), p. 587.

419 Briggs (2002), p. 257. Davidson (1988), p. 641.

420 Davidson (1988), p. 625.

421 Briggs (2002), pp. 259–260. Davidson (1988), pp. 663–665.

422 The U.S. troops in Vietnam numbered 540,000 by the end of 1968, 280,000 by the end of 1970, and 65,000 in 1972.

To demonstrate their strength and the failure of Vietnamisation, and to improve their positions in the peace talks in Geneva, Hanoi launched a massive *conventional* invasion from North Vietnam in March 1972. The PAVN's objectives were to achieve victory and to humiliate President Nixon, destroy his war policy and prevent his re-election. The North Vietnamese leadership had hoped to destroy ARVN forces as much as possible, and to occupy key terrain threatening Saigon. They also hoped to cause the U.S. troop withdrawal to accelerate, and ultimately to seize control of South Vietnam.⁴²³ Again, the Communists abandoned their successful *compound warfare* strategy, and went too early to 'phase three' of their insurgency strategy. General Giap had, as during the Tet offensive in 1968, underestimated the strength of the U.S. Air Force and the by 1972 much improved ARVN forces. Although the number of American troops in Vietnam was significantly lower than in the years before (estimated 65,000) they would not be able to pose a conventional threat to the PAVN as a combat force, but the American military advisors on the battlefield could still coordinate the close air support for the fighting ARVN forces, thus unleashing the awesome firepower of the U.S. Air Force against the now exposed PAVN heavy forces. A number of times the ARVN forces were saved by the massive American support from the air.⁴²⁴ The Americans and the South Vietnamese gained a tactical victory, but it resulted in a harsh realisation that the American support of the ARVN was only delaying the inevitable outcome of the war – a defeat for the Americans and a victory to the insurgency.⁴²⁵

After winning the 1972 presidential elections, President Nixon gave orders on Christmas Day to bomb Hanoi and Haiphong in order to force the DRV to a settlement.⁴²⁶ He had promised in his presidential campaign that the war was fought successfully and that peace was at hand. The American forces being pulled out of Vietnam gave another picture. The bombing was heavy and destructive, but as it was aimed at military targets the civilian casualties were relatively low. A cease-fire agreement was signed at the end of January 1973 and a political settlement followed.⁴²⁷

The last American soldier left Vietnam in the spring of 1973, and the war was over for America. President Nixon had new problems arising in the United States that tied his hands as far as supporting the RVN government with air power or other supplies was concerned. Congressional hearings on secret bombings of Cambodia and the Watergate scandal intensified, eventually leading to his resignation in August 1974. The PAVN began its final spring offensive in 1975, and as a result of this the ARVN

Briggs (2002), p. 256, 260, 262.

423 Briggs (2002), p. 261. Davidson (1988), pp. 673–674.

424 During the two-month siege of An Loc, the U.S. Air Force flew 262 B-52 missions, USAF and the Vietnam Air Force provided 9,203 tactical air strikes. The B-52s alone dropped 42,444 tons of bombs.

425 Briggs (2002), pp. 261–262. Davidson (1988), pp. 711–712. Ahern (2010), p. 374.

426 Davidson (1988), pp. 726–728.

427 Briggs (2002), p. 262. Davidson (1988), p. 730.

collapsed and South Vietnam was conquered within three months. The American efforts in Vietnam had ultimately failed.⁴²⁸

3.5.6. Summary case study 1

Many researchers and officers have discussed the reasons for the failure of the United States war efforts in Vietnam over the years. There is no simple answer, but a number of key elements can be pointed out.

1. The United States never matched the Communist DRV's will to win the war. Whereas the DRV committed all national efforts to reaching its ultimate goal of unifying North and South Vietnam, and winning against the Americans was a prerequisite of this goal, the Americans limited their efforts to what they considered adequate.
2. The DRV fought a political war. To reach its political goals, it used military force only as one tool along with political agitation, propaganda, terrorism and international diplomacy.
3. The Americans restricted themselves from using all means possible to wage war, since they did not want to risk escalating the conflict or a possible war with China or the Soviet Union. By doing this, the PAVN sanctuaries in Laos and Cambodia as well as their supply routes were untouched for a long time. In this case, North Vietnam cleverly used the asymmetry described in *compound warfare* theory to its advantage.
4. The Americans have also been strongly criticised by some critics for the armament and development of the ARVN – it was too 'heavy' for guerrilla warfare. In the critics' opinion, light infantry would instead have been the sort of forces needed to fight the Communist insurgents.
5. The Americans also faced a relentless enemy – time. Whereas the insurgents were prepared to fight ten, fifteen or twenty years, the American interest in committing to the war diminished over time. This can be seen as an essential part of *compound warfare* dynamics.⁴²⁹

The Vietnam War demonstrates the classical elements of fortified *compound warfare* in action. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) utilised a conventional force of its own army (PAVN). It had a guerrilla force formed from the People's Liberation Army of South Vietnam (PLA) and safe havens in Laos and Cambodia. And as a fortifying element it had major power alliances with China and the

⁴²⁸ Briggs (2002), p. 263.

⁴²⁹ Briggs (2002), pp. 263–264. Davidson (1988), pp. 796–797.

Soviet Union. This war also demonstrates the difficulty of fighting against an enemy who is using a *compound warfare* strategy. The inability to recognise key factors in the conflict proved fatal to the United States. The DRV's goal was not to win against the United States, but to unify Vietnam under Hanoi's rule. The primary enemy was not the United States, but the government of South Vietnam. In this light, winning the 'hearts and minds' of the peasants of the Vietnamese countryside, the importance of successful social reforms and the general well-being of the majority of the population are shown in an entirely new perspective, demonstrating the difficulty of fighting a successful counterinsurgency war. Or as Thomas Huber puts it: '*It is far less costly to understand compound warfare dynamics going in than to learn them in a harder school; failed operations,*'⁴³⁰ as the Americans did in Vietnam.

3.6. Case study 2: Second Lebanon War

3.6.1. Hezbollah – background

Hezbollah is a Shia Muslim political group with a militant wing called the Islamic Resistance. Hezbollah is defined as a terrorist organisation by the West. The group is active in Lebanon, and can be described as a 'state-within-a-state'. Along with the activities of its military wing, Hezbollah is also a major provider of social services, operating schools, hospitals and agricultural services for thousands of Lebanese Shias. It has participated actively in the Lebanese political system since 1992 – having had over the recent years from two to eleven out of thirty seats in the Lebanese national unity cabinet. Hezbollah operates a satellite TV channel, al-Manar, and a broadcast station – both are in the West regarded as terrorist entities. Ideological and financial support for the organisation is provided by Iran and Syria. Hezbollah raises funds from criminal activities, such as counterfeiting money and drug production and trade.⁴³¹

The seeds for Hezbollah were planted among the Lebanese Shias in the late 1970s as a result of the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1977), and two Israeli campaigns in Lebanon in 1978 and 1982. Hezbollah was to counter the Amal Movement, the largest Shia organisation in Lebanon at the time. It was a new organisation, separate from the PLO or other Palestinian groups operating in the area. In 1982, a group of Lebanese Shia Muslims declared themselves to be the 'Party of God' (Hizb Allah) as a response to the Israeli invasions of Lebanon. Islamic resistance units were formed and were committed to the liberation of the occupied territories and the ejection of the

⁴³⁰ Huber (1996), p. 7.

⁴³¹ Jennifer Ching and Michael Toiba, 'Hezbollah (a.k.a. Hizbollah, Hizbu'llah)', *Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations*, <http://www.cfr.org/lebanon/hezbollah-k-hizbollah-hizbullah/p9155/>, p. 1. 'Hezbollah; Profile of the Lebanese Shiite Terrorist Organization of Global Reach Sponsored by Iran and Supported by Syria', *Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S.)*, July 2003, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/ENG-LISH/IRAN/PDF/JULY_03.PDF, pp. 141–149.

Israeli forces. As soon as it was realised that the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) intended to stay in South Lebanon, the (at that time inexperienced) Hezbollah resistance cells began to develop their military competence with the desire to resist the Israeli occupation. In this, Hezbollah was assisted both ideologically and logistically by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards based in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley – originally sent there to aid in the resistance against Israel. Hezbollah began developing its popular base in Lebanon, and has over the years expanded and strengthened both its political and military capacity.⁴³²

Hezbollah draws inspiration from the Iranian Revolution, and is dedicated to the creation of an Iranian-style Islamic republic in Lebanon, and the removal of all non-Islamic influences from the area. It is strongly anti-Western and especially anti-Israel in its ideology. Iran and Syria have provided Hezbollah with substantial support since the organisation was founded, both financing and military training. The affiliation between Iran and Hezbollah has always been a close one. There are strong religious and ideological ties between Iran and Hezbollah – both being Shia Muslims. Iran has had a great effect on Hezbollah's improved capabilities by providing vital material and moral support to Hezbollah over the years.⁴³³

Syria has been, and still is, a close supporter of Hezbollah. There are two main reasons for Syria to support Hezbollah. Syria has its own conflicts and confrontations with Israel over the occupation of Golan Heights and it has interests to look after in Lebanon. Thus Hezbollah serves as a *useful tool* for Syrian political interests in the region.⁴³⁴

Hezbollah is a Shia Muslim organisation in which religion plays an important political role. Shias differ from Sunni Muslims in the way they look at leadership, but not in the spiritual aspects of religion. Shias believe that their leaders, both religious and political – which often go hand in hand – descend directly from the family of the Prophet Mohammad or God himself. Therefore among the Shias, Imams are considered sinless by nature and their authority infallible since it comes directly from God or the family of the Prophet. Hence the leaders are highly respected, and their authority unquestioned. Among the Muslims, Shias are a minority, accounting for about 15% of the Muslim population of the world. The attitude towards the divine authority of Shia Imams explains how Shia organisations may turn fanatical and be considered to behave like terrorist organisations in the West.⁴³⁵

432 'Hizballah / Hizbollah / Hizbullah / Hezbollah, Party of God, Islamic Jihad, Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine, Organization of the Oppressed on Earth, Revolutionary Justice Organization', *GlobalSecurity.org*, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/hizballah.htm>, p. 1. 'Hezbollah, the "Party of God"', *Ynetnews.com*, 31 July 2006, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3284023,00.html>, pp. 1–2. 'Who are Hezbollah?', *BBC News*, 4 July 2010, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4314423.stm, pp. 1–2.

433 Ching and Toiba, p. 1–2, and Hizballah, *Global Security*, p. 1.

434 *BBC News* (4 July 2010), p. 1.

435 Huda, 'What's the Difference Between Shia and Sunni Muslims?', http://islam.about.com/cs/divisions/f/shia_sunni.htm.

3.6.2. Early terrorist campaigns

Once established as a *militia*, Hezbollah received acclaim and legitimacy in Lebanon and throughout the Muslim world by fighting against the IDF and the South Lebanese Army (SLA). Its base areas were, and still are, Lebanon's Shiite dominated areas, parts of Beirut, Southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley. Aside from its activities in Lebanon, in the 1980s and early 1990s Hezbollah conducted a global terrorist strategy with a capability to operate all over the world, and they carried out terrorist attacks against Israeli and U.S. targets. Hezbollah focused on South America, Southeast Asia, Jordan, the Persian Gulf and the European continent.⁴³⁶

During the 1980s and early 1990s, Hezbollah was behind a series of terrorist attacks against Western targets such as suicide bombings of the U.S. embassy in Beirut (1983), the U.S. Marines base in Beirut (1983) and the U.S. Embassy Annex in Beirut (1984), aircraft hijackings (Trans World Airlines 1985, Kuwaiti Airlines 1984 and 1988), the attack on the Israeli Embassy in Argentina (1992) and a number of kidnappings of U.S. and European civilians as well as French, British, German and Russian diplomats. Hezbollah was responsible for most of the kidnappings of foreign nationals carried out in Lebanon during that time period (at least 18 citizens of Western countries were held hostage, and three of them were killed). It is said that Iran heavily influenced – or even directed the actions of – Hezbollah over this period of time. In the 1990s, following a shift in Iranian policy, Hezbollah lowered the profile of its anti-Western pursuits and focused its attention on terrorist activity against Israeli and Jewish targets.⁴³⁷

At the beginning of the 21st century, there was increasing cooperation between Hezbollah and other Palestinian terrorist organisations in the region.⁴³⁸ Hezbollah was very active against the IDF during the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon in May 2000. It transferred its focus to violent activities in Israeli territory with the aim to disrupt any attempt at dialogue or the peace process in general.⁴³⁹

However, since the 11 September 2001 attacks, Hezbollah made considerable efforts to promote its image in order to blur its identity as a terrorist organisation. It publicly denied its involvement in terrorism in general, and in particular its capability of global terrorism.⁴⁴⁰ Yet despite Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000, Hezbollah continued periodically to shell Israeli forces in the disputed Shebaa Farms border zone, resulting in periodic conflict and retaliation from Israel.⁴⁴¹ At the end of 2005, Hezbollah and the IDF had a heavy exchange of fire across the Blue Line established by the UN Security Council resolutions 425 and 426 for the IDF withdrawal from

⁴³⁶ Hezbollah, CSS (2003), p. 64.

⁴³⁷ Hezbollah, CSS (2003), pp. 64–65.

⁴³⁸ Hizballah, *Global Security*, p. 3. Hezbollah, CSS (2003), pp. 96–99.

⁴³⁹ Hizballah, *Global Security*, p. 2.

⁴⁴⁰ Hezbollah, CSS (2003), p. 65.

⁴⁴¹ Hizballah, *Global Security*, p. 4.

Lebanon in 2000. Both sides used heavy weapons against each other. Since the withdrawal of the IDF from Lebanon, Hezbollah has built its military capabilities substantially with the support of Iran and Syria.⁴⁴²

In 1989, heavily influenced by Syria, the Lebanese administration accepted Hezbollah as the only militia organisation in Lebanon, whereas all other ethnic militias were to be dismantled. Along with the weakness of the Lebanese central regime, Hezbollah's special status enabled the organisation to use its power and seize both military and civilian control in Southern Lebanon (and several areas of the Bekaa region), practically replacing the legitimate Lebanese regime. This process continued even after the IDF withdrawal from Lebanon. Southern Lebanon had in fact turned into a *state-within-a-state*. Hezbollah thus became the ultimate authority in this region, undisturbed by the Lebanese regime's weak control, which focused mainly on economic development projects that were themselves approved by Hezbollah. Hezbollah pursued its own policy in southern Lebanon, imposing it on the Lebanese government. This policy opposed the effective deployment of the Lebanese army in the south, thus preventing the Lebanese regime from assuming responsibility for this region's security and implementing its sovereignty. According to resolution 425 of the UN Security Council, the Lebanese army was to deploy in the south of the country. However, receiving strong support from Syria, Hezbollah openly rejected the deployment of the Lebanese Army to the south, and carried on as before.⁴⁴³

The Shia community had been the largest, and yet the most underprivileged ethnic community in Lebanon. For Hezbollah, this created a fertile soil for gaining support with an extensive social and economic programme, since the Lebanese government had lacked the initiative to improve the situation. Hezbollah carried out far-reaching social and welfare activities, including schools, women's affairs, health and medical services, social welfare and religious education. All these were financed by the funds received from international fundraisers and its support from Iran and Syria. Unsurprisingly, Hezbollah earned the trust and support of the Shia community as well as some non-Shias. The social and economic programmes served Hezbollah's aims of gaining political power in Lebanon and its ultimate goal of forming an Islamic republic in Lebanon.⁴⁴⁴

3.6.3. Background to the Second Lebanon War

After the withdrawal of the IDF from Lebanon in 2000, Hezbollah kept close ties to Iran and Syria and began arming itself. High-quality weapons, such as ground-to-ground rockets, anti-tank weapons, anti-aircraft missiles, mines and mortar rounds as

⁴⁴² Hizballah, *Global Security*, p. 4.

⁴⁴³ Hezbollah, *CSS* (2003), pp. 132–133.

⁴⁴⁴ Hezbollah, *CSS* (2003), pp. 136–137.

well as explosives, small arms and ammunition, were being smuggled to Lebanon.⁴⁴⁵ The tensions were high in the region and occasional clashes with the IDF occurred. In September 2004, the UN Security Council resolution 1559 called for the Lebanese government to disband and disarm all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias and to prevent the flow of armaments and other military equipment to the militias from Syria, Iran and other nations. The Lebanese government did not comply with the resolution – Hezbollah was very popular among the Shiites, had built a considerable military strength and did not want the Lebanese army in Southern Lebanon – Hezbollah territory.⁴⁴⁶ The November 2005 clash between Hezbollah and the IDF was, in its shortness and intensity, like a prologue to the Second Lebanon War the following year.⁴⁴⁷ The military and financial support Hezbollah received from Iran and Syria did not go unnoticed by the international community. As late as mid-April 2006, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called on Syria and Iran to stop interfering in Lebanon. But the situation had already developed for the worse.⁴⁴⁸

3.6.4. A retaliatory campaign escalating to war

The 33-day long Second Lebanon War was initiated by the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah near Shtula on the Lebanese-Israeli border on 12 July 2006. The kidnapping Hezbollah unit had crossed the border during a diversion attack in which Katyusha rockets and mortar rounds were fired against the border villages and IDF positions. Israel responded and launched a large-scale retaliatory operation that eventually escalated into a war.⁴⁴⁹

The war, which ended in a ceasefire agreement on 13 August 2006, can be divided into three phases, seen from the Israeli point of view.

- Phase I: Air campaign (12–16 July)
- Phase II: Engagement of ground forces (18 July – 11 August)
- Phase III: Final push (12–13 August)

The first phase of the Israeli retaliatory operation began with a massive use of the Israel Air Force (IAF). The IDF imposed air and sea blockades on Lebanon. The IAF attacked suspected Hezbollah command posts in Beirut, including military targets along the Beirut-Damascus highway and elsewhere, and tried to destroy the long-range missile launchers used by Hezbollah against Northern Israel. Israel refrained from bombing

⁴⁴⁵ Hezbollah, CSS (2003), pp. 108–116.

⁴⁴⁶ Anthony H. Cordesman, *Preliminary “Lessons” of the Israeli-Hezbollah War* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2006) (Cordesman 2006c), p. 10.

⁴⁴⁷ Hizballah, *Global Security*, p. 4.

⁴⁴⁸ Hizballah, *Global Security*, p. 4.

⁴⁴⁹ Kober (2008), p. 3.

Lebanese infrastructure, although the IDF Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Dan Halutz had suggested doing so, thus imposing restrictions on itself in conducting the operation. Israel also avoided a direct confrontation with Syria, despite the support it gave to Hezbollah. Within the first two days of the war, the IAF destroyed most of Hezbollah's medium and long-range missile launchers, along with the Hezbollah command centres in Beirut. Yet the Israeli retaliatory campaign met an unexpected surprise – the missile corvette INS Hanith, one of Israel's newest and most capable ships, was hit by a Hezbollah anti-ship missile while monitoring the naval blockade.⁴⁵⁰ On 14 July, the Lebanese government asked for a ceasefire, which was turned down a few days later.

According to Kober, this was the culmination point of the operation – the efficiency of the air campaign would only get worse as time went on. The situation could not be solved with air assets alone. This was recognised in the IDF high command, and on 16 July, the IDF Deputy Chief of Staff, Major General Moshe Kaplinski, recommended stopping the operation, but the highest political and military leaders thought otherwise. Thus the retaliatory operation started to escalate into a war.⁴⁵¹

In the beginning of the operation, the Israeli political and military leadership was both confused and indecisive concerning the objectives and methods to reach them.⁴⁵² As an example, the IDF Chief of Staff was initially thinking of the operation 'in terms of a retaliatory attack, not war', and even instructed his subordinates at the General Staff level not to use the term 'war' regarding the operation.⁴⁵³ Afterwards, it can be concluded that Israel had five objectives in the war:

- Destroy the 'Iranian Western Command' before Iran could go nuclear.
- Restore the credibility of Israeli deterrence after the withdrawals from Lebanon (2000) and Gaza (2005).
- Try to force Lebanon to act as an accountable state, including the end of Hezbollah's 'state-within-state' status.
- Damage or cripple Hezbollah while understanding that it could not be destroyed as a military force, and would continue to be a major political player in Lebanon.
- Free the two captured soldiers without major trades of prisoners held by Israel.⁴⁵⁴

450 Anthony H. Cordesman, 'The Lessons of the Israeli-Lebanon War', *Center for Strategic & International Studies*, 11 March 2008, http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/080311_lessonleb-iswar.pdf, pp. 47–48.

451 Kober (2008), p. 4.

452 'Winograd Commission Final Report, *Council on Foreign Relations*, 30 January 2008, <http://www.cfr.org/israel/winograd-commission-final-report/p15385>, points 13–17.

453 Kober (2008), p. 9.

454 Cordesman (2008), p. 6.

Although it was initially thought that the operation would be carried out based on an air campaign, a reserve infantry division was mobilised as early as on 13 July (eventually, three more infantry divisions were mobilised).⁴⁵⁵ Regardless of the damage inflicted on the Hezbollah long-range missiles and launcher arsenal, Hezbollah still had the capability to fire hundreds of short-range rockets a day into Northern Israel. This caused serious but above all morale damage to the Israeli civilian population living in the area. It was now finally understood by Israel's political and military leadership that the war could not be won without the ground element, and it felt forced to commit ground forces into battle, with the mission of destroying Hezbollah's positions along the Israel-Lebanon border.⁴⁵⁶

On 22 July, the second phase began – the IDF committed ground forces in battle in Southern Lebanon. The Israeli forces attacked head-on against the Hezbollah forces in Southern Lebanon, uncharacteristically departing from their tradition of mechanised warfare relying on outflanking and encircling the enemy, including the use of the element of surprise. The audacious fighting capabilities of Hezbollah came as a surprise to the troops on the ground. It has been debated whether this was the result of a failure of the Israeli intelligence community or not. The Israeli troops on the ground faced a prepared enemy, including well-prepared defence lines and bunker systems, well-armed troops with missiles, rockets and advanced lighter arms like anti-tank weapons and surface-to-air missiles.⁴⁵⁷ Fighting was fierce but ineffective, seen from the Israeli point of view, and the short-range rockets launched by Hezbollah kept terrorising the civilian population in Northern Israel. The IDF operations kept building up. On 29 July, the Israelis stepped up their efforts to create a security belt on the Northern Lebanese border. The ground troops took hold of dominating terrain and Special Forces hit targets in Bekaa Valley and Tyre. Yet in terms of the overall effort, it did not have much effect.⁴⁵⁸

Characteristic of the Second Lebanon War was that as the IDF engaged with Hezbollah, they often faced fighting in urban areas. Hezbollah had built its facilities in towns and populated areas. It used civilian facilities and homes to store weapons and supplies, as well as for defensive and offensive positions. Rockets and mortars were deployed within towns and homes; the Hezbollah soldiers rushed in and out to carry out firing missions.⁴⁵⁹ Hezbollah used the people of Lebanon as *human shields* to their advantage, clearly against the rules of the international laws of war. The IDF faced the challenge of target intelligence and collateral damage – how to verify targets to be

⁴⁵⁵ IDF committed at least 15,000 troops to attacks in Lebanon out of a force that rose to roughly 30,000. Cordesman (2008), p. 3.

⁴⁵⁶ Kober (2008), p. 4. Cordesman (2006c), p. 5.

⁴⁵⁷ Cordesman (2006c), p. 13.

⁴⁵⁸ Kober (2008), pp. 5–6.

⁴⁵⁹ The Israelis taped numerous videos of Hezbollah setting up a system, firing and leaving in less than a minute. Cordesman (2008), p. 16.

engaged with different types of weapons and how to avoid collateral damage? How much to limit the strikes and the use of force when military operations were carried out of civilian facilities or in their immediate vicinity? On the other hand, as the IDF Chief of Staff had publicly stated a threat of ‘setting Lebanon back 20 years’, it is tempting, if not evitable, for a non-state actor with terrorist status to use civilians as human shields. Collateral damage would play to the benefit of Hezbollah in this case; it would be excellent media operations material to bring the population to its side.⁴⁶⁰ In light of statistics, this could easily be done.⁴⁶¹ The Hezbollah leadership used its own TV and broadcast capabilities effectively to send out its own message to its supporters, its foes and the international press.⁴⁶²

Another characteristic of Hezbollah fighting during the conflict was its well-trained soldiers’ use of the advanced weapon systems they had acquired before the war, such as anti-tank weapons, anti-aircraft missiles, anti-ship missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles. The anti-tank weapons were used skilfully in terms of tactics – multiple rounds were fired at the same target, indicating that the use of anti-tank weapons was concentrated in anticipated kill zones. Anti-tank weapons were effectively used against IDF ground troops seeking protection from buildings, and these kinds of weapons actually caused most of the casualties of the IDF in the war.⁴⁶³ The anti-aircraft missile capability, whose existence was known by the Israeli intelligence community, played an important role from the Hezbollah’s perspective, although it could only drop one IAF aircraft during the war.⁴⁶⁴ Just the knowledge that Hezbollah possessed short-range air defence missiles forced the IAF to change mission profiles and to use extensive countermeasures to avoid possible ambushes of IAF planes. A successful ambush could provide Hezbollah with a propaganda victory.⁴⁶⁵

In the first days of the war, Hezbollah damaged the Israeli Navy missile corvette INS Hanith with an anti-ship missile, a capability thought to be possessed only by national armies rather than by an organisation with terrorist status. Israeli intelligence had suspected that Hezbollah had such weapons in its possession as early as 2003, but

⁴⁶⁰ Cordesman (2006c), pp. 13–14.

⁴⁶¹ Lebanon reported some 1,110 civilians dead, 3,700 civilians wounded and almost 1 million displaced persons at the peak of the fighting. It also made claims that the war cost some \$2.4–6.0 billion worth of damage, some \$398 million worth of damage to electric facilities and key infrastructure equipment, and over 150,000 residences destroyed. Cordesman (2008), p. 32.

⁴⁶² Cordesman (2008), p. 8.

⁴⁶³ The IDF estimated that at least 500 anti-tank guided missiles were fired during the fighting (ATGM: AT-3 Sagger, AT-4 Spigot, AT-5 Spandrel, TOW, Tophaan, AT-13 Metis, AT-14 Kornet, ATW: RPG-29/Vampire). Some 500 Merkava Main Battle Tanks were committed to battle; some 50 were hit, 21/22 were penetrated depending on the source, out of which 10 caused casualties. Cordesman (2008), pp. 43–46.

⁴⁶⁴ The IAF flew some 15,500 sorties during the war, and lost one aircraft due to hostile fire and four to accidents. Cordesman (2008), p. 36.

⁴⁶⁵ Israeli intelligence estimated Hezbollah to have a number of different types of man-portable surface-to-air missiles (SA-7 Strela/Grail, SA-14 Gremlin, SA-16 Gimlet, SA-18 Grouse) and perhaps a vehicle-mounted, radar-guided system (SA-8 Gecko) with a range of 10 km. Cordesman (2008), p. 36. Also see Kober (2008), p. 11.

the Israel Navy did not take the warning seriously, and as a result INS Hanith operated without using active countermeasures, and the ship was struck.⁴⁶⁶

The unmanned aerial vehicles supplied by Iran provided Hezbollah with another force multiplier.⁴⁶⁷ With a range of up to 450 kilometres and payload capability of 45 kg, a UAV could deliver a load practically anywhere in Israel with an accuracy of 10 m using its GPS guidance system. One penetrated the Israeli air defence system and was shot down by the IAF 15 km from Haifa. This demonstrated a new threat to Israel, since the UAVs could not be detected with normal surveillance radars and the new repercussions would have been unimaginable if the payload had been chemical or biological weapons.⁴⁶⁸ Although the threat posed by long- and medium-range rockets and missiles to Israel was dismissed by the IAF during the first days of the war, Hezbollah demonstrated its capability to inflict damage and a continuous threat to the civilian population of Northern Israel by firing short-range rockets continuously during the entire war. The smaller rockets required smaller launchers; they were moved and hidden easily and were both quick to set up and fire – a weapon that was used very effectively.⁴⁶⁹ There were some reports that Hezbollah had Iranian-promoted electronic warfare capabilities during the war, such as jamming and successful hacking of Israeli communication, which Israel has denied. It can be said that Hezbollah was well prepared to fight the war under the influence of Israeli electronic warfare, and could maintain its command network throughout the war.⁴⁷⁰

Due to the ineffectiveness of the IDF in the battlefield against Hezbollah's ground positions in Southern Lebanon, and particularly the IAF's inability in handling the continuous short-range rocket launcher threat to Northern Israel⁴⁷¹, it became evident that the threat would not disappear unless the territory from where the rockets were launched was captured. This set the stage for the third phase of the war. Although ceasefire negotiations were ongoing, an operation was planned to capture the entire area south of the Litany River. The Israeli government approved this operation because they thought it would give both military and political flexibility.⁴⁷² Israeli troops in the area nearly tripled, and the operation began on 12 August. It was never to accomplish its objectives, because the ceasefire took effect on 13 August.⁴⁷³

⁴⁶⁶ Cordesman (2008), pp. 37–38.

⁴⁶⁷ Iranian ABABIL was called MIRSAD-1 by Hezbollah. Kober (2008), p. 6.

⁴⁶⁸ Cordesman (2008), pp. 16–18.

⁴⁶⁹ Cordesman (2006c), p. 5. Cordesman (2008), pp. 16–19.

⁴⁷⁰ Cordesman (2006c), pp. 38–29. Cordesman (2008), p. 23. Kober (2008), p. 20.

⁴⁷¹ Hezbollah fired some 3,950 rockets at Israel during the war; more than 100 a day, and nearly 250 on the last day. Cordesman (2008), p. 3.

⁴⁷² Winograd Commission Final Report (2008), points 29–31.

⁴⁷³ Kober (2008), p. 5.

3.6.5. Summary – case study 2

Looking at the outcome of the Second Lebanon War, one must admit that Hezbollah emerged as the one that more successfully achieved the goals it had set for the war than Israel. Israel could not restore the credibility of its deterrence; in fact, the effect was quite the opposite. Kober points out that the war exposed serious weaknesses of the IDF: a late realisation that it was war; adherence to post-heroic warfare under circumstances that would have required a different approach; the erosion of the IDF's fighting standards due to policing missions; artificial Revolution in Military Affairs-inspired concepts; the adoption of the notion of *controlling* instead of capturing territory; a centralised logistics system; poor generalship; a hesitant and inexperienced political leadership; and IDF dominance in decisions on military matters.⁴⁷⁴ All these problems could be discussed in some detail, but are out of the scope of this section. Lebanon was not forced to act as a credible state to end the Hezbollah's 'state-within-state' status. Rather, this war forced the Lebanese Government to ask the international community for support against the Israeli aggression towards Lebanon.⁴⁷⁵ Looking at Hezbollah's strategic goals of the war:

- Survive and adapt to an Israeli-driven escalation
- Inflict maximum casualties in forward area
- Win limited war of attrition
- Demonstrate the ability to strike into Israel with short- and long-range weapons
- Dominate media battle
- Enhance post-war status in Lebanon and the Islamic world
- Emerge with political leadership, most weapons and key cadres intact
- Prevent from being disarmed after the war⁴⁷⁶

It can be said that Hezbollah was successful in almost all of them.

Hezbollah was unable to inflict really heavy casualties to IDF or Israel in general, but the damages caused were higher than expected, and as Israel has a democratic elected government, casualties is always a problem. Long-range missile weapon systems were used in the beginning of the war, but were quickly taken out by the IAF. Yet the continuous use of short-range rockets and the use of UAVs adequately demonstrated the Hezbollah's striking capability beyond close range. As a result of the ceasefire, Hezbollah was neither disarmed nor incapacitated. It could continue to rebuild its lost capabilities, and continue to be an important part of Lebanese politics.

⁴⁷⁴ Kober (2008), p. 9.

⁴⁷⁵ Cordesman (2006c), p. 16.

⁴⁷⁶ Cordesman (2008), p. 7.

The reasons for Hezbollah's achievements are many. It can be said that Israel underestimated the new capabilities of Hezbollah, both politically and militarily, and at the same time overestimated its own capability to win the war by waging only an air campaign without the use of an extensive ground element.⁴⁷⁷ Perhaps the biggest failure of Israel in the Second Lebanon War was that it escalated the retaliatory operation into a war before the Israeli government had decided whether to conduct a short and powerful blow on Hezbollah, or to bring about a significant change in Southern Lebanon with a large ground operation. In addition, the Israelis went to war without deciding on an exit strategy.⁴⁷⁸

Not only did Hezbollah possess weapons usually associated with national armies, but it also used them with considerable precision and skill. Its use of modern weapons and advanced guerrilla tactics involved disregarding internationally accepted rules of war, such as the use of civilians or civilian targets as shields for operative troops – and this was something that the IDF was not prepared to face. But as Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah, the Secretary General of Hezbollah said: '*...we are not a regular army. We will not fight like a regular army.*'⁴⁷⁹ They did not, and this worked against Israel, a foe thinking and fighting according to Western standards. The command system of Hezbollah was decentralised and responsibilities were distributed to smaller cells, thus giving the organisation flexibility and strength to carry on fighting despite the fact that many of these independent cells were incapacitated. During the years before the war, Hezbollah had plenty of time to build its defensive positions in Southern Lebanon according to estimates of possible battle spaces, and prepare for the eventually inevitable armed conflict, if not war, against Israel. With the decentralised command system going hand in hand with a decentralised logistics system, the small cells had well-planned resources available to them, giving them logistical independence from the upper echelons, which is often not the case for national armies.

The support of Iran and Syria was crucial to Hezbollah both before and during the war. Since Israel's 2000 withdrawal from Lebanon, both countries supported and supplied the Hezbollah military build-up extensively, bringing weapons and military expertise to Lebanon. This support continued during the war as well as after it. Israeli intelligence had reason to believe that Iranian advisors were closely working with Hezbollah during the war. It is believed that the Iranian advisors helped Hezbollah create a command centre for targeting and missile fire control, thus increasing Hezbollah's capabilities.⁴⁸⁰ Without the support from Iran and Syria, Hezbollah could not have built its military capabilities prior to the war, nor could it have maintained its forces

⁴⁷⁷ Cordesman (2008), p. 5.

⁴⁷⁸ Winograd Commission Final Report (2008), points 13–15.

⁴⁷⁹ Nasrallah on war in Cordesman (2008), p.8.

⁴⁸⁰ Cordesman (2006c), p. 20.

during the war either. This demonstrates the importance and effectiveness of external support to an organisation like Hezbollah.

The Second Lebanon War demonstrates the capability of a non-state actor like Hezbollah to wage war successfully against an army like the IDF, study and deconstruct the vulnerabilities of a Western-style military and devise appropriate counter-measures.⁴⁸¹ To do this, it mixed elements of war into a cocktail of a hybrid war, and used these elements as force multipliers to its advantage. Hezbollah's successful mix included advanced weapons, well-trained troops in irregular warfare, use of media to distribute self-profitable information, disregard for own and civilian casualties, the inclusion of a strong religious background and, last but not least, knowledge of the opponent, including its political and military capabilities and restrictions, and especially the opponent's moral limitations. This is just the kind of 'hybrid war' Hoffman describes as a '*blend of lethality of state conflict with the fanatical and protracted fervor of irregular warfare*'.⁴⁸² The opponents will have organisations of a hybrid kind, and the means by which to reach their respective objectives; they '*will exploit access to modern military capabilities... and promote protracted insurgencies that employ ambushes, improvised explosive devices, and coercive assassinations*'.⁴⁸³ The Second Lebanon War served as a good example of how to fight and be successful against a Western military-driven force. Its lessons have been learned and studied by other Hezbollah-like organisations. These are the types of conflicts Western militaries will be faced with in the future.

3.7. Full spectrum operations

*Army forces combine offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations simultaneously as a part of an interdependent joint force to seize, retain, and exploit initiative, accepting prudent risk to create opportunities to achieve decisive results. They employ synchronized action – lethal and nonlethal – proportional to the mission and informed by a thorough understanding of all variables of the operational environment. Mission command that conveys intent and an appreciation of all aspects of the situation guides the adaptive use of Army Forces.*⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸¹ F. Hoffman (2009a), p. 37.

⁴⁸² Frank G. Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars* (Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute Press, 2007), p. 28.

⁴⁸³ F. Hoffman (2007), p. 28.

⁴⁸⁴ U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Operations*, U.S. Army Field Manual FM 3-0, February 2008, p. 3-1. (A new version has been published in October 2011).

3.7.1. U.S. Army FM 3-0 Operations

The U.S. Army Field Manual 3-0, *Operations* is the U.S. Army's capstone manual on operations. It shapes all Army doctrine, while influencing the Army's organisation, training, material, leadership, education and concerns of individual soldiers. It is contested, examined and debated by Army leaders and officers, and measured against their strategic, operational and tactical experience before it is adapted as an accepted doctrine. FM 3-0 *Operations* is supposed to balance between the U.S. Army's current capabilities and requirements for future operations of different levels, from civil support operations to full-scale war. FM 3-0 recognises the challenges posed by the conflicts that the U.S. Army is involved in currently, such as Iraq or Afghanistan, as well as its part in countering global terrorism. There is always a clear need for evaluating the current conflicts and to predict the nature of future ones. The U.S. Army is required to be able to deploy forces promptly at any time, in any environment and against any adversary, for an extended period of time from stable peace through general war.⁴⁸⁵

FM 3-0 recognises that the conflicts of today are not solved with military means alone, and that while a land element is critical, it is only a part of the campaign. In order to achieve success in an operation, extended use must be made of all instruments of a nation's capabilities – diplomatic, informational, military and economic. The complexity of 21st century conflicts is recognised. Conflicts are more than just combat between armed groups. Multiple dimensions are involved: various armed groups operating among populations, difficulties in distinguishing a friend from a foe, success cannot be ensured solely by winning battles and engagements, improving the civil situation, informing the public and influencing specific audiences for operational purposes. Stability operations are considered to be as important as, if not more important, than offensive and defensive operations. As the Department of Defense policy states:

*Stability operations are a core U.S. military mission that the Department of Defense shall be prepared to conduct and support. They shall be given priority comparable to combat operations and be explicitly addressed and integrated across all DOD activities including doctrine, organizations, training, education, exercises, materiel, leadership, personnel, facilities, and planning.*⁴⁸⁶

Full spectrum operations is described as simultaneous offensive, defensive and stability or civil support operations, and it is the theme for FM 3-0 *Operations*. Since 2001, there has been a shift in the understanding that stability and civil support operations cannot

⁴⁸⁵ FM 3-0 (2008), p. vii.

⁴⁸⁶ FM 3-0 (2008), pp. vii-viii.

be something the U.S. Army conducts merely as ‘other than war’ operations. Rather, the U.S. Army forces must address the civil situation directly and continuously, combining tactical tasks directed against the non-combatants with tactical tasks directed against the enemy. From these tasks, there has emerged a need for ‘civil-military operations’, recognising their importance to the successful completion of the mission. FM 3-0 emphasises the need for nonlethal actions as part of the operations, and the aspect of civilian proximity during operations. The complexity of the conflict is stressed as an integral part of the conflict as is the importance of land power to victory in general.⁴⁸⁷

When discussing adversaries and enemies, FM 3-0 concludes that they can involve very different groupings, like criminal organisations, extremist networks, private corporate enterprises and increasingly powerful megacities or state-like extremist organisations. Failing states can provide safe havens for the adversaries to hide. These adversaries are capable of acquiring high-tech equipment, such as mobile networks or media, and use them effectively. Weapons of mass destruction are a potential threat in the hands of rogue states and extremist groups and may cause a catastrophic attack. The complexity of today’s operational environment is recognised, with the emphasis on populated urban areas and new non-geographical areas such as cyberspace. ‘All adversaries, state or nonstate, regardless of technological or military capability, can be expected to use the full range of options, including political, economic, informational, and military measure at their disposal.’⁴⁸⁸

FM 3-0 expresses the changing nature of the threats facing the United States and thus the U.S. Army at the same time. The threats are divided into four categories: traditional, irregular, catastrophic and disruptive threats. These categories do not describe the adversary, only the nature of the threat. The adversary can use all or a combination of these threats.⁴⁸⁹

- Traditional threats are posed by states using recognised military capabilities and forces in comprehended forms of military campaign and conflict.
- Irregular threats are posed by an adversary employing unconventional, asymmetric methods and means to counter traditional U.S. advantages. These methods and means can include such means of irregular warfare as terrorism, insurgency and guerrilla warfare, and can also be coupled with economic, political, informational and cultural means.
- Catastrophic threats involve the acquisition, possession and use of nuclear, biological, chemical and radiological weapons – weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

⁴⁸⁷ FM 3-0 (2008), p. viii.

⁴⁸⁸ FM 3-0 (2008), pp. 1-1 – 1-3; 1-5.

⁴⁸⁹ FM 3-0 (2008), pp. 1-4.

- Disruptive threats involve an enemy using or developing new breakthrough technologies to reduce U.S. advantages.

By combining these threats together and changing the balances of each during the duration of the conflict, the adversaries will try to create conditions in which they can employ the capabilities that the United States and/or its forces are least prepared to face. The adversaries are likely to adapt quickly to the changes in the operational environment whatever they may be, and blend into the populated urban areas. They will not be limited by national restrictions; rather they will use sophisticated combinations of conventional, unconventional, irregular and criminal tactics including information operations through global networks to achieve their objectives.⁴⁹⁰

In FM 3-0 *Operations*, neither the terms *hybrid operations*, *hybrid wars* or *hybrid warfare* nor the word ‘hybrid’ are mentioned, but the descriptions of future adversaries or the operational environments could well be described with the word ‘hybrid’.

3.7.2. Full spectrum operations – a presentation

The term *full spectrum operations* (FSO) describes the foundation of the U.S. Army’s operational concept. The goal is to employ land power as part of a unified action to defeat the enemy on land and create conditions that accomplish the joint force commander’s established end state. The concept dictates how the U.S. Army conducts and adapts to land operations as part of a joint force both today and in the near future, anywhere and in any situation worldwide. FSO require a simultaneous combination of four elements – offence, defence, stability and civil support.⁴⁹¹

Of these four elements, FM 3-0 determines that offence, defence and stability operations are to be combined simultaneously by the U.S. forces conducting operations outside the United States or its territories. Those operations conducted in the United States and in its territories combine civil support operations, defence and offence in support of civil authorities. Mutually supporting lethal and nonlethal capabilities are used to support operations in either case.⁴⁹²

FM 3-0 recognises the need for multipurpose and well-trained units as well as the importance of tough and adaptive commanders to successfully conduct operations. The importance of flexibility in the execution of the operations and force design is stressed throughout the concept, whether operating as part of a U.S. joint or multinational joint operation. The need for flexibility derives from the complex operational environment. There will most likely be continuous interaction between friendly forces, different groups, the local population, multinational partners, civil authorities,

⁴⁹⁰ FM 3-0 (2008), pp. 1-5.

⁴⁹¹ FM 3-0 (2008), p. 3-1.

⁴⁹² FM 3-0 (2008), p. 3-2.

business leaders, civil organisations, and adversaries and enemy forces. The operations are run amongst the populations, and at the same time the civil conditions are to be improved and the enemy defeated. Thus the concept of *full spectrum operations* emphasises that conflicts are more than just combat between armed opponents – they are complex and multileveled. The FM 3-0 underlines that in joint operations the stability or civil support operations are often more important than defence or offence.⁴⁹³

| | |
|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Offensive Operations</p> <p>Primary Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement to contact • Attack • Exploitation • Pursuit <p>Purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dislocate, isolate, disrupt, and destroy enemy forces • Seize key terrain • Deprive the enemy of resources • Develop intelligence • Deceive and divert the enemy • Create a secure environment for stability operations | <p style="text-align: center;">Defensive Operations</p> <p>Primary Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile defense • Area defense • Retrograde <p>Purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deter or defeat enemy offensive operations • Gain time • Achieve economy of force • Retain key terrain • Protect the populace, critical assets, and infrastructure • Develop intelligence |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Stability Operations</p> <p>Primary Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil security • Civil control • Restore essential services • Support to governance • Support to economic and infrastructure development <p>Purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a secure environment • Secure land areas • Meet the critical needs of the populace • Gain support for host-nation government • Shape the environment for interagency and host-nation success | <p style="text-align: center;">Civil Support Operations</p> <p>Primary Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support in response to disaster or terrorist attack • Support civil law enforcement • Provide other support as required <p>Purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save lives • Restore essential services • Maintain or restore law and order • Protect infrastructure and property • Maintain or restore local government • Shape the environment for interagency success |

*Table 3.2: The elements of full spectrum operations.*⁴⁹⁴

Offensive operations are combat operations conducted to defeat and destroy enemy forces and seize terrain, resources and population centres. Offence is the decisive element of combat operations and full spectrum operations. No matter what the situation in the conflict, in order to defeat the enemy at any level, operations must shift to the offence, sooner or later.⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁹³ FM 3-0 (2008), p. 3-2.

⁴⁹⁴ FM 3-0 (2008), p. 3-7.

⁴⁹⁵ FM 3-0 (2008), pp. 3-7 – 3-8.

Defensive operations are combat operations conducted to defeat an enemy attack, gain time, economise forces, and develop conditions favourable for offensive or stability operations. Normally, the defence alone cannot achieve a decision. It can create favourable conditions to offensive operations, a shield for support operations, or counter enemy offensive operations. It must be done aggressively, causing the enemy as much damage as possible. The chances for counterattacks – a shift to offence – must be exploited without hesitation in order to gain the initiative in the battlefield. During the force projection phases of operations, the initial entry forces may engage in defensive operations while the forces are building up, but they should have enough combat power to deter, attack or defend successfully.⁴⁹⁶

Stability operations include various military missions, tasks and activities conducted in cooperation with other instruments of national power.⁴⁹⁷ Stability operations may aim to provide a safe and secure environment, essential government services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction support or humanitarian relief. They can be conducted in support of a host-nation, temporary government or as part of an occupation force if no government exists. Stability support operations may facilitate reconciliation among adversaries as a neutral party. Other missions may include establishing political, legal, social and economic institutions and the support of transition of power to the legitimate local government. It is emphasised that the causes for instability must be resolved in order to achieve the commander's end state, rather than only reacting to enemy actions.⁴⁹⁸

Civil support operations are conducted in the United States and its territories. They are categorised as support provided by the Department of Defense to the U.S. civil authorities for domestic emergencies, and for designated law enforcement and other activities. These emergencies include natural or man-made disasters, accidents, terrorist attacks and other incidents. The U.S. Army forces are used when the capabilities or capacities of the domestic civilian agencies are exceeded. Primarily the civil support operations are a suitable task for the Army National Guard, and they are limited and directed by the U.S. laws.⁴⁹⁹

3.7.3. Summary FSO

The U.S. Army Field Manual 3-0 *Operations* gives the guidelines for operational use of Army forces. It explains in detail the universal basic military tactical principles used to successfully complete a mission. We have deliberately not focused on those, but rather concentrated on the descriptions of the operational environment and *full*

⁴⁹⁶ FM 3-0 (2008), p. 3-10.

⁴⁹⁷ Diplomatic, informational, military and economic instruments of national power.

⁴⁹⁸ FM 3-0 (2008), p. 3-12.

⁴⁹⁹ FM 3-0 (2008), pp. 3-16 – 3-17.

spectrum operations of today and the future. The term *hybrid warfare* was brought into the discussion because there was a need to better understand the complex conflicts of today and tomorrow. Thus there was a need to update FM 3-0 (2008) and take a broader look at *full spectrum operations* than the previous FM 3-0 from 2001 did. FM 3-0 underlines the need for the simultaneous application of all elements of *full spectrum operations* in various combinations in a given operation. The weight of each element depends on the circumstances in the operational environment during the given operation, and the analysis and will of the mission commander. Defence and offence are important, but in complex operations today, stability and civil support operations are even more important for achieving the required end states. Operations are becoming multileveled and complex – hybrid, one could say.

3.8. Analysis of compound warfare, hybrid warfare and full spectrum operations

This section is divided into two parts. First, we will discuss the similarities and differences of the two organisations involved in the two case studies presented earlier, namely the National Liberation Front (NLF) in the Vietnam War and Hezbollah in the Second Lebanon War. Second, we will compare *compound warfare*, *hybrid warfare* and *full spectrum operations* to demonstrate the similarities and differences of these three terms.

3.8.1. National Liberation Front vs. Hezbollah

The National Liberation Front (NLF) in the Vietnam War and Hezbollah in the Second Lebanon War have similarities and differences as organisations. Both can be seen as successful participants in the conflicts they were involved at different times – the NLF in the fight against the U.S. Armed Forces in the 1960s and early 1970s, and Hezbollah 35 years later in 2006 against the Israel Defence Forces. In Table 2, the two organisations are compared with each other.

The following similarities of the two organisations can be identified:

- A clear political agenda and ideology.
- The political organisations in both had their own military organisation.
- Strong support from one or more external states. This support from outside is political, ideological, logistical, military training and economic. External support has been essential for the survival of both organisations.

The supporters of Hezbollah, Iran and Syria have substantially improved the military capabilities of Hezbollah over the years prior to the Second Lebanon War by providing it with military training and advanced weapons.

The military wing of the NLF, the PLA, on the other hand, received help and support from North Vietnam, China and the Soviet Union, which was also essential for its fighting capability.

| | National Liberation Front (NLF) | Hezbollah |
|---|---|---|
| Political agenda | Unify the two Vietnams as one Create a unified Communist state | Form Islamic state of Lebanon Deter Israel from Southern Lebanon |
| Reason for foundation | Need to gather support of nationalist elements together (around communists) in the South | Need to resist Israel |
| Predecessor | Vietminh | None |
| Ideology | Communism, nationalism | Religion, nationalism |
| Appearance | Initially nationalism, later Communism | Initially a terrorist organisation, later tried to appear as a political one |
| Ideological and political leadership/ guidance | North Vietnam | Iran |
| Military wing | People's Liberation Army (PLA) | Islamic Resistance |
| Supporters (logistics, military training, funds, ideology) | North Vietnam, China, Soviet Union | Iran, Syria |
| State within state | No | Yes |
| Support base | The rural population (different tribes). Understood that to win, it had to have the support of the rural population of South Vietnam. | Lebanese Shias Understands that the Lebanese Shias have always been second-class citizens, easy to unify and gain support from them. |
| War waging | Terrorism (regional) Insurgency Unconventional warfare Conventional warfare | Terrorism (global) Unconventional warfare Criminality (drug production and trade, counterfeiting money) Propaganda (Media) |
| Weapons | Light | Light to heavy |

Table 3.3: Comparison of the National Liberation Front (NLF) and Hezbollah

- An effort to disguise its true colours at one time or another. Initially the NLF presented itself as a nationalist rather than a Communist party to attract other nationalists to join forces with it, and later began to promulgate

its Communist agenda. Hezbollah on the other hand began as a terrorist organisation, but at the turn of the 21st century tried to change its image into that of a Lebanese political party rather than a terrorist organisation. There was a shift in the actions of Hezbollah from terrorism to regional politics.

- A clearly defined social group among the population to draw support from. Yes and no. Hezbollah's support base consisted of the South Lebanese Shia Muslim population, which was very homogeneous and whose support was easy to gain. The NLF, on the other hand, had to work really hard to win the support of the rural South Vietnamese to their side, since the local population consisted of multiple different tribes not accustomed to supporting the Communists in the past.
- The use of terrorism and unconventional warfare to reach goals. Both organisations used acts that can be categorised as terrorism, and used methods of unconventional warfare during the conflict.

The following differences can be found in these two organisations:

- The NLF had a well-functioning and battle-hardened predecessor, namely Vietminh, a revolutionary organisation. Hezbollah started as a new organisation in the region when the Arab members realised that the Israel Defence Forces were not going to withdraw from Southern Lebanon. Hezbollah was inspired by the Iranian revolution and was established on a religious foundation. It can be argued that a political movement, in this case Communism, can be as strong of a motivation as religion when measuring the fanaticism of the members of each organisation. Thus we make no difference in this case whether the organisation was Communist or religious when measuring fanaticism, which both the NLF and Hezbollah had. That said, religion today has the potential to create more fanatical movements than political trends do.
- Hezbollah was and still is a 'state-within-state' whereas the NLF had strong influence in South Vietnamese rural areas, but never had constant 'state-like' status – control – in a particular area for an extended period of time. Hezbollah on the other hand controlled (and still controls) Southern Lebanon as if it was its own state. It provides social services and has its own militia, and even owns mass media to control information distributed to the population of the region. The Lebanese government was (and is) powerless in the face of Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon.
- Hezbollah is clearly categorised as a terrorist organisation by the West whereas the NLF was not, although terrorist acts such as assassinations and use of torture were not alien to the NLF either. Another difference is that Hezbollah

conducted global terrorism targeted at Western nations, whereas the terror of the NLF was regional, focused in South Vietnam alone.

- Hezbollah was involved in criminal activities such as counterfeiting money as well as drug production and trade. With these criminal activities, additional funds could be raised and as a by-product have a negative effect on the Western nations.
- Hezbollah used media aggressively to demonstrate its resolve and success. With its own television and broadcast stations, it aggressively distributed its message during the Second Lebanon War, implying the divine dimension of the Hezbollah's determination in fighting Israel.⁵⁰⁰

The most fundamental difference in these two organisations is the 'state-within-state' appearance of Hezbollah. It acts under the Lebanese government on Lebanese soil, but is in no way controlled by the Lebanese Government, which has neither the capability nor will to do so, because the Shia Muslims make up the majority of the Lebanese population and any effort to control Hezbollah could result in unrest. Some say that it is Hezbollah that controls Lebanon rather than vice versa.⁵⁰¹ Hezbollah has a well-trained and equipped militia with combat experience against the Israel Defence Forces. It is an organisation with multiple layers – religious, political, social, military, criminal and terrorism – and it has in its possession advanced military weapons with the capability to use them effectively. It is a hybrid organisation, representing the sort of hybrid threats the Western militaries are likely to face in the upcoming conflicts of the 21st century.

3.8.2. Compound warfare vs. hybrid warfare vs. full spectrum operations

In section 3.4, we stated that one of the purposes of this part of the chapter was to answer how *hybrid warfare* differs from *compound warfare* or *full spectrum operations*.

In section 3.5, we introduced *compound warfare* using the Vietnam War as a case study. Then in section 3.6, we used the Second Lebanon War as another case study of *hybrid warfare*. In section 3.7, we explained the current U.S. Army operational concept, *full spectrum operations*, by covering the main topics from the U.S. Army FM 3-0 *Operations*. In all these sections, I highlighted the characteristics of each term.

In Table 3.4, we have gathered information from Figure 3.1 and the subsequent sections to compare these three terms. In the *full spectrum operations* column we have

⁵⁰⁰ Cordesman (2008), p. 8.

⁵⁰¹ Brig.-Gen and Dr. Simon Shapira, 'Has Hizbullah Changed? The 7th Hizbullah General Conference and Its Continued Ideology of Resistance', *Jerusalem Issue Briefs Vol. 9, No 15*, 17 December 2009, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, <http://jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=111&FID=442&PID=0&IID=3222>.

included the types of operations involved in that particular matter discussed.⁵⁰² This is done to better understand whether *hybrid warfare* is included in *full spectrum operations*, as declared by the United States Government Accountability Office. Table 3.2 provides further information on the primary tasks and purposes of different *full spectrum operations*.

| | Compound Warfare | Hybrid Warfare | Full Spectrum Operations |
|--|------------------|----------------|--|
| Conventional Warfare | ✓ | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive Operations |
| Irregular Warfare | ✓ | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive/Stability Operations |
| -Terrorism | ✓ | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive Stability/Civil Support Operations |
| -Counterterrorism | ✓ | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive Stability/Civil Support Operations |
| -Unconventional Warfare | ✓ | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive/Stability Operations |
| -Insurgency | ✓ | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive/Stability Operations |
| -Counterinsurgency | ✓ | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive/Stability Operations |
| Asymmetric Warfare | ✓ | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive/Stability Operations |
| Criminality | ✓ | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive Stability/Civil Support Operations |
| Cyber Warfare | | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive Stability/Civil Support Operations |
| Advanced Technology | ✓ | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive Stability/Civil Support Operations |
| Megacities or State-within-State Organisations | | ✓ | Offensive/Defensive/Stability Operations |

Table 3.4. Comparison of compound warfare, hybrid warfare and full spectrum operations.

According to Table 3.4, all these three types of warfare seem to be very similar to each other, including the same elements of war. Of these three, *compound warfare* seems most out of date, since it does not include cyber warfare or state-within-state organisations. On the other hand, although the Second Lebanon War is not categorised as an example of *compound warfare*, the resemblance to *compound warfare* is visible, and

⁵⁰² *Full spectrum operations* include offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations.

even clearer, if we extend the timeline some 30 years back to look at the development of Hezbollah and the Middle East in general and look at the Second Lebanon War as just a single battle rather than a war. Hezbollah had strong external supporters (Iran and Syria), and we could argue that Hezbollah is the 'guerrilla' force, and Syria the main force, the regular army, and Iran the supporter and supreme director, all of them having a common enemy, namely Israel.

If we examine the way Hezbollah has operated over the years, developing from poorly trained and equipped resistance cells to a terrorist organisation and then to a well-trained militia force with considerable political weight in Lebanon, we can conclude that the basic elements of *compound warfare* are in place, and that it is not all that different from *hybrid warfare*. The reason why *cyber warfare* is not included in *compound warfare* is mainly because in the example discussed in this thesis, the term did not yet exist. The Vietnam War, which served as an example of *compound warfare*, saw both sides using the most advanced military technology available at that time. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) had been supplied with a state-of-the-art air-defence system by the Soviet Union. Had *cyberspace* been an operational environment at the time, we see no reason why it should have been omitted from the toolbox of *compound warfare*, since other means of advanced technology were used as well. In *compound warfare*, just as in *hybrid warfare*, the warring parties will use all available technologies and methods to achieve their desired goals.

In a sense, *compound warfare* is a concept to be used at the *strategic level* of a conflict whereas *hybrid warfare* more describes the tactical level circumstances within a given conflict. From the perspective of a Western observer, the opposing force's actions and the operational environment may seem hybrid, since the opponent's *modus operandi* and mindsets are different from ours. But from their perspective, it probably makes perfect sense. The use of all available means to reach desired end states is acceptable, and from their point of view could be understood as a comprehensive approach to the conflict. Having said that, we could conclude that *hybrid warfare* is included in the term *compound warfare*, albeit with a greater focus on the tactical level of the conflict.

When comparing *hybrid warfare* and *full spectrum operations* we must agree with the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report of September 2010 on the term *hybrid warfare*.⁵⁰³ The elements of *hybrid warfare* are included in the term *full spectrum operations*. FM 3-0 *Operations* describes comprehensively the operational environment of today's conflicts, and includes the elements normally connected with the term hybrid warfare.

The main difference in these terms is the occasion when they were brought into discussion. *Compound warfare* was introduced first, in the mid-1990s. *Full spectrum operations* was introduced in 2001 by the U.S. Army's then new version of FM 3-0,

503 GAO, *GAO-10-1036R Hybrid Warfare*, 10 September 2010.

Operations, and *hybrid warfare* was introduced into the military discussion at around the same time. Thus in our opinion, *full spectrum operations* is the most inclusive of the terms discussed earlier in this thesis, containing the two terms discussed here.

3.8.3. Conclusion

The purpose of this section was to answer the questions: what was the thinking behind *hybrid warfare*, what is it and how does it differ from *compound warfare* or *full spectrum operations*? The term *hybrid warfare* appeared in the discussion of warfare at the beginning of the 21st century, when the Western militaries became involved in complex and challenging operational environments in Afghanistan and Iraq, and military theorists and doctrine writers tried to better understand the developing situation, including the nature of the conduct of warfare in these two wars. The adversaries and enemies were flexible, adaptable and rogue, and they used advanced weapons and employed irregular forms of warfare. Around the year 2000, the U.S. Army was still using doctrinal terms such as ‘low-intensity conflict’ and ‘military operations other than war’,⁵⁰⁴ terms that were not very descriptive or suitable to the new types of conflicts. The 2001 FM 3-0 *Operations* introduced *full spectrum operations*, but at that time the new, unfamiliar term and concept was difficult to adapt to use immediately. On the other hand, the word ‘hybrid’ is descriptive, and it is well suited to describing the nature of modern-day warfare. From a linguistic perspective, the expression ‘hybrid warfare’ probably gives a better understanding of the complexities and multimodality of modern-day warfare than the terms ‘compound warfare’ or ‘full spectrum operations’. Due to the descriptive quality of the term, the United States GAO stated that the threats and wars may well be of a ‘hybrid’ kind,

The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) does not use the word ‘hybrid’ today. As descriptive as the word ‘hybrid’ may be, it is still not used in the United States Army doctrines. The United States GAO report of September 2010 on *hybrid warfare* tried to put an end to the discussion of *hybrid warfare* by declaring that this was not a new form of warfare.

The other term discussed in this section, *compound warfare*, has ‘disappeared’ from the debate, and it is not used in any doctrine document. *Hybrid warfare* seems to be facing a similar fate – or will it? Will the term *hybrid warfare* also disappear from the discussion among American or Western military thinkers? We will see in the next two to three years. If we look at the most recent conflict the Western world has become involved in, the rebellion against the Gaddafi regime in Libya, it is possible to see that the term could potentially be used. In the Libyan conflict, poorly trained and equipped Libyan rebels

⁵⁰⁴ Frank G. Hoffman, ‘Hybrid vs. compound war, The Janus choice: Defining today’s multifaceted conflict’, *Armed Forces Journal*, October 2009, <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2009/10/4198658>. (F. Hoffman 2009b).

face Gaddafi's well-equipped and better-trained army. Then we have the Coalition forces led by NATO, a military alliance comprised of NATO members, non-NATO EU members and Arab states supporting the rebels with air power, training and weapons supply, and with no interest in bringing their land forces into the conflict. The Libyan oil fields provide the operational environment with a commercial and a strategic factor relevant to the world economy. In addition, the Coalition entered the conflict with neither a clear end state nor exit strategy. With these factors in mind, and the possible national interests of the Coalition states, the ongoing Libyan conflict (civil war) includes the potential elements to become a *hybrid war*. Hence the modern terms *hybrid threats*, *hybrid war* and *hybrid warfare* will, in our opinion, remain in use in discussions of today's and future conflicts, due to the descriptiveness of the word 'hybrid' and the ease of its use.

1. Abbreviations Chapter 3:

| | |
|------|--|
| ARVN | Army of the Republic of Vietnam, the South Vietnamese Army. |
| COIN | Counterinsurgency |
| DRV | Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Communist state of North Vietnam. |
| FM | Field Manual |
| GAO | The United States Government Accountability Office |
| IDF | Israel Defence Forces |
| NLF | National Liberation Front, also known as Vietcong, an umbrella organisation containing representatives from several factions opposing the RVN government, controlled by the Communist party. |
| MAAG | Military Assistance Advisory Group, early headquarters of the U.S. Assistance to South Vietnam. |
| MACV | Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. The command and control headquarters for the U.S. military effort in South Vietnam. |
| PLA | People's Liberation Army, the armed forces of NLF. |
| PRP | People's Revolutionary Party, the nominally independent Communist party of South Vietnam. |
| PAVN | People's Army of Vietnam (North), the armed forces of North Vietnam. |
| RVN | Republic of Vietnam (South), the pro-American state of South Vietnam. |
| SLA | South Lebanese Army |
| WMD | Weapons of Mass Destruction |

*The myth of Sisyphus is a recurrent
nightmare for the counter-insurgent.'*
- David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 1964.

4 DIFFERENT THEORIES AND PRACTICES CONNECTED WITH COUNTERINSURGENCY

Nils Marius Rekkedal

4.1. Introduction – concepts for countering insurgencies

4.1.1. The setting of the scene

As mentioned earlier, in the 1980s and early 1990s, counterinsurgency and counter-terrorism as a way of engaging in so-called *warfighting* attracted little interest both in Europe and in the USA within the governments, armed forces and the academic world. Especially in the USA, the political elite were not interested in a new Vietnam War, and the terms counterinsurgency (COIN) and nation building were hardly in daily use. Funding for new research had to wait until after 11 September 2001. But at that time, the terms most commonly used in articles and books were CT and asymmetric warfare. The war in Iraq, and especially the Iraqi insurgents' attacks on U.S. and other Coalition forces, forced renewed interest in COIN theory for the first time since the early 1970s.

The term 'counterinsurgency', often abbreviated to COIN, was widely used in the 1960s and until the late 1970s. In this period, COIN had a more precise meaning, describing the American effort to thwart a perceived Communist threat to the global balance of power, including American political and economic interests. COIN was prioritised on the U.S. foreign affairs agenda at the highest levels of the U.S. Government. COIN was conceived as a response to dangers that appeared to threaten U.S. global interests, and the many insurgencies at this time made it difficult to detect upcoming problems in a timely fashion. And if detected, the so-called *revolutionary wars* were all difficult to deal with effectively. This 'new warfare' was seen as very dangerous, as 'the Communists' had devised methods of mobilising and organising political and

military forces where this possibility had traditionally been looked upon as less likely – among peasants in traditional and backward economies.

Based on Mao Zedong's theories, the 'new' Communist rural insurgency used the Leninist variety of Marxism as its starting point. Under the leadership of Mao, the new theories were developed between 1927 and 1937. Mao had understood that a country like China, with only a tiny proletariat, was not ready for a 'proletariat-led revolution'. He understood that in those countries of the Third World with a largely rural and agricultural population, the people living in the countryside could be successfully organised and led in a mass movement to 'encircle' and take over the cities.⁵⁰⁵

But in the late 1970s, the earlier thinking about COIN was considered 'outdated', especially in connection with U.S. interventions in Third World countries. We may say that COIN more or less fell out of use in the U.S. armed forces at the end of the 1970s. Also, the U.S. military generally turned its back on counterinsurgency operations after the Vietnam War (with the exception of the Special Forces community). Seldom has a great power so quickly revised its strategic evaluations and the assumptions behind the country's foreign policy, as the Americans did in the mid-1970s.

After 1976, the U.S. Army concentrated on defending Europe against a Soviet major attack. The U.S. Marines were focused on so-called *expeditionary operations* in the Third World. Retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Conrad C. Crane, the then Director of the Military History Institute at the U.S. Army War College, wrote in 2006:

*Basically, after Vietnam, the general attitude of the American military was that we don't want to fight that kind of war again. The Army's idea was to fight the big war against the Russians and ignore these other things.*⁵⁰⁶

A common assumption in the 1980s and 1990s was that if the military trained for major combat operations, it would be able to easily handle less violent operations like peacekeeping and counterinsurgency. But that assumption would later prove to be wrong in Iraq. In 2003, the military found itself in Iraq without an effective military doctrine. Different military units had to improvise different approaches. The failure by civilian policy makers in Washington to plan/prepare for the reconstruction of Iraq compounded the mounting problems.

4.1.2. The development of concepts

Even though COIN was no longer a common term within the United States armed forces from the 1980s onwards, the countries that the Americans supported politically

⁵⁰⁵ Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Volume 2* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), pp. 113-192.

⁵⁰⁶ Michael R. Gordon, 'Military Hones a New Strategy on Insurgency', *The New York Times*, 5 October 2006.

and militarily made use of the techniques/tactics that were developed and described during the Vietnam War. So-called COIN operations were common in Latin America and elsewhere from the 1970s to the 1990s (particularly in El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia, Peru and the Philippines). El Salvador in particular conducted a relatively successful *counterinsurgency* policy targeted at an amalgamation of revolutionary groups under the name of the FMLN. That the government forces would succeed was by no means certain, taking into account that, during the initial phase of the war at the beginning of the 1980s, the government forces lacked military competence and often committed breaches of human rights. After the FMLN had conducted an unsuccessful 'final offensive' from 1981 to 1983, the insurgency continued without any clear victor. In 1992, a peace agreement was signed and the FMLN went from being an insurgent movement to being a political party.⁵⁰⁷

The great power that was clearly least able to utilise COIN was the Soviet Union. In Afghanistan, the Soviets made most of the errors we find described in international literature on this type of warfare.⁵⁰⁸ For their part, the British have, since the 1970s, continually further learned from their experiences in Northern Ireland. Due to the restrictions that accompany counterinsurgency in a Western European country,⁵⁰⁹ the British security forces developed sophisticated COIN tactics with a minimum loss of human life on all sides. Even though there is now officially peace in this area, there is still antagonism between the different groups in Northern Ireland.

As mentioned earlier, at the end of the 1970s, the U.S. closed down many programmes and research initiatives within the area of counterinsurgency. All the experiences that had been gleaned during the approximately 25-year-long period from 1950 to 1975 now seemed to have been relegated to the 'scrap heap of history'. With President Jimmy Carter in the White House and defeat in Vietnam fresh in their memories, no one had any desire to take part in fresh attempts to combat insurgent movements in the Third World. But, as usual, it is *not* the individual great power that can freely decide by itself what the actual agenda will be in the many areas that we call the Third World. In the last 30 years there have normally been about 20 wars going on at any time in just what we call the Third World, and most of these have at some stage involved a form of insurgency or civil war. Today, the great powers are also, to a greater or lesser extent, involved in several of these conflicts.

The concept of counterinsurgency has consequently acquired a fresh topicality today. In particular, the unexpected extent of guerrilla warfare and terrorism directed at

⁵⁰⁷ Joes (1996), pp. 141–145.

⁵⁰⁸ Lester W. Grau (translator/editor), *The Bear Went Over the Mountain: Soviet Combat Tactics in Afghanistan* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1996), in particular see pp. ix–xxviii.

⁵⁰⁹ The most discussed action carried out by British forces was the killing of 13 Catholics on Sunday 30 January 1972 in the city of Londonderry. The event, which became known as *Bloody Sunday*, largely contributed towards creating a concept of the British forces as the enemy among Northern Ireland's Catholics. By comparison, hardly anyone other than those directly involved would have reacted to the killing of 13 civilians during a counterinsurgency in an African or Asian state.

the American-led coalition forces in Iraq and their local allies has contributed to fresh interest in the topic. Also closely associated with the same problems is the relatively new American concept of *Stability and Support Operations* (SASO), which was much used in the military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan between 2003 and 2006. The concept of *(Principles of) Military Operations Other Than War* (MOOTW) was also in common use in American military literature between about 1996 and 2006. Nevertheless, the two concepts that were most common in English-speaking literature from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s were probably *Low Intensity Conflict* (LIC) and, to some extent, *Non-State Warfare*. In the 1990s, theories were also created around the slogan ‘Three Block War’,⁵¹⁰ which fitted well with the thinking around nation building in the late 1990s.⁵¹¹

The UK COIN doctrine from October 2009 has this to say about COIN:

1-1. Counterinsurgency is Warfare.

Until recently, the word counterinsurgency appeared to be synonymous with low-intensity operations, or operations other than war. It conjured up images of British soldiers in the Malayan jungle, or on the streets of Northern Ireland. The U.S. military’s experience in Iraq 2003-2008, and the British campaign in Helmand Province in Afghanistan since 2006 have demonstrated that military operations against irregular insurgents can be as intense as combat in conventional warfare. The intensity of operations is not the issue at stake. Insurgency and counterinsurgency are two sides of a very complex form of warfare, where a group or groups resort to violence and take up arms to achieve political objectives. Typical objectives are replacing an existing government, securing the status quo and challenging a nascent or emerging state. Today’s hybrid threats – any adversaries that simultaneously and adaptively employ a fused mix of conventional weapons, irregular tactics, terrorism, and criminal behaviour in the same battlespace to obtain their political objectives – are constantly seeking to exploit what they perceive to be the vulnerabilities of regular forces. They do this by using terrorism and subversion, by blending into the population amongst which security forces operate, and by exploiting their most effective weapon which is the influence that they can extend through the media. Counterinsurgency is warfare; it is distinctly political,

510 Krulak (1997), pp. 139–141. See also Charles Krulak, ‘The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War’, in *Marine Corps Gazette* Vol. 83, Issue 1, January 1999, pp. 18–23.

511 A. Walter Dorn & Michael Varey, ‘The Rise and Demise of the “Three Block War”’, *Canadian Military Journal* (CMJ), Vol. 10, No.1, 2009, <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol10/no1/07-dornvarey-eng.asp>. ‘The “Three Block War” concept was briefly used as a military metaphor by the U.S. Marine Corps leadership at the end of the 20th Century. It was resurrected by the Canadian Forces (CF) in 2004–2005 and touted as the new model for Canadian field operations. The core idea is that military forces conduct humanitarian, peacekeeping/stabilization, and combat operations simultaneously on three separate city blocks, or more widely.’

*not primarily military; and it involves the people, the government, and the military. The strength of the relationship between these three groups generally determines the outcome of the campaign.*⁵¹²

In the 1990s, it was often common to include concepts such as insurgency/counter-insurgency, terrorism/counter-terrorism and *peace enforcement* in the so-called LIC concept. The concept of *Peace Support Operations* (PSO) can perhaps also be included, but there are clearly divided opinions on this in today's literature. However, the concept of *peacekeeping* is not included in the current definition of the LIC concept. This is because it is usually emphasised in connection with *peacekeeping* that one should *not* actively use armed force to solve a mission. Most of those who use the LIC concept also specify that, in addition to making use of military force, it is also necessary for social, economic, humanitarian, legal and diplomatic measures to be taken. A problem with the manner in which the LIC concept is normally used in literature is that it is definitely a Western term. At the same time, this indicates Western thinking and experiences as regards this form of war/warfare. The rest of the world does *not* necessarily think of warfare in the same way as we do in the West. It is not uncommon for leaders in the Third World to have different attitudes with regard to what is right and wrong when waging war.⁵¹³ In other words, the definitions vary depending on the source. That said, the concepts are generally used to describe a lengthy political/military conflict between an insurgent movement and a ruling regime, normally internally in a Third World country.

The term 'unconventional warfare' (UW) has been in (infrequent) use since the 1950s, and may include use of guerrilla warfare and other direct *offensive*, low visibility, covert or clandestine operations, as well as the *indirect* activities of intelligence work, subversion, sabotage and so-called *evasion and escape*.⁵¹⁴ Because of the setbacks encountered in Iraq in the period from late 2003 to 2006, we saw a clear revival in the interest in 'COIN theories' in the military press. And now that the term COIN was back in usage, it became useful to introduce two 'new' main categories: *unconventional war* (UW)⁵¹⁵ and *direct action* (DA).⁵¹⁶ The United States Department of

512 UK Ministry of Defence, *Countering Insurgency*, British Army Field Manual, Volume 1 Part 10, Army Code 71876, October 2009, p. 1-1.

513 Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands With the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* (London: Arrow Books Ltd., The Random House Group Ltd., 2003). The book shows with great clarity what can happen when a conflict gets totally out of control. General Dallaire was 'force commander' for the unsuccessful UN mission in Rwanda in the early 1990s. The book describes the consequences that the combination of ethnic and social opposites can have.

514 U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, Joint Publication JP 3-05, 17 April 1998, p. GL-11: 'Unconventional warfare. A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes guerrilla warfare and other direct offensive low-visibility; covert, or clandestine operations, as well as the indirect activities of subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and evasion and escape (E&E).'

515 Abbreviated to 'UW' in Special Operations jargon. UW is one of the nine core missions of U.S. Army Special Forces.

516 Unconventional warfare (UW) – 'A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration,

Defense defined (1998) UW as a broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of short duration, predominantly conducted by indigenous or local forces who are, to varying degrees, organised, trained, equipped, supported and directed by an *external* source.

If one follows the debate in the Western specialist military journals and English-language specialist literature, there has been constant debate since the mid-1990s about which trends or 'ideologies' have been dominant with regard to the many insurgencies in the Third World in particular. A common view has been that the Marxist-Leninist or Maoist ideological platforms dominated the leadership of many insurgencies during the Cold War, but that today these platforms have been largely replaced by a new preoccupation with national, religious or ethnic identities.⁵¹⁷ Others have asserted that many of the insurgency leaders focused from an early stage on identity problems but, since two superpowers dominated the picture during the entire Cold War, the majority of insurgencies were put into that political and economic context and labelled accordingly. During the entire Cold War, 'anti-capitalist' rhetoric in particular dominated.

The truth is probably instead that, at ground level in the many insurgent movements, it was rarely the case that the reality perfectly matched the simplified picture of 'capitalism versus Communism'. It is likely that growing nationalism and identification with a local group were more important as a basis for recruitment for most of those who joined up to fight than a great desire by ordinary insurgents to introduce an idealistic Marxist-Leninist social system or other similar *dogmatic* notions of the future.

During the latter part of the Cold War, there was always the possibility of being *sponsored* in connection with a planned or ongoing insurgency. If the government one wanted to fight against was supported by one of the superpowers, there was always the possibility that the other superpower would want to support the insurgents. In insurgent movements that desired socialist-inspired social reforms, the sponsor was usually the Soviet Union and sometimes also China and smaller countries, such as Cuba and Libya. In conflicts with clear ethnic overtones, we should always study who they were fighting if we are to understand which superpower directly or indirectly may have supported the insurgent movement. Areas of protracted conflict, such as Eritrea

predominantly conducted through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes, but is not limited to, guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and unconventional assisted recovery.' (U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Publication JP 1-02, 12 April 2001 (As Amended Through 31 August 2008)). 'Operations conducted by, with, or through irregular forces in support of a resistance movement, an insurgency, or conventional military operations.' (U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Special Forces Unconventional Warfare Operations*, Field Manual FM 3-05.201, 28 Sept. 2007, and in U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Army Special Forces Unconventional Warfare*, Field Manual FM 3-05.130, September 2008).

⁵¹⁷ An example of a researcher who has emphasised this type of evaluation is Mary Kaldor, *Nya och gamla krig: Organiserat våld under globaliseringens era* [New and Old Wars: Organised Violence in a Global Era] (Gothenburg: Bokförlaget Daidalos, 1999).

(1961–1993), Angola (UNITA was established in 1961 and waged war against various opponents almost without interruption up until 2003) and the Palestinian territories (during the 1970s when the Palestinians were strong in Lebanon) are all examples of conflicts where ethnicity has been of great importance. The examples mentioned here are natural ones to study if we wish to acquaint ourselves with the patterns of behaviour in ethnic conflicts. It is also possible that several insurgent movements used (and are using even today) rhetoric to attract a sponsor, such as, for example, the *Mujahedeen* in Afghanistan and UNITA in Angola. Both clearly used ‘anti-Communist’ rhetoric but were, in practice, nationalist and ethnic respectively.⁵¹⁸

It should be noted here that, during the Cold War, the many revolutionary movements were often seen as an expression of rivalry between the two superpowers, but this is probably also too simple a description of the realities. The question is who took advantage of whom? Was the insurgent movement using one of the superpowers as a ‘sponsor’ or was the superpower using the insurgent movement in its own game for control of parts of the Third World? Or was it often quite simply more a case of a series of ‘marriages of convenience’ between a sponsor and the insurgent movement in question than anything else? This form of warfare has, however, also continued after the end of the Cold War. This could be seen as possible evidence that these wars have their own internal lives. Another important factor may be that the remaining great powers have been involved since the end of the Cold War in combating various forms of revolutionary groups in the Third World in order to secure their own and what are seen as Western interests. The best-known examples are probably the attempts at countering insurgencies and drug barons in Colombia and the still ongoing so-called ‘war against terrorism’ in Afghanistan and Iraq, among other places. Another interesting observation is that *research* into insurgent wars has developed since the first wave of literature on *counterinsurgency* in the early 1960s. These were books and articles that were often based on the authors’ own personal experiences. When, from the spring of 1965, the Americans began their increasingly serious military intervention in Vietnam, more research-based literature began to appear. The research institution RAND Corporation, in particular, played a key role in this research work, which gradually became extremely widespread. The best of these reports are also of a very high standard, evaluated against today’s research. This was nevertheless a conflict that came from a completely different tradition than the preoccupations of European research in the 1970s, which was characterised by analyses of organisations such as the IRA and RAF, etc.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁸ Joes (1996), pp. 161–165.

⁵¹⁹ The abbreviation IRA stands for *Irish Republican Army* and RAF for *Red Army Faction*.

4.1.3. The concepts of irregular armed forces, LIC and insurgency

I will here introduce the term *irregular armed forces*. This term or concept is often given a broad and *negative* definition, as almost all ‘militarised’ insurgent or oppressive actors fall into this category. A number of different terms are often used in English when discussing what irregular armed forces involve, such as: militias, paramilitaries, guerrillas, mercenaries, warlords, bandits, vigilantes, veterans, police and possibly also militarised youth groups (gangs). It is exactly because this concept has been defined so broadly that I will largely avoid it later in this chapter. Instead, I will place greater emphasis on the terms that will be introduced below. The uniformed and conventional state armies that defend a state’s independence against external enemies *cannot*, on the other hand, be called irregular forces.

One of the first military writers to use the term *Low Intensity Conflict* (LIC) was the British General Frank Kitson.⁵²⁰ Kitson himself built on earlier British experiences from the many insurgencies in the former British Empire. During the same period, the term ‘protracted war’ came into use.⁵²¹ The LIC concept has also been used to describe so-called ‘LIC strategies’ and may possibly be seen as a more *informal* ‘strategy’ whose roots go back to the beginning of the 1980s. (It is, however, disputed whether this can be regarded as a ‘strategy’.)

Ivan Molloy, an Australian writer, has presented the concept in an alternative manner. He argues that LIC was developed as a low-cost and low-risk method of dealing with revolutionary movements and new post-revolutionary governments (usually Marxist-controlled) that are considered a threat to U.S. interests:

*(...) LIC remains the foremost and most effective means by which the United States can combat threatening revolutionary nationalism when direct intervention is not an option. Or alternatively, it remains the pre-eminent strategy for preparing the ground for direct and ‘just’ US military intervention in foreign target states. As such, this most effective strategy has continued to be used either fully or partially by the United States, and indeed other states, since the 1980s and its original emergence in the Philippines and Central America. Used to fight wars when ‘it is not fighting wars’, LIC remains one of the most enduring legacies of the Reagan era. (...)*⁵²²

There is nothing new about the use of insurgency as a political weapon and the development of insurgent movements to do the hard work. Insurgency has always existed,

⁵²⁰ Kitson, (1971), see page XI.

⁵²¹ As an example of this use of the term, see the book written by Robert Strausz-Hupé, William R. Kintner, James E. Dougherty and Alvin J. Cottrell, *Protracted Conflict: A Challenging Study of Communist Strategy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963).

⁵²² Ivan Molloy, *Rolling Back Revolution: The Emergence of Low Intensity Conflict* (London and Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2001), Introduction, p. 1.

normally in the form of people taking up arms to counteract what they feel is unfair treatment from rulers. In doing so, they are (in the vast majority of cases) reacting to impulses or pressures from others. But if this is to develop into an organised and well-led insurgent movement, often with its starting point in an almost spontaneous insurgency, those behind the insurgency must be able to develop a politically educated leadership. The insurgency may also be directed against a foreign influence or against a direct occupation by forces from outside the region supporting the movement, and is then often called a resistance movement. Nevertheless, insurgencies or resistance movements will be violent activities that are carried out by a weaker party and directed at those in power. Guerrilla warfare has historically shown itself to be the most effective means of organising an insurgency for the weaker party. And as mentioned earlier, a certain use of terror has normally been an ‘integral weapon’ in all guerrilla wars, and this trend will probably continue.

One should note here that not all insurgencies develop into guerrilla war or a resistance movement, such as those directed against Nazi Germany in occupied Europe during the Second World War. The English terms *insurgency* and *insurrection* are often lumped together in translation as *insurgency* even if there is a difference in meaning between the two terms. The terms actually assume that the insurgents have introduced a *Western* concept/thinking in connection with the insurgency, i.e. that they have a clear political objective and are led by a recognised leadership.

A variant of this has been *revolutionary warfare*. This concept also has an assumption: that a revolution is desired and that it is based on the concept that individual people or groups have *rights* and not just obligations to a ruling class or group. When *politics* is injected into the insurgency, one gets a notion that a society can be changed and that this can be done systematically. As can be seen, it is difficult to give insurgency only *one* definition. There are consequently at least a *hundred* such definitions in the literature today. Professor Thomas A. Marks, for example, who is the author of one of the more accepted books about so-called Maoist movements, attaches importance to the following factors:

1. He assumes that different levels of warfare exist.
2. On this basis, he asserts that an organised insurgency makes use of force as a strategic support for a political goal. At an operational level, the insurgents will use force to develop a political infrastructure, something that will, at a tactical level, make it possible to secure political dominance.
3. In other words, insurgent wars are a political struggle in which the use of force is central and where power is fought by forceful means.⁵²³

⁵²³ Thomas A. Marks, *Maoist Insurgency since Vietnam* (London: Frank Cass, 1996), pp. 1–18. Particular attention should be paid to his explanation on p. 4.

The American Larry E. Cable has described the phenomenon in the following manner: 'Insurgency is the armed expression of organic, internal political disaffiliation.'⁵²⁴

A somewhat different definition that also describes modern insurgencies has been worded as follows by the former U.S. Air Force officer and later professor Bard E. O'Neill:

*Insurgency may be defined as a struggle between a non-ruling group and the ruling authorities in which the on-ruling group consciously uses political resources (e.g., organizational expertise, propaganda, and demonstrations) and violence to destroy, reformulate, or sustain the basis of legitimacy of one or more aspects of politics.*⁵²⁵

O'Neill also goes a little further and divides the different forms of insurgent movements into what he calls 'types', using terms such as 'anarchist, egalitarian, traditionalist, pluralist, secessionist, reformist and preservationist' to describe the different groups. For his part, Cable states:

*While insurgency exists in two forms, offensive and defensive, with the distinction being drawn upon the basis of the overarching political goal, a radical restructuring of the social-political matrix in the case of the former or the assertion of autonomy by a distinct social, cultural linguistic group with respect to the latter, the process which produces the end result of armed conflict is the same.*⁵²⁶

In other words, he is saying that if an insurgent movement is to be a lasting success, it must create a *political* platform – and the members must, in addition, have a strong desire to create change and be willing to use force to achieve their goal. Accordingly, it would be difficult to see previous religious leaders, such as Buddha and Jesus, as revolutionaries in this sense since they both desired a peaceful change to the state of affairs by spreading their teachings.

If it is appropriate to see insurgency as a political phenomenon whose central element is the struggle for power, a whole series of methods that can be used to achieve this goal must exist. Normally, attempts at mobilising the people are a key element, but one cannot exclude the possibility that a *coup d'état*, for example, may be the basis for a change to the system. Even if the golden days of Marxist-Leninism as a spiritual source of inspiration are probably over, one should continue to have great respect for ideology (and today also religion) as a basis for mobilisation. Today, a mixture of

524 Larry E. Cable, 'Reinventing the Round Wheel: Insurgency, Counterinsurgency and Peacekeeping Post Cold War', *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, Autumn 1993, pp. 228–262. The definition comes from p. 229.

525 O'Neill (1990), p. 13. New printing of the book: O'Neill (2005).

526 Cable (1993), in footnote 2, p. 229.

ethnicity, a struggle for national identity and religious concepts is probably the most important mobilising factor in the current insurgent wars.

Seen in isolation, ideology is seldom of any decisive importance because it is too elite-oriented in its form. And the insurgents have historically normally only been a marginal group. One will, however, always see extremely devout cadres who can be willing to sacrifice everything 'for the cause', e.g. the Chinese cadres in Mao's China and the elderly, unemployed and poor in countries such as Russia and East Germany. For example in Norway, we saw the lay preacher Hans Nilsen Hauge's religious movement at the end of the 18th century function in a similar role. Notions of justice and all men having human rights can per se have a considerable mobilising force and should accordingly not be underestimated as a political explosive. This kind of thinking has been one of the driving forces in the still ongoing rebellions – or maybe revolutions – in parts of the Arabic world.

One example from Europe's own recent past is the German *Red Army Faction* (RAF), better known as 'the Baader-Meinhof Gang', which operated in Germany in the early 1970s. The group was not able to mobilise the German people, who were largely very content with the state of affairs, even though the group employed a not insignificant amount of terrorism. Historically there have always been a number of fanatics who wish to bring about a revolution where the conditions for this do not actually exist. The RAF was 'sponsored' by East Germany, which indirectly helped them to maintain their fight without popular support in West Germany.⁵²⁷ A more recently discovered group of this kind is the Danish cell now known as the 'Blekinge gade bande' after the address of its arsenal. They chose not to seek public exposure and support in order to remain 'below the radar' of Danish intelligence. Their fundraising efforts through bank robberies, etc., were funnelled to 'partner groups' in the Middle East.⁵²⁸

The people need a good reason to create an insurgency – ideology is probably never the only reason. A more tangible basis is required, such as, for example, an unfair division of economic benefits and/or a lack of a future for a large percentage of the population. However, an insurgency may also be driven by a struggle between power elites that use factors such as religion/nationalism/ethnicity as a means of getting national groups to involve themselves directly as insurgents. Alternatively, these means may be

527 'The small and disciplined RAF is the successor to the Baader-Meinhof Gang, which originated in the student protest movement in the 1960s. Ideology is an obscure mix of Marxism and Maoism; committed to armed struggle. Organized into hardcore cadres that carry out terrorist attacks and a network of supporters who provide logistic and propaganda support. Has survived despite numerous arrests of top leaders over the years.' See 'Red Army Faction (RAF)', *Intelligence Resource Program FAS*, <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/raf.htm>. 'In March 1998, the Red Army Fraction (RAF) announced its dissolution. For 28 years, the RAF was an attempt to wage resistance to the murderous capitalist system and conditions of exploitation.' 'Red Army Fraction (RAF)', *World History Archives*, Hartford Web Publishing, <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/61/index-had.html>.

528 Per Egil Hegge, 'Fra ideologi til terrorisme. Oppsiktsvekkende dokumentar om danske terrorister' *Aftenposten* 4. apr.2007, http://www.aftenposten.no/kul_und/litteratur/article1723241.ece.

used to scare the population away from supporting the side they feel has a hostile attitude towards their own cause. It is possible to put forward some questions regarding what creates a rebellion/revolution:

1. As mentioned earlier there will always be a number of religious, ideological or political fanatics in almost every society, and under given political and social conditions, these small groupings may be the leadership in a local uprising.
2. Very often, groups of youths, including students, become the avant-garde for social uprisings. The aims for an uprising depend on the local conditions. Use of violence is also very dependent on the actual leadership and which kind of ideological or religious platform the rebels stand on. It is very important for all kinds of counterinsurgency or counter-terror to have insight into what kind of indoctrination is used by the insurgents/rebels.

Depending on the sources used, we will find that several factors have been indicated as important. For both the insurgents and the existing political regime, it is of importance to get enough people involved if they are to ensure their own survival. Three factors are presented below:

1. Demography – how could leaders such as Napoleon and Hitler raise their armies? Was it the availability of large groups of youths without a future or opportunities that was the decisive factor? Politics is about creating visions and belief in the future. A person who can succeed in giving young people between the ages of 14 and 30 a vision of a better life will have secured himself an enormous resource. If we look at the situation in many Muslim countries today, there are large numbers of youths without any great hope of an education or well-paid jobs. This sets the scene for one of the reasons why Islamic extremist groups currently have good success in recruiting youths from a middle-class background who are on the way downwards in social status.
2. Creating an *external enemy* can provide many opportunities for rallying a people. Then one can recruit in order to defend the country or, as is often the case today in Africa, in order to ensure that one's own tribe/national group can safeguard its threatened rights. In this way, clever insurgent leaders will be able to attract support from within and direct the actual hatred against the groups they see as enemies of their own aims. This type of organising provides, among other things, the opportunity to stigmatise rivals for power, whether they are hangers-on of the declared enemy or are only trying to find political solutions to a deadlock situation.

3. Today, we also see the extensive use of ideology and religion as a means of mobilising local support within one's own ethnic group or within a social group. There is no absolute requirement here for the actual power elite itself to be very 'religious' but they must be able, in a credible manner, to organise active opposition to the ruling regime, to foreigners or to whoever is the actual 'enemy'.

Today's conflicts, including insurgencies, partly follow a 'new' direction. In the past half century, the collapse of colonialism and the end of the Cold War were both important factors driving the new trends. And none of these two earlier important power factors will return. It is difficult to know anything about the future, but it is not impossible that these two 'historical drivers' may be replaced with new 'driving forces', for example Islamist extremism, in parts of the world. But as long as there is no genuine popular support for these kinds of thoughts, their time has not yet come. In the most extreme Islamist sources, we may read that their leaders want to create a 'general rebellion' against the states and groupings they look upon as their 'arch-enemies'. As small extreme terrorist groups have no armies, they can hardly threaten established and well-functioning states, but they may become relatively powerful in so-called *failed states*. But it is still probably correct to say that extreme Islamism has thus far been incapable of harnessing the same subversive energy that powered Marxist-oriented political movements and some of the anti-colonial movements in the 1950s and 1960s.

It is of course difficult to predict any long-term trends for the development of insurgencies. However, the events of the last 15 years or so, especially in Africa and parts of the Middle East and South Asia, may give us some indications for the future:

- Today's conflicts are often complicated. Modern conflicts are not automatically between a regime and an organised guerrilla. We today often see rebel groups, or other organised groupings that use violence, fight against each other. In the background, states may fuel the conflict, but without directly involving themselves in the fight.

One example: in Sudan before the formal peace agreement signed in 2005, it was common that the Sudanese government 'sponsored' a rebel group for a time, and that later the sponsored group, possibly as part of an agreement, then clashed with another rival rebel group.

Another example of this type of conflict is the 'warlike conflict' still going on between competing drug cartels in Mexico. In this 'war' between different drug cartels, it is very difficult to understand who is against whom and why.

Another type of non-state conflict is clashes between ethnic groups. Current

examples of this type of conflict include fighting between Somali clans and hostilities between two of the leading Nigerian ethnic tribes, Hausa and Igbo. Countries strongly affected by ethnic conflicts, except the already mentioned 'everlasting' clashes between tribes in Somalia and Nigeria, include states like Congo, Sudan (which soon will be two new countries) and Ethiopia. Some writers have labelled the conflicts in Nigeria as a religious conflict between Muslims and Christians. But it is not clear if this is mainly an ethnic or religious conflict, as it may be difficult for an outsider to understand the reasons behind it – are they fighting over grazing land or is there a political/religious conflict behind the killings?

- There are as yet no clear signs that the international (read Western) community's willingness to conduct peace-building and peace-building measures is 'fading out'. The intervention on behalf of the Libyan revolutionaries in the spring 2011 is one example (but how well thought through was this intervention before it happened is another question). However, the political interest in very costly and long-lasting and ambitious Western/U.S. COIN-based interventions like what we saw in Iraq and Afghanistan is declining fast today.
- The economic interdependence between countries continues to grow, which at least theoretically will raise the price of war among states.
- The proliferation of standards that reduce the risks of conflict – for example democracy and human rights – seems to continue in many regions of the Second and Third World.

None of the conflicts described in the bullets above give any guarantee that the security situation for ordinary people will be better during the coming years. But the trend is not only negative. At least some of the developments we have seen may offer a powerful antidote to some of the mainly pessimistic predictions concerning global security.

4.1.4. Today's military thinking about how to handle insurgency

Only about a few years ago, the United States Army was primarily an army prepared for conventional war, with a mentality developed to handle this kind of warfare. In 2011, it is an altered organisation, with a changing mentality. The U.S. Army has been 'transformed', and the story of that transformation is fascinating for anybody interested in the flow of military ideas.

Generals like David Petraeus and Stanley McChrystal have had an important role in this transformation, which began amid Western failure in Iraq. The U.S. was getting 'beaten' from late 2003 to 2005 in Iraq. Captains to colonels were generally the

first to see what was happening, but only a few knew how to respond. Those who did tended to have dual personalities. That is, they had been steeped in Army culture but also in some other, often academic, culture. For example, General Petraeus had written a dissertation on Vietnam at Princeton. H.R. McMaster, then a colonel himself, had earlier written a very critical book on how the Johnson administration and the Joint Chiefs of Staff had behaved during the Vietnam era.⁵²⁹ Others were autodidact officers and had studied the counterinsurgency tactics that had been used in, for example, Malaysia, Algeria and El Salvador.

These officers had themselves been trained to use overwhelming force to kill the enemy. They had also been trained to see terrorists as members of networks (almost like computer networks), and to focus on disrupting the nodes where networks joined. But in the theatre of Iraq, they sometimes saw that the more force you unleashed, the more enemies you generated. The network metaphor can of course be misleading because it ignores geography, and the importance of holding and controlling ground (and the people who live there).

Because of the negative development in Iraq, some ‘army dissenters’, nicknamed ‘COIN-inistas’, arose. There was at that time no updated, overarching military doctrine that covered the insurgent fighting seen by the American forces (between 2001 and 2005). The U.S. Army FM 3-0, *Operations*, published in 2001, was intended for use in conventional/regular war.

In 2005, General Petraeus left Iraq and was sent to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to lead a writing team for a new COIN field manual.

After the end of the Vietnam War, there had been a tendency in the U.S. Army to regard the news media and academia with suspicion – and maybe not without a good reason. But the ‘COIN-inistas’ welcomed also academics, journalists and human rights activists into doctrine development. This was the starting point of today’s military interest in all kinds of insurgency, counterinsurgency and other forms of irregular warfare. As in the late 1970s, the periodical *Military Review* was once again an important vehicle for change.⁵³⁰

But a reaction to the ‘COIN progress’ and the strong influence this thinking has had on training and education in the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps may be underway – perhaps not very different from what we saw after the Vietnam War?

529 H.R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Johnson, McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies That Led to Vietnam* (New York: Harper Perennial 1998). From the book cover: ‘McMaster stresses two elements in his discussion of America’s failure in Vietnam: the hubris of Johnson and his advisors and the weakness of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Dereliction of Duty* provides both a thorough exploration of the military’s role in determining Vietnam policy and a telling portrait of the men most responsible.’ Read about McMaster: Martin, David, ‘Petraeus Picks McMaster to Join Afghanistan Team’, *CBSNews, Political Hot Sheet*, July 23, 2010, http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544_162-20011528-503544.html?tag=contentMain;contentBody.

530 *Military Review*, United States Army Combined Arms Center CAC, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/index.asp>. look for articles on insurgency and COIN after 2004.

Nearly a decade after the United States began to focus its military training and equipment investments on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. military leadership is again quietly shifting gears. Are influential parts of the Pentagon afraid that large-scale counterinsurgency efforts cost too much and last too long? The U.S. (and Western) economic crisis and the Obama administration's commitment to withdrawing from Iraq, and the U.S. intentions of drawing down forces in Afghanistan from late 2011 are factors in the change. However, there is a growing recognition that large-scale counterinsurgency battles have high casualty rates for troops and civilians, and cost equipment that must be replaced. And most important – these wars rarely end in clear victory or defeat. In addition, some military thinkers say that such wars have put the U.S.'s technologically advanced ground forces on the defensive while less sophisticated insurgent forces are able to remain on the offensive.

According to Andrew Exum, counterinsurgency 'is a good way to get out of a situation gone bad, but it's not the best way to use combat forces. (...) I think everyone realizes counterinsurgency is a losing proposition for U.S. combat troops. I can't imagine anyone would opt for this option.'⁵³¹ Some in the Pentagon have started claiming that future counterinsurgencies should involve fewer American ground units and more military trainers, special forces and air strikes. Other U.S. military staff call these thoughts 'foreign internal defence', although some use the term 'counterinsurgency light'. The newer U.S. approach is on display in Yemen and Pakistan, countries in which the U.S. faces strong extremist organisations with ties to al-Qaeda. According to Joseph Collins, a professor at the U.S. National Defense University, a Pentagon-funded institution that trains officers and civilians, these 'new kinds' of counterinsurgency will be fought with 'the indigenous people and a handful of Americans'.⁵³²

U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates recognised (2010) these changes in thinking in an article published in *Foreign Affairs*. Gates wrote that 'the United States is unlikely to repeat a mission on the scale of those in Afghanistan and Iraq anytime soon – that is, forced regime change followed by nation building under fire.'⁵³³ More likely, he wrote, are 'scenarios requiring a familiar tool kit of capabilities, albeit on a smaller scale'.⁵³⁴ In his summing up, Gates wrote:

⁵³¹ Andrew Exum is a Fellow with the Center for a New American Security. He is a U.S. citizen and served on active duty in the U.S. Army from 2000 until 2004. He led a platoon of light infantry in Afghanistan in 2002 and a platoon of Army Rangers in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2003 and 2004, respectively. Most recently, Exum served as an advisor on the CENTCOM Assessment Team and as a civilian advisor to Gen. Stanley McChrystal in Afghanistan. He is the author of one book, *This Man's Army: A Soldier's Story from the Frontlines of the War on Terror* (Gotham, 2004), and has published opinion pieces in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *the Guardian* and many other newspapers.

⁵³² 'In Yemen, where leaders have distanced themselves publicly from the United States, the U.S. has quietly dispatched military trainers to work with Yemeni government forces and has provided air support, largely for observation. In addition, the U.S. sent Yemen \$70 million in military aid.' Nancy A. Youssef, 'Pentagon rethinking value of major counterinsurgencies', *McClatchy*, May 12, 2010, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2010/05/12/94058/pentagon-rethinking-value-of-major.html>.

⁵³³ Robert M. Gates, 'Helping Others Defend Themselves. The Future of U.S. Security Assistance', *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2010, pp. 2–6.

⁵³⁴ Gates (2010), p. 2.

Finally, everything must be suffused with strong doses of modesty and realism. When all is said and done, there are limits to what the United States can do to influence the direction of radically different countries and cultures. And even the most enlightened and modernized interagency apparatus is still a bureaucracy, prone to the same parochial and self-serving tendencies as the system it has replaced.

*Helping other countries better provide for their own security will be a key and enduring test of U.S. global leadership and a critical part of protecting U.S. security, as well. Improving the way the U.S. government executes this vital mission must be an important national priority.*⁵³⁵

Admiral Michael Mullen, the chairman of U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2010, recently ordered a review of how the military should train and equip itself in the future, acknowledging that it is once again shifting course. ‘The chairman wants to look at the capability and size of the military’ after Iraq and Afghanistan, spokesman Navy Capt. John Kirby said. ‘No one has codified the requirements.’⁵³⁶ The economic downturn is driving much of the change within the Pentagon. Military spending has risen steadily since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks.

The possible shift to a ‘lighter form’ of counterinsurgency also incorporates the Obama administration’s national security view, which calls for getting troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan. U.S. forces are set to begin leaving Afghanistan in July 2011, and a U.S. withdrawal from Iraq is to be complete by the end of that year. It also, military strategists said, allows the United States to prepare better for a future war that would be fought against another country, not against relatively amorphous terrorist groups.

The Pentagon acknowledges that since 2001 there’s been little training for the kind of *coordinated land, sea and air battles* that have characterised most of the United States’ previous conflicts. While no one wants to predict where such a war might be fought, military strategists say that U.S. troops could be involved in battles between India and Pakistan, North and South Korea, and China and Taiwan.

The last time the military discussed a major strategy shift was during the first months of Rumsfeld’s tenure, when he proposed streamlining the military to use less manpower and more technology. That discussion about shrinking the military ended in the months after the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, when it became clear that technology alone couldn’t defeat the burgeoning insurgency there. The order issued by Bush

⁵³⁵ Gates (2010), p. 6

⁵³⁶ Youssef (2010). From the same ‘insider’ newspaper article: ‘When former Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld arrived at the Pentagon in 2001, the Defense Department budget was \$291.1 billion, or \$357.72 billion in 2010 dollars. The 2010 budget is \$708 billion for defence costs and funding the wars. Pentagon planners say budget cuts are inevitable, and that the change in strategy will help make them.’

to increase the number of troops in Iraq, the so-called *surge*, ended that approach. Still, there are doubts that a change in strategy will defeat armed groups that threaten to take over ‘failed states’ such as Somalia and Yemen. However, using trainers and airstrikes requires a strong local government that can lead such trained forces – and there are no strong governments in ‘failed states’. The countries those are most susceptible to groups such as al-Qaeda often have corrupt and inefficient governments. The Pentagon’s ‘new strategy’ could also founder if there were another major attack on the United States. Terrorist attacks can hardly be met with a huge military response.

I would like to end this section with some interesting words written by the American James J. Wirtz. His words probably hit upon something very important:

*The Vietnamese communists referred to their soldiers as “armed politicians” and they called war “politics with guns.” I have always thought that these terms were both wonderfully accurate and generally alien to the way that U.S. military officers thought about war. For U.S. officers, the height of their profession is the conception and execution of brilliant combined-arms operations. This sort of thinking is at the heart of the Lind-Wilson typology and Hammes’s concern about the rise of a new group of armed politicians. Fourth generation warfare, however, is not combat effective against a modern combined-arms military. But, as Hammes correctly notes, it does pose a political challenge. This challenge would best be met not by devising ever more splendid combat evolutions, but by thinking more about how the use of force can be used to achieve political objectives. The problem with Fourth Generation warriors is not that they are better soldiers than today’s military professionals are; it is that they are better politicians.*⁵³⁷

4.2. The development of COIN

Since the late 1970s, I have been pursuing questions related to the different (elusive) concepts of ‘revolutionary war’ or ‘insurgent war’. As mentioned earlier in this book, these were the most common terms from the 1950s until around late 1980s.

In this section, I want to present a brief look at counterinsurgency theory and practice. The problems connected with COIN were introduced in Chapter 1. The problems, political and military, that the counterinsurgent will face when trying to counter an insurgency are always complicated.

⁵³⁷ James J. Wirtz, ‘Politics with Guns: A Response to T. X. Hammes’, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Volume 26, Issue 2, 2005, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13523260500190526>.

We have earlier looked into the nature of irregular/guerrilla warfare and the principles, tactics and strategies that are peculiar to this form of warfare. Here I want to present some of the different theories about counterinsurgency to the reader.

An overview of various 'classic' and more recent specialist literature concerning insurgency and counterinsurgency is necessary if we are to study this specialist area. Despite the fact that the United States is probably the nation in the world that has the most experience of counterinsurgency in modern times, reports from especially Iraq have suggested that even the Americans still have a lot to learn.⁵³⁸

This has unfortunately been fully demonstrated in the aftermath of the conventional war against the Saddam regime in Iraq in the spring of 2003. It proved difficult in practice for the American forces, with support from small allied contingents, to 'eliminate' the often competing, partly organised insurgent groups in the country. These operations were at their most intensive between 2005 and throughout 2007.

At the same time, the Americans, with support from allied forces and the interim government the Americans installed, were attempting to build up confidence among the relatively fragmented Iraqi population. This was at a time when the Americans also had a clear desire to play down their role as an occupying power. After an election process, the new Iraqi government has been attempting to build up its own security forces, but establishing new local and competent security forces in Iraq has been a slow process.

The Iraq case is of course only one of many contemporary insurgencies. I will also use other cases to demonstrate the problems connected to the development of insurgencies and the different counterstrategies used by local regimes that are eventually supported by Western great powers and their allies.

I also think it is important to remember there are literally thousands of books and scientific articles that discuss different insurgencies and how to solve them. We may talk about a real 'cottage industry' here. Especially in the late 1960s and during the 1970s, many books and articles were produced about the U.S. Vietnam War. Many of these documents are both interesting and important to this day, but as time goes on, it is easier to see that only a small part of the literature produced gives real knowledge/insight into why the American enterprise in Vietnam failed. We will probably see the same after the still ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have ended.

When a large element of the population in a country feels insecure, this normally affects local developments and especially the initiative in the actual conflict – the insurgents very often gain the initiative. An important dilemma that the Western states will probably always face is the political desire to secure the various forms of freedom for the majority of people while having to fight the actual insurgents who threaten

⁵³⁸ When it comes to the amount of experience from different insurgencies, the United States is in the 'leading group'. On the other hand, several countries have fought against 'their' insurgent movements for a great number of years, e.g. Northern Ireland, Colombia, Uganda, Sudan, Burma and Israel.

the inner stability of society. Here, historical examples may be useful, as they make it possible to demonstrate certain recurring patterns from the many wars since 1945. A number of military and political measures do not appear to have worked as hoped – they should probably be avoided. It is, however, always assumed that those who make use of this type of historical lesson have the self-insight not to try to directly copy something that may have been successful in an earlier war without always taking local realities into consideration. As previously indicated, no two wars are the same in practice, and they are always coloured by local political, social, economic and other topical factors.

An obvious problem with U.S. and European perspectives on these kinds of wars is that Western political leaders look for fast/quick answers, often before they have defined the real questions connected to the actual insurgencies. We tend to forget that most of these kinds of war have local reasons, and we must take that into consideration when looking for possible solutions. We must study the questions surrounding the concept of insurgency. If we are studying, for example, the Vietnam War, we should look at the American and North Vietnamese experience in Vietnam as an opportunity to discover something about war and politics - i.e. understanding more precisely what insurgency is – its theoretical and applied importance. This may also help alter the significance of lessons from this war. If we are to learn from past experiences, it may be especially important to look at the behaviour of the political community. It is the combined effort of political decisions and military effects that decides the outcome in all kinds of insurgencies.

In this section, I am primarily focused on understanding insurgency as a method (or type) of fighting a war, including the different theories and practices in counterinsurgencies. Here I will quote from Sir Robert Thompson, the very interesting British theoretical writer about COIN and himself a practitioner of COIN in Malaya, who wrote about his experiences of working with Americans during the Vietnam War:

*The lessons of the past in Vietnam and elsewhere have just not been learnt. ...*⁵³⁹

The Vietnam War during the period of heavy U.S. military involvement (from 1965 to 1972) is probably the best-documented conflict so far in the Third World. However, those wishing to study ‘classic’ counterinsurgency campaigns that are not altogether too far back in time can find a lot of ‘alternative thinking’ in the French wars in Indochina and Algeria.

⁵³⁹ Sir Robert Thompson, *No Exit from Vietnam* (New York: David McKay Company, 1969), pp. 129–130.

4.3. A French view on counterinsurgency

The development of French theories about insurgency and counterinsurgency is only partly known to English-speaking students, including officers. Most of this theory was written in French, and was not translated in the 1950 and 1960s, when most of these theories were developed. It is also of interest to look at how the theories are used today.

4.3.1. The importance of Dien Bien Phu 1954 for French COIN thinking

The battle for Dien Bien Phu in North Vietnam in 1954 has been described in many ways, and Dien Bien Phu became a symbol for both the Viêt-Minh and the losing forces, the French colonial soldiers.⁵⁴⁰

Three goals were assigned to the camp at Dien Bien Phu, according to Paul Bourry:

1. Stand in the way of Laos (which had entered into a defence treaty with France);
2. Become an anchor for anti-guerrillas;
3. Serve as a starting point for efforts against the communication lines of the Viêt-Minh.⁵⁴¹

For the implementation of Dien Bien Phu, General Navarre asked for both more staff and additional resources. The government refused.⁵⁴² Paul Bourry wrote that the defeat and captivity in Viêt-Minh's 're-education camps' (of captured French soldiers), 'would mark the minds terribly, especially among military leaders of elite troops (including non-commissioned officers) who have suffered the shock' in the Viêt-Minh camps, 'with a double sense of injustice and humiliation'. Bourry's point is that these soldiers often felt cut off from the nation they belonged to, and were misunderstood.⁵⁴³

The concept of the so-called 'internal enemy' (i.e. in France) influenced the future actions of many of these officers and non-commissioned officers.⁵⁴⁴ These very radical political ideas would later have consequences for the coming *revolutionary war* in Algeria. One important view among the French officers involved in the development

⁵⁴⁰ Among others, Jules Roy, *The Battle of Dien Bien Phu* (Paris: Julliard, 1963), and Bernard Fall, *Dien Bien Phu. Hell in a Small Place* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1968). More recently: Guy Leonetti (editor), *Letters of Dien Bien Phu* (Paris: Fayard, 2004).

⁵⁴¹ Paul Bourry, *Dien Bien Phu. Pourquoi ? Comment ? Et après?* (Dijon: Editions Clea, 2004). Quoted from the original French text: 'Trois objectifs avaient été assignés au camp retranché, rappelle Bourry: barrer la route du Laos (qui avait passé un traité de défense avec la France); constituer un point d'ancrage pour les guérillas anticomunistes; servir de point de départ contre les lignes de communication viêt-minh. Pour l'exécution de ce projet, le général Navarre demanda des effectifs et des moyens supplémentaires.'

⁵⁴² Bourry, (2004).

⁵⁴³ Bourry, (2004). Those who became so-called 'lost soldiers' were naturally led to refer to, and build, their own *specific ethical scale of values* that no longer was identical with the one that was widely shared in the mainstream French society.

⁵⁴⁴ Maurice Lemoine, 'Dien Bien Phu, Alger, Buenos Aires. De la guerre coloniale au terrorisme d'Etat', *Le Monde diplomatique*, novembre 2004, <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/2004/11/LEMOINE/11679>.

of the new COIN ideas was that the guerrilla war is a mere tactic, but *revolutionary warfare* should be looked at as a *comprehensive strategy*, the purpose of which is to control the population. This can be done by a system of ‘parallel hierarchies’, i.e. through a grid of local and territorial Communist-infiltrated organisations, with the Communist Party hierarchy at the top – i.e. the Communists control both the local political and administrative organisation. The Communist-controlled administrative structures ensure the control of the local population and enforce ‘politically correct thinking’, i.e. the morale and ideological *reorientation* of the population’s thinking, effected through denunciations, indoctrination and psychological warfare.

Once complete control is achieved in a given region, military operations are progressively scaled up, beginning with terrorist attacks and moving up to guerrilla and then full-scale conventional operations. As is well known, standard Maoist revolutionary warfare unfolds in three phases but can also be encountered in degraded forms, as in Algeria.

It is possible to trace the history of this ‘concept’ (or theories) about who were the internal enemies of France, and these theories’ later development and use in the coming civil wars in many countries in Latin America.

4.3.2. A description of some of the French military COIN thinkers

French military theoretical writers such as Roger Trinquier, Pierre Château-Jobert, Charles Lacheroy, Marcel Bigeard, Charles Massu, Jacques Hogard and Paul Aussaresses became ‘household names’ in France. Some of these French thinkers and their ideas will be described later.

The French author Marie-Monique Robin has written about COIN thinking in France in her book *Escadrons de la mort, l'école française*. She is concerned with the emergence of what she calls ‘The French School of counterinsurgency’. Robin describes how many officers were able to continue with the moods of the French Resistance to engage in so-called ‘dirty war’.⁵⁴⁵ According to Robin, it is important to study the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 if we are to understand the French political and military development in Algeria. This defeat had a significantly adverse effect on French confidence. Coupled with the Suez Canal political disaster of 1956, i.e. the invasion of Egypt together with British and Israeli forces, it marked the contraction of French power and exposed the fractious and ‘unprofessional’ behaviour of the government of the Fourth Republic.⁵⁴⁶ But in France there are still today very different

⁵⁴⁵ Marie-Monique Robin, *Escadrons de la mort, l'école française* (Paris: La Découverte, 2004). (See also the *Le Monde Diplomatique* reference above.)

⁵⁴⁶ For a description of the so-called *Suez Crisis* or *Suez War* in 1956, see David Tal (ed.), *The 1956 War* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2001) and John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonization: The Retreat From Empire in the Post Cold War World* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1988). For an Arab/socialist view, see Anne Alexander, ‘Suez and the high tide of Arab nationalism’, *International Socialism*, Issue 112, 11 October 2006, <http://www.isj.org.uk/index.php4?id=249&issue=112>.

opinions about what really happened, and not all informed French writers agree with Robin's views. An interesting, somewhat different view may be found in an interview with Professor Etienne de Durand, who is director of the Security Studies Centre at the Institut Français des Relations Internationales (IFRI) in Paris. He told Octavian Manea his opinion on the following question: 'How important were Charles Lacheroy and Roger Trinquier in shaping the French School of COIN compared to David Galula?'

There was much debate and opposition within the French Army regarding the proper answers to guerre révolutionnaire, and no single school of thought ever prevailed. If there is such a thing as the French School of Counterinsurgency, its founding father undoubtedly is Charles Lacheroy, and with him the proponents of (French School of) DGR (doctrine de guerre révolutionnaire or French Counterinsurgency Doctrine) to include Jacques Hogard. During the French Indochina and Algeria wars, they were extremely influential towards French policy and strategy leading conferences and lectures, contributing to doctrinal manuals, and advising on day-to-day operations. Lacheroy, for instance, had high-level contacts within the government and was able to implement his views in 1957, with the creation of 5e bureaux all over Algeria and the generalization of guerre psychologique (psych war or psychological operations).

Roger Trinquier is at first more of a practitioner. He wrote on COIN at the end of the period and should therefore only in retrospect be included as a central, yet not foundational, figure of French COIN.

*Contrastingly, David Galula was an intelligence officer and most of what he wrote was marginal in France. Nobody knew of him.*⁵⁴⁷

One of the most influential French officers from this group was Colonel Charles Lacheroy (1906–2005) (see the comment in the quotation above). In France, he is still regarded as a major French military thinker of the second half of the twentieth century. He used the term *revolutionary war* to describe the Communist-inspired (and led) insurgencies in Indochina and Algeria. Lacheroy, and also Jacques Hogard, both emphasised first and foremost psychological warfare and propaganda, tactics which they in an almost 'totalitarian way' intended to use exactly like the Communists had done in Indochina. An expression used by many people who have written about the war in Algeria is that the French 'won militarily, but lost politically'. This statement is almost meaningless, because victory always happens at the *political level*. Even in the

⁵⁴⁷ Octavian Manea, 'Reflections on the French School of Counter-Rebellion: An Interview with Etienne de Durand', *Small Wars Journal*, March 3, 2011, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/reflections-on-the-french-school-of-counter-rebellion>, p. 1.

late 1950s there was no such thing as a 'purely military victory' unless the victorious party is ready to physically exterminate his enemies – and no Western democracy has been willing to try to do that. In the real world you win when the losing side decides it is time to stop fighting. Some of the French military leaders did not accept the restrictions put on warfare.

One of these officers was Charles Lacheroy. In his book *De Saint-Cyr à l'action psychologique. Mémoires d'un siècle* (new printing 2003), he describes what many of the Indochina veterans thought, but few described on paper. This book was his most important theoretical work. Lacheroy was one of the leading theorists of revolutionary warfare. In the book, he refers to the Vietminh's efforts to control body and soul. His first writings on revolutionary and psychological warfare circulated as papers among French officers, beginning in 1954.

In 1951, Lacheroy was sent to Indochina, where he was tasked to protect a railroad to Saigon and secure the sector of Bien Hoa in South Vietnam. As a Lieutenant Colonel, Lacheroy was later transferred to Paris and made director of the Centre d'études asiatiques et africaines (CEAA). There, he developed his theory of COIN warfare, by then known as 'psychological action' in French. In 1954, he served as adviser to Defence Minister Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury, and in 1956 to Defence Minister André Morice. In 1958, Lacheroy was dismissed by the new Defence Minister Jacques Chaban-Delmas, and sent to Algeria. In May 1958, he was made *director of information and psychological action services* in Algiers. He organised conferences at the *École supérieure de guerre* (1958), and later he was made director of the *École supérieure des officiers de réserve spécialistes d'état-major*. But as De Gaulle gave independence to Algeria, he became very frustrated and joined the terrorist organisation OAS. For seven years he lived underground, along with likeminded revolutionaries like Antoine Argoud, Pierre Lagailarde and Jo Ortiz, and directed the OAS operations against the de Gaulle regime.⁵⁴⁸

Insufficiently funded and supported by its political masters, the French Army felt *betrayed*, setting in motion events that would help bring about the end of the Fourth Republic in 1958.⁵⁴⁹ This also resulted in the development of the terrorist organisation OAS (Organisation de l'Armée Secrète), founded by General Raoul Salan. The organisation was led by officers who sought to prevent Algeria from gaining independence from France, many of them with experiences from both Indochina and

⁵⁴⁸ Charles Lacheroy, *De Saint-Cyr à l'action psychologique. Mémoires d'un siècle* (Panazol: Lavauzelle, 2003). The following quote says a lot about the internal development in the French Army: 'Having diagnosed the problem, French officers knew the remedy. The French military had to transform itself by adopting the techniques that had defeated them.' In adopting these techniques, explained a French officer, 'The Army was thinking only of turning against an enemy the arms that he used.' This included the use of torture and counter-terrorism, etc. (Lacheroy was sentenced to death *in absentia* in April 1961. He was amnestied in 1968.)

⁵⁴⁹ Peter Paret, *French Revolutionary Warfare from Indochina to Algeria, the Analysis of a Political and Military Doctrine* (New York: Praeger), pp. 54–55. Paret argues that it was the French military experience in Indochina and Algeria that led officers to accept the doctrine of revolutionary warfare (including use of torture against internal enemies).

Algeria. Later officers attempted a *putsch* (1961) against President Charles de Gaulle following his decision to grant Algeria independence.

The thoughts of Lacheroy and other French officers about this kind of warfare, which may be looked upon as some kind of ‘patented brand’ of French doctrinal thinking in the 1950s and early 1960s, have had a lasting influence into our own time.

The American David Tucker has written about different forms of insurgencies (including use of Special Operations). In his publication *Confronting the Unconventional: Innovation and Transformation in Military Affairs* (2006), he gives a somewhat different description of the French experiences with insurgency and their theory development in the 1950s and 1960s.⁵⁵⁰ He wrote, for example:

The defeat also sent the French Army, or at least some of its officers, in search of an explanation. How could a small, backward colony have defeated its metropolitan master? The answer to this question began to emerge in meetings and training sessions even before the war in Indochina had ended. It appeared in the pages of professional military journals shortly after Dien Bien Phu, as the French began another war, this time for control of Algeria, and an integral part of France. The explanation for their defeat was that the French had encountered a new kind of warfare – revolutionary warfare. Unlike classical warfare, in which one military force sought to defeat another in order to gain control of territory, revolutionary warfare sought to control a territory by controlling its population. That was the point of Vietminh efforts to organize the Vietnamese people.

*The decisive fighting of the war took place not on the battlefield where the French had the advantage, but in the hearts and minds of the French and Vietnamese populations, where the Vietminh built an advantage through inducements and coercion. The Vietminh avoided pitched battles, hoping to exhaust not just the French Army, but the French people, while organizing the Vietnamese population so it could withstand a long struggle.*⁵⁵¹

In his text, Tucker gives us an interesting presentation of some of the experiences from the French colonial wars in Indochina and Algeria, quote:

⁵⁵⁰ Tucker was at that time Associate Professor in the Department of Defense Analysis and Co-Director of the Center on Terrorism and Irregular Warfare, with very good access to information.

⁵⁵¹ David Tucker, *Confronting the unconventional: Innovation and Transformation in Military Affairs*, *Strategic Studies Institute (SSI)*, Army War College, October 2006, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=729> pp. 5–7.

The organizing effort had two components. One was political warfare. The Vietminh infiltrated all sections and levels of society through a system of committees. These committees paralleled the official political organizations at every level (hamlet, village, province, etc.) and included a series of social committees (of the young, the old, women, etc.). The result was a system that, as explained by Charles Lacheroy, one of the most famous of the French students of revolutionary warfare, allowed the Vietminh to take physical possession of people. But this component – political warfare – was not sufficient. The second required component of revolutionary warfare was psychological warfare. The Vietminh aimed to take control of people's hopes and fears, loves and hates – to take control of people's souls. To do this, they used a variety of measures ranging from propaganda to brain-washing, supported by physical punishment. The French referred to these measures as psychological warfare. Political warfare and psychological warfare together made revolutionary warfare. Revolutionary warfare had allowed the Vietminh to beat a force that by conventional measures was far superior. Thus revolutionary warfare was itself a revolution in warfare.⁵⁵²

This way of thinking depended on the development of new military theory, a theory that included use of psychological warfare as a 'main weapon'. The official sanctioning of the so-called revolutionary and psychological warfare by the French Defence Minister Bourguès-Maunoury is documented in *Revue militaire d'information*, published in July 1956.⁵⁵³ The use of what was called psychological warfare and 'harsh treatment' of prisoners (i.e. against 'internal enemies') in Algeria became an important part of the French COIN concept developed in the mid-1950s.⁵⁵⁴ General Paul Aussaresses broke the silence about the French version on 'war on terror' in Algeria with his book *The Battle of the Casbah*. In this book, he described in detail the subject of torture during the eight-year-long conflict that led to Algeria's independence from France. The use of torture against and summary execution of FLN suspects was accepted by the political leadership. This book described for the first time how the French government was directly involved.⁵⁵⁵ General Aussaresses himself gave the following explanation in an interview with the French newspaper *Le Monde* about why he supported use of terror against the FLN during the Algerian War: 'Once you have seen with your own eyes as I did, civilians, men, women, and children quartered, disembowelled and

552 Tucker (2006), pp. 6-7. Tucker refers to Colonel Charles Lacheroy, 'La Guerre Revolutionnaire', speech on 2 July 1957, printed in Centre de sciences politiques (Nice) et al., *La Defense Nationale*, Paris, 1958.

553 Maurice Bourguès-Maunoury, 'Le Problème Algerien', *Revue militaire d'information*, Vol. 274, July 1956, pp. 6-7.

554 Books with descriptions of the French development are: François Géré, *La Guerre Psychologique* (Paris: Economica, 1997). Maurice Mégret, *L'Action Psychologique* (Paris: Librairie Artheme Fayard, 1959).

555 Paul Aussaresses, *The Battle of the Casbah. Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Algeria, 1955-1957* (New York, NY: Enigma Books, 2002).

nailed to doors (by the rebels), you are changed for life. What feelings can anyone have towards those who perpetrated such barbaric acts and their accomplices?’⁵⁵⁶

The French counterinsurgency expert and military theorist David Galula is not well known in France, but has become an important source in today’s Anglo-Saxon thinking about countering insurgency. The American authors of the 2006 Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* wrote that of the many books that were influential in the writing of the new document, perhaps none was as important as David Galula’s *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*.⁵⁵⁷ An important fact is also that he wrote his most important works in English in the USA in the early 1960s.

Galula knew many of the leading figures in French counterinsurgency. Even before fighting in Algeria, he was noticed by General Raoul Salan, who was later infamous for his leadership of the OAS. When Galula arrived in Algeria, he as an officer became involved in the practical implementation of the ideas of French theorist-practitioners like Colonels Charles Lacheroy (1907–2005) and Roger Trinquier (1908–1986).⁵⁵⁸

More than 40 years ago, Galula wrote something that is still topical in connection with theories about counterinsurgency:

*Since antagonizing the population will not help, it is imperative that hardships for it and rash actions on the part of the forces be kept to a minimum. The units participating in the operations should be thoroughly indoctrinated to that effect, with misdeeds punished severely and even publicly if this can serve to impress the population. Any damage done should be immediately compensated without red tape.*⁵⁵⁹

And without getting the majority of the population behind you (the counterinsurgent), there is hardly any hope of a victory for more moderate forces. Galula also made another important observation – ordinary people by and large want to live in peace and this means that if one must (or is forced to) pick a side in a conflict, one will support the side one assumes will be the winner! He wrote his observation in the following manner: those fighting the insurgency will not be able to achieve broad popular support until the majority of people are convinced that those fighting the insurgency have the will, the resources and the ability to win. This is a wise way of thinking, given the severe risk a person opting for the wrong side in a civil war is tak-

⁵⁵⁶ Quote from the Enigma Books back cover of the English version of Aussaresses’ book.

⁵⁵⁷ U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Counterinsurgency*, Field Manual FM 3-24, Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-33.5, December 2006., p. viii., 2-1, and 2-9.

⁵⁵⁸ Marlowe, Ann, *David Galula: His Life And Intellectual Context*, SSI Monograph, Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), United States Army War College, August 2010, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1016.pdf>, pp. iii-1v.

⁵⁵⁹ David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, second printing, 1965. Reprinted 2006 with new page numbers.), pp. 108–109.

ing – it could in fact cost him his life. Ordinary propaganda is not enough to get a careful person to side against the insurgents.⁵⁶⁰

On the basis of his own experiences during the Algerian War in the period from 1956–1958, Galula stated that, without popular support, a peaceful solution based on a non-radical social order would be difficult to achieve. In his most important book - *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, David Galula created a synthesis of his experiences as a soldier in places like China (where he was taken prisoner by Maoist guerrillas), Algeria and Indochina. His work can be looked upon as an overall theory with regard to COIN. As I see it, the actual core of his theory is his description of how an area (or a country) can be divided up into smaller controllable parts, and then military forces can be used to defeat the insurgents there. But an important point was that, at the same time as carrying out the military operations, it was necessary to use *political measures* aimed at the civilian community and to reinforce the civilian structures. Once the insurgents were defeated or had fled from the area now controlled by the military forces, it was the new civilian administration's most important task to ensure that the insurgency did not re-emerge. Once stability was achieved in the 'liberated' area, the military and civilian structures could be moved to the next area. The same operational pattern would then be carried out there. In many ways, Galula was describing a very common feature of insurgency when he stated that disorder is cheap to create and very costly to prevent.⁵⁶¹

A relatively simple theoretical construct underlies the theory and practice of counterinsurgency. It is the essence of what today's theorists and strategists term asymmetric warfare: although an asymmetric distribution of resources and abilities actually favours counterinsurgent forces, they are often inappropriately wielded. The conflict is asymmetric because there is a 'disproportion of strength between the opponents at the outset, and from the difference in essence between their assets and liabilities'⁵⁶² At the conceptual level, 'the insurgent has a formidable asset – the ideological power of a cause on which to base his actions. The counterinsurgent has a heavy liability – he is responsible for maintaining order throughout the country', without undermining the ideals on which the new government is making its pleas for support.⁵⁶³

560 Thomas E. Ricks, 'Excerpt: A 1964 Classic's Lessons for Iraq in 2005', *The Washington Post*, 17 July 2005, p. BW08.

561 Galula (1965), see especially pp. 74–81.

562 Galula (1965), p. 6.

563 Galula (1965), p. 7.

| Component | Insurgent | Counterinsurgent |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Resource asymmetry | Limited resources/power | Preponderance of resources/ power |
| Objective = population | Solicit government oppression | Show that insurgency is destabilising |
| Political nature of war | Wage war for minds of population | Wage war for same, and to keep legitimacy |
| Gradual transition to war | Use time to develop cause | Always in reactive mode |
| Protracted nature of war | Disperse; use limited violence widely | Maintain vigilance; sustain will |
| Cost | High return on investment | Sustained operations carry high political/economic burden |
| Role of ideology | Sole asset at beginning is cause or idea | Defeat root of cause or idea |

Table 4.1. About the source: This table is based on an article written by Robert R. Tomes.⁵⁶⁴ This is a possible interpretation of David Galula's view of differences between insurgents and counterinsurgents, based on his Chapters 5 and 6.⁵⁶⁵

According to Robert R. Tomes, the figure above illustrates the differences that David Galula saw between insurgents and counterinsurgents. Galula wanted to explore the practical implications of the dyadic relationships between what he saw as two different forms of warfare. He looked upon a counterinsurgency as a 'special war':

Revolutionary war (...) represents an exceptional case not only because, as we suspect, it has its special rules, different from those of the conventional war, but also because most of the rules applicable to one side do not work for the other. In a fight between a fly and a lion, the fly cannot deliver a knockout blow and the lion cannot fly. It is the same war for both camps in terms of space and time, yet there are two distinct warfares – the revolutionary's and, shall we say, the counterrevolutionary's.

This is where Mao Tse-tung is misleading. What he calls "the laws of revolutionary war" are in fact those of the revolutionary side, his side. The one who

⁵⁶⁴ Tomes, Robert R., 'Relearning Counterinsurgency Warfare', *Parameters*, Spring 2004, <http://carlislewww.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/04spring/tomes.htm>.

⁵⁶⁵ Galula (1965), pp. 70–86 and 87–106.

*directs a war against a revolutionary movement will not find in Mao (...) the answers to his problems.*⁵⁶⁶

According to Galula, a confluence of military and non-military operations defeats the insurgents. This requires a functioning organisation invested with the power to coordinate political, social, economic and military elements. For Galula, counterinsurgency efforts require unified command – a single source of direction. This means a ‘tight’ organisation is needed: ‘A single boss must direct the operation from the beginning to the end.’⁵⁶⁷ The military, moreover, cannot be allowed a free hand in the overall direction of the war. At the operational level, ‘it is better to entrust civilian tasks to civilians’.⁵⁶⁸ That means that, ‘essential though it is, the military action is secondary to the political one, its primary purpose being to afford the political power enough freedom to work safely with the population’.⁵⁶⁹

Galula in his book *Counterinsurgency Warfare* provides advice to the counterinsurgent forces. In a given *local area* the following eight points may be used as guidelines for counterinsurgency planning and campaign:

1. Concentrate enough armed forces to destroy or to expel the main body of armed insurgents.
2. Detach for the area sufficient forces to oppose an insurgent’s comeback in strength.
3. Establish contact with the population; control its movements in order to cut off its links with the guerrillas.
4. Destroy the local insurgent political organisations.
5. Set up, by means of elections, new provisional local authorities.
6. Test these authorities by assigning them various concrete tasks. Replace the soft and the incompetent; give full support to the active leaders. Organise self-defence units.
7. Group and educate the leaders in a national political movement.
8. Win over or suppress the last insurgents.

Today we must look upon this advice using a *modern* interpretation – the political, economic and military situation is very different from what it was in the 1960s, and the direct influence of the media on politics is also different.

⁵⁶⁶ Galula (1965), see his ‘Introduction’, p. xi.

⁵⁶⁷ Galula (1965), p. 87.

⁵⁶⁸ Galula (1965), p. 88.

⁵⁶⁹ Galula (1965), p. 89.

As mentioned earlier, Galula's book was inspired by his military experiences as a French military officer. He had been an attaché in China, and had experience from Greece, Southeast Asia and Algeria. Galula realised the need for a 'handbook' on the suppression of insurgency, and he set out to define the laws of counterinsurgency warfare, i.e. he wanted to outline its strategy and tactics. Even though he was a French citizen all his life, he wrote his most important works in English while he was in the USA. It is still a problem to this day that there are differences in French and English military terminology, and few books are translated from French to English, and *vice versa*. Books given high value by critics may not be translated. The differences will be easy to see for everyone who reads French comments on Galula. Professor Etienne de Durand, in his answer to Manea's question, gives some insight. The question was: 'Coming back to the legacy of the DGR School and that of Galula's COIN template, which is today their relevance in an environment where we have to deal not with a Maoist insurgency, but with a post-Maoist type of insurgency?'

People tend to forget that Galula was writing in a completely different context, that of the Cold War – and the most tensed period of the Cold War at that. He took for granted – and this is something that he shared with Lacheroy and Trinquier – that the West was engaged in an existential struggle against communism. In other words, the campaigns in Algeria and Indochina were perceived as parts of a global war against communism. In this context of total and global war, Galula regarded the reliance on “total” means such as conscription, large number of troops, near unlimited funding and high acceptance of casualties as naturally justified. We ought to remember that the French deployed in Algeria around 420,000 soldiers which are more than what the Americans deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan together.

When people cite Galula, Trinquier and all this generation, they should bear in mind that they were engaged in a different kind of war – a war which to them clearly encompassed vital interests and required almost endless military means. This is not the case today, as Afghanistan is foreign territory. Algeria wasn't, and Vietnam had been a French colony for decades. That's why Algeria was never regarded as a counterinsurgency war, but as a counter-rebellion operation. The difference with our present interventions is therefore huge, if only in terms of stakes. Today, we have limited interests at stake and must operate with constrained resources, yet our militaries are under constant media attention.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁷⁰ Manea (2011), p. 5.

If we study the writings of the Australian-born Dr. David Kilcullen, who was the senior counterinsurgency advisor to Commanding General MNF-I in Iraq 2007, David Petraeus did understand that today we can not directly copy the methods described by the French theorists, including Galula.⁵⁷¹

4.3.3. The relevance of the French theories today

What is the relevance of the French COIN ideas today? After all, they lost in both Indochina and Algeria. If the Americans and NATO had not been involved in first Afghanistan and later in Iraq, it is my personal view that we would not have seen the reborn interest in COIN theories, and especially not in the French theories. The new-born interest was mainly a result of the fast-growing troubles of the U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq from late 2003. This triggered new studies of old classical COIN theories and case studies, including some of the French theories. One major problem here was, and still is, that relatively few French texts from this period are translated into English.

In the 1960s, a group of French officers with a background from Indochina and Algeria developed a new doctrine for combating insurgencies that was to be used to combat the FLN insurgent movement in Algeria. Theorists such as Colonels Charles Lacheroy and Roger Trinquier opted for the effective destruction of the armed opposition and also recommended developing an environment in which the insurgents could not operate. They also included the extensive use of psychological warfare at all levels. The French first attempted to isolate the nationalists in Algeria by closing its borders with Morocco and Tunisia and established a large network of garrisons across the entire country, supported by a strong reserve that carried out direct anti-guerrilla operations. Thousands of civilians were moved to areas that could be defended and separate self-defence forces were established. Although the French Army in fact overcame the guerrilla, there was ultimately no longer the *political will* in the government offices to continue fighting for Algeria. This meant that the French army became more and more politicised and, in 1958 and 1961, threatened action against the government. Although this method of combating guerrillas clearly worked at a certain level, it was ultimately impossible to halt Arab nationalism, particularly as the French politicians saw this as a 'lost cause'.

The tendency to approach insurgency without using (local) history has in itself a long history. Many military specialists in counterinsurgency have seen their subject more as a 'struggle of light versus darkness' than as a common and *recurrent* theme of military history. One example of an 'ahistorical approach' to the subject of insurgency may be the French group of theorists' writings in the 1950s and early 1960s about the French term 'guerre

571 The interpretation of Galula is from Kilcullen's briefing: David Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency in Iraq: Theory and Practice*, 2007. Speech. Counterinsurgency Seminar 26.09.2007, Marine Corps Base, Quantico, Virginia, [usacac.army.mil/cac2/coin/repository/Dr_Kilcullen_COIN_Brief\(Sep07\).ppt](http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/coin/repository/Dr_Kilcullen_COIN_Brief(Sep07).ppt) - 2008-06-27.

revolutionnaire'. These theorists often denied the complexities, especially the mixture of material, moral and ideological factors, that today's leading theorists normally look upon as keys to understanding why and how terrorist/insurgent movements come into existence. These theories are based on 'the ideological control of populations'. This became the real issue of the war, through a system of 'supervision of the masses'.⁵⁷² In this context it is interesting to see what French doctrine writers today write in the new French COIN document (2010), as part of the introduction, under the heading 'Warning':

Insurgencies do not have military objectives; instead, they have political goals. Consequently, they create asymmetrical conditions at the tactical level which rely upon the population as both the principal actor and prize of the conflict.

*War conducted in the midst of the population, otherwise known as guerrilla warfare, has an essential place in today's conflicts as an alternative means of action. The French Armed Forces are rediscovering this type of action which had fallen into disuse but has been revived by our engagement in Afghanistan.*⁵⁷³

In the new (2010) French COIN doctrine for the tactical level, the official definition of COIN is:

*Counterinsurgency (at the tactical level) is a course of action that consists of neutralizing an organization that practices armed violence in the form of guerilla warfare or terrorist attacks, by reducing that organization's freedom of movement through confinement, or even eliminating it through the effects of reduction and/or dispersion. The level of engagement in this type of struggle depends upon the national or international political option chosen, upon the balance of forces on the ground and the attitude of the population.*⁵⁷⁴

572 An important source of this kind of thinking is Trinquier (1964). Colonel Charles Lacheroy, who was a leading figure in the new French military thinking about counterinsurgency and head of the French Army's *Service d'Action Psychologique*, famously stated: 'In the beginning there is nothing.' See also Lacheroy (1958), p. 322, cited in Paret (1964), p. 15. Robert Townshend, 'Counterinsurgency', in Richard Holmes (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Military History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 231.

573 Ministère de la Défense, Armée de Terre, *Doctrine for Counterinsurgency at the Tactical Level*, Army Manual, Forces Employment Doctrine Center, Paris, April 2010, smallwarsjournal.com/documents/frenchcoindoctrine.pdf. A French comment to the translation of the text from French to English may be useful for the reader: 'The original title of the French version of this manual is "Doctrine de contre rébellion". In order to avoid confusion and possible misunderstanding with our allies, the French word "contre rébellion" is translated as "counterinsurgency". Although the American and British meaning of this term better corresponds to the French notion of "stabilisation" (or stabilization phase), counterinsurgency in this document, should exclusively be understood as referring to the tactical level of operations. In the same manner, the French word "rébellion" which characterizes an armed organization using guerrilla warfare and/or terrorism is translated as "insurgency".'

574 (French) *Doctrine for Counterinsurgency at the Tactical Level* (2010).

This new French document, according to the ‘warning’ on one of the first pages, ‘draws its inspiration from the collective experiences gained from the lessons learned of our own forces to those of our Allies and foreign armies with more distant views’. It seems obvious that the doctrine writers have been inspired by the French COIN classics, especially Roger Trinquier:

*Lessons from engagements which predate the Cold War have also reappeared. They have enabled us to identify, develop and eliminate particular tactical approaches all while integrating strategic, cultural and ethical limitations from these lessons which emanate from a sometimes painful past.*⁵⁷⁵

In his book *Modern Warfare*,⁵⁷⁶ Roger Trinquier states that in the development of *revolutionary warfare*, the allegiance of the civilian population becomes one of the most important objectives of the struggle for control. Trinquier was more concerned about whether the COIN forces had lost the confidence of the population among whom one was fighting, than about military tactics and the hardware in use. This book is more ‘hands on’ in its approach than Galula’s more strategic writing, and is mostly about warfare at tactical level, including a defence for the use of contra-terror and torture, if necessary. Trinquier defended the use of torture in fighting for the control of Algiers because he saw information collected through torture as the bane of the terrorists.⁵⁷⁷ Of course the use of torture became difficult to defend for the Fourth Republic (whose political leaders had said yes to the use of torture), and the Algerian War may be looked upon as the beginning of the end of the Fourth Republic.

As mentioned earlier, Marie-Monique Robin has studied the history of French military thinking and its later use and developments in Latin America.⁵⁷⁸ She mainly relies on French books and documents as sources, works written by French military thinkers and practitioners like Roger Trinquier (1908–1986), Marcel Bigeard (1916–2010),⁵⁷⁹ Paul Aussaresses (born 1918),⁵⁸⁰ Jacques Charles Massu (1908–2002)⁵⁸¹ and Pierre Château-Jobert (1912–2005). There is an obvious problem with

⁵⁷⁵ See (French) *Doctrine for Counterinsurgency at the Tactical Level* (2010), p. 6.

⁵⁷⁶ Trinquier (1964).

⁵⁷⁷ Trinquier (1964), pp. ix–xvii.

⁵⁷⁸ Robin (2004).

⁵⁷⁹ General Marcel Bigeard was a French military officer who fought in World War II, Indochina and Algeria. He was one of the parachute battalion commanders in the battle of Dien Bien Phu and influenced the development of French COIN thinking. He was one of the most highly decorated soldiers in France, and ended his career as a Lieutenant General.

⁵⁸⁰ As mentioned earlier Paul Aussaresses is a retired French Army General whose actions during the Algerian War of Independence, and later defence of those actions, caused considerable controversy. See Aussaresses (2002).

⁵⁸¹ Jacques Émile Charles Massu was a French general who fought in World War II, Indochina, Algeria and the Suez crisis (1956). General Massu’s greatest fame rested on his role in Algeria. He was named military commander of Algeria in 1957. When his harsh measures resulted in triumph over the guerrillas of the National Liberation Front, he became the hero of Algeria’s one million French settlers and worshiped by soldiers and veterans’ groups calling him ‘Le père de paras’, the father of paratroopers. Interestingly, General Massu later condemned the use of torture while claiming that he had never

her sources: are not many of these books obsolete today, given the very changed political realities in both France and Europe? I think the answer is yes – some of these theories and many of the methods described are not politically acceptable in Europe today. But it is still of interest to study the French thinking, as these books/texts were built on personal experiences. Robin, among other things, describes how many officers were willing to use experiences from the French Resistance and captivity in Indochina during the war in Algeria. One of her comments was: ‘If the army seeks to draw lessons from the war in Indochina, it was not to examine the social and economic roots of national movements in underdeveloped countries, or on the inevitability of decolonization.’⁵⁸²

From the point of view of many of these soldiers, the conflict in Algeria was beyond the scope of French colonial thinking. In their view, they were defending their threatened countries as part of the fight between Communism and the ‘Free World’. ‘In a case as dangerous as the war,’ Colonel Trinquier later wrote, ‘errors due to the kindness of spirit are the worst thing.’⁵⁸³ The use of *physical force* does always include the use of intelligence. The military (or security) forces that use ruthlessness - and do not stop even if it comes to bloodshed - have an advantage over their opponent, according to these French theories.⁵⁸⁴

A book written by another already mentioned controversial French colonel and military theorist, Roger Trinquier (1908-1986), is still regarded as one of the more interesting books documenting French experiences with fighting insurgencies. He mainly describes the military points of view. His ways of thinking may appear controversial today, but he should be regarded as a child of his own time and experiences. Trinquier served in China, Indochina and Algeria, and it was against this background that he wrote his book.⁵⁸⁵ His book was published in 1961 and was soon translated

learned where the policy originated. ‘Torture is not indispensable in time of war, we could have gotten along without it very well,’ according to Michael T. Kaufman, ‘Jacques Massu, 94, General Who Led Battle of Algiers, Dies’ *New York Times*, 31 October 2002, <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/10/31/obituaries/31MASS.html>.

582 Robin (2001).

583 Roger Trinquier, *Guerre, subversion, révolution* (Paris : Robert Laffont, 1968). This book is not to my knowledge translated into English.

584 Lemoine (2004), p. 32. Based on an interpretation of this thinking done by the French journalist Maurice Lemoine and published in the French newspaper *Le Monde diplomatique* in November 2004, the importance of control over the population must be given priority. Lemoine wrote: ‘a prominent place is given to both “political intelligence” and “police action”.’ Et, en Algérie, qui dit renseignement dira rapidement quadrillage urbain, interrogatoires et, finalement, torture. In Algeria, the need for intelligence in connection with the introduction of the so-called *quadrillage urbain* system, led to the use of harsh interrogations of suspected persons, and ultimately paved the way for the use of torture. Lemoine in his article wrote that this happened with the implicit support of the French political authorities in Paris, who, according to Lemoine, were ‘unable to assume their responsibilities’. He wrote: ‘these abuses are a systematic expression of a “revolution in the art of war” supposed to tackle the “total war” waged by the rebels with a policy of terror, where the issue is the alignment of people.’ I will also quote the French text in the article: « Et, en Algérie, qui dit renseignement dira rapidement quadrillage urbain, interrogatoires et, finalement, torture. Avec le soutien implicite des autorités politiques, incapables d’assumer leurs responsabilités, « ces exactions systématiques sont l’expression d’une “révolution dans l’art de la guerre” censée répondre à la “guerre totale” menée par les rebelles par une politique de terreur dont l’enjeu est le ralliement des populations ».

585 The title of the original is *La guerre modern* [Modern Warfare], and can be seen as an overall attempt at creating a *French counterinsurgency theory*. Some opponents have seen the book as a ‘blueprint’ for military totalitarianism. See the next footnote for details.

into English. The English translation of the book is titled *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency*.⁵⁸⁶ This book has, without doubt, been one of the most influential books of its kind ever written and was a bestseller in France, something that is not very common for this type of specialist literature. The book is unusually direct and realistically written and provides a unique insight into how the French paratrooper forces, with their reference point being their previous participation over many years in the war against the Việt-Minh in Indochina (1946–1954), developed and carried out their campaign in Algeria in the period from 1956–1959.

Many of the officers and noncommissioned officers who had fought in Indochina had learned from the Việt-Minh. Many also had been tortured and mistreated by the Việt-Minh in prison camps after Dien Bien Phu. Some also had experience from the French resistance against the German occupation of France. They subsequently made use of the *combat techniques* they themselves had gained personal experience of in the colonial wars, including the use of torture (which naturally enough became extremely controversial in France).

Even if the French troops can, in many ways, be seen to have won the battle against the Algerian liberation movement (the FLN), they were not able to win the war politically. President de Gaulle and his political circles decided to end the war and concentrate on developing France as an atomic power – the illusion of still being a European superpower became the priority.

It was implied that those who took up this form of destructive insurgency were fundamentally against what Trinquier and many of his colleagues looked upon as modernisation. The insurgent *counter-forces* would either defend the traditional political forces and values (as Islam), or were adherents of ‘Communism’, and Communism was probably looked upon as a modern form of ‘reactionary religion’ by Trinquier and many others who led counterinsurgency operations. These insurgent organisations’ methods of combat were based on guerrilla warfare and terrorism.

French theorists such as Roger Trinquier and several of his contemporary French military leaders were confronted by revolutionary warfare in Indochina during the lengthy war against the Việt-Minh.⁵⁸⁷

In 1951, the French had set up a special unit in Indochina, called the *Groupeement de Commandos Mixtes Aéroportés* (GCMA), an organisation that would try to fight the Việt-Minh’s increasing control over the population in the rural areas. The entire organisation was organised as a resistance movement against the Việt-Minh and the GCMA wanted to mobilise different minorities, which would be set up as small self-defence areas and indirectly contribute to efforts to make the Việt-Minh lose control of their own

⁵⁸⁶ Trinquier (1964).

⁵⁸⁷ Paul-Marie de la Gorce, *The French Army: A Military-Political History* (New York: George Braziller, 1963), pp. 440–449. Gorce characterised the war as follows: ‘The Algerian War was to be the last, probably, and certainly the greatest and most dramatic of colonial wars.’ (p. 447.)

rear areas. The group was to infiltrate the local population, gather intelligence and set up small guerrilla units. The GCMA quickly grew in size through the deliberate recruitment of minorities that were traditionally most sceptical of the Vietnamese, such as the T'ai and Meo tribes. In May 1953, the then Major Trinquier took over as GCMA commander. By the spring of 1954, the GCMA had grown to almost 20,000 men covering several thousand square kilometres. Few majors have commanded such an important force. He had already previously been a regional commander for assignments in North Vietnam and had a good knowledge of guerrilla and counter-guerrilla activities. On the basis of his own experiences he felt that a local *maquis* (resistance area) should consist of a maximum of 1,000 guerrilla soldiers supported by between 2,000 and 3,000 support troops from the actual (local) tribes. Based on the experiences they had gathered, the Việt-Minh were not able to defeat a force like this without deploying an even bigger conventional force. As Trinquier saw it, the mission of a *maquis* was to:

1. prevent the local population from collaborating with the Việt-Minh;
2. develop an atmosphere of permanent insecurity within the Việt-Minh's own area;
3. eventually invite the local population to become more and more active in operations directed at the Việt-Minh's established infrastructure and political structure within their own area.⁵⁸⁸

During his latter years in Indochina, Trinquier began his comprehensive study into what he later called 'modern warfare'. He was finally promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel in 1956 and later served under General Massu in the 10th Paratrooper Division in Algeria in 1957. By then, he already had several decades of service and what he experienced in Algeria, particularly the fighting against the FLN in the capital of Algiers in 1957–1958, was what inspired him to write about how insurgent movements could be dealt with.⁵⁸⁹ Clearly inspired by what these elite forces believed they had learned from the lost war in Indochina, there was one requirement that had to be satisfied if one were to have any hope of winning: securing the support of the local population. If one was to achieve any military and political success at all, one had to at least ensure that the population would not turn against the political regime. Hard and systematic efforts were required for success. Counterinsurgency, if it is to lead to the desired political goal, assumes that:

Warfare is now an interlocking system of measures – political, economic, psychological, and military – that aims at overthrow of the established authority

⁵⁸⁸ Trinquier (1964), pp. 107–111.

⁵⁸⁹ For a general historical presentation, see Alexander and Keiger (eds.) (2002). See particularly Alexander and Keiger, 'France and the Algerian War: Strategy, Operations and Diplomacy', pp. 1–34.

*in a country and its replacement by another regime. To achieve this end, the aggressor tries to exploit the internal tensions of the country attacked – ideological, social, religious, economic – any conflict liable to have a profound influence on the population to be conquered (...) On so vast a field of action, traditional armed forces no longer enjoy their accustomed decisive role. Victory no longer depends on one battle over a given terrain. Military operations, as combat actions carried out against opposing armed forces, are of only limited importance and are never the total conflict. This is doubtless the reason why the army, traditionally attracted by the purely military aspect of a conflict, has never seriously approached the study of a problem it considers an inferior element in the art of war.*⁵⁹⁰

His own operations were obviously strongly influenced by the defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, or as he wrote in a clear understatement in the book: ‘The regrettable Dien Bien Phu incident.’⁵⁹¹ After Indochina, Trinquier served as a counterinsurgency advisor during the Algerian War. In his book, he defined counterinsurgency as ‘an interlocking system of actions – political, economic, psychological, military – that aims at the [insurgents’ intended] overthrow of the established authority in a country and its replacement by another regime.’ Trinquier writes openly about the difficulties the French had in using a traditionally trained and equipped modern, armoured force that had been developed and trained to be able to combat a similarly equipped enemy. If such a force is deployed to take on a guerrilla force, ‘it is reminiscent of the situation that arises if one lets a lorry driver try to run over a fly and who is constantly forced to try again’. In Indonesia, the French military leaders had ‘tried to force the Việt-Minh into a decisive battle, the only form of battle the French mastered, in the hope that their material superiority would then give them a cheap victory’.⁵⁹² The only way possible to avoid this form of mistake was, according to Trinquier, to combat the hostile *organisation* that most insurgent groups develop in order to be able to challenge the status quo. ‘Victory will only be able to be achieved through the complete destruction of (the secret) organisation (that wishes to dominate the population). This is the main concept that must guide us in our studies of *modern warfare*.’⁵⁹³

It is never enough for patrols to walk (or drive) through cities if one is to be able to deal with and combat an emerging urban insurgent movement. If one is to suc-

⁵⁹⁰ Trinquier (1964), p. 6.

⁵⁹¹ Trinquier (1964), p. 110.

⁵⁹² Trinquier (1964), p. 3.

⁵⁹³ Trinquier (1964), pp. 8–9. Important for Trinquier’s later writing is the fact that he commanded the *Groupeement de Commandos Mixtes Aeroportes* (GCMA). The French GCMA has been likened to, for example, U.S. Army Special Forces and the paramilitary units of intelligence organisations. While GCMA was created by the French military command in 1951, it had close ties to the French *Service de Documentation Exterieur et de Contra-Espionage* (SDECE). The GCMA was created to execute a three-part mission in Indochina: 1) Establish French-led indigenous counter-guerrilla groups to be called ‘Maquis’. 2) Set up escape and evasion routes where needed. 3) Organise sabotage squads. During the Algerian War (which

ceed, one must gain access to good intelligence and be able to infiltrate the enemy's organisations by means of local agents. It is necessary to penetrate the enemy's secret organisations and cells. Equipped with the insight that this type of personal experience provides, the government forces can remove or weaken the insurgents' ability to frighten or persuade the people to join the insurgent forces or their political/religious organisations. It is assumed that the successful organisation of an insurgency will normally consist of the four following elements/components:

1. The establishment of so-called 'secret cells' that function as a hidden *network*.
2. The insurgents carry out acts of terror to show the majority of people that they are not safe, i.e. they wish to create a feeling of insecurity among the population and thereby show that the central authorities are not able to control the situation. Only the insurgents can provide safety.
3. The insurgents implement a series of measures to gain the support (or at least the sympathy) of the majority of people.
4. The insurgents implement the measures they see themselves being able to carry out with a view to undermining support for the new regime (as in Iraq today) in order to demonstrate that those governing are not in control of the situation. It is only if the insurgency is victorious that there can be peace in the area.

Here, the claim can be made that, even if much of the French thinking on insurgency may probably seem less than topical today, there is still some knowledge that may be learned from their extensive experiences from the colonial period, and particularly from Algeria. The groundwork for military theory and associated operational patterns must, however, always be adapted to modern reality – i.e. today's political and military reality. Another problem is the lack of knowledge in the English-speaking world about the current military literature written in French. Most of the books available were written in the 1960, but updated texts are probably also available for students who can study the modern French military literature.

The importance of the mass media in particular and the greatly changed *political* situation in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War make it necessary to carefully think through which of the French experiences could possibly still be relevant.

broke out in 1954), the French intelligence organisation SDECE in 1955 created a new unit inspired by the Vietnamese GCMA experience. It was named *Groupeement Léger d'Intervention* or GLI (Light Intervention Group) and involved Algerian Muslims fighting alongside the French against the FLN rebels.

4.4. American COIN development

4.4.1. Introduction

The war against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq in the spring of 2003, with the subsequent 'continuation war', a war that had not been brought to a complete end when this book was written (2011), will be used as one of the examples here. What were the thinking/doctrines used in the early phase of this long conflict? When did the Americans understand the real problems they had ended up with, and what did they do to change their direction?

Another problem clearly connected to the changing winds in the U.S. internal military debate is associated with the question of which theories and concepts should be used in, for example, Afghanistan. Winning over sceptical and often scared people requires the counterinsurgent to convince the populace that the counterinsurgent is going to win. Very few people want to support the side they believe is going to lose. General Petraeus stepped in as the new Commander in Afghanistan in the summer of 2010, and seemed to do just as he earlier did in Iraq: conducting aggressive tactics to force the enemy to either come to the negotiation table or face total defeat. But consolidating a possible victory in Afghanistan will require an effective Afghan government and much needed development reforms. Here it is important not to confuse so-called *consolidation mechanisms* with defeat mechanisms. And we should also accept it as a fact in all kinds of civil war that violence and the killing of civilians are inherent parts of insurgencies.

In the ongoing U.S. military debate, one of the topics discussed has been whether historical experiences prove that insurgency is first and foremost a political problem. As mentioned earlier, some writers define the term insurgency as an organised effort aimed at overthrowing a constituted government.⁵⁹⁴ However, most of today's insurgencies both have a political component and also exploit core grievances and perceived illegitimacy. But normally a well-led insurgency has both a political and a military side. It is a question of understanding the actual (local, regional) situation and then striking a workable balance in the use of the different tools available to the counterinsurgent forces – used against the 'right targets'. An insurgency is always an attempt to change the regime (institutions); normally this also includes a strong wish to change the official ideology or political philosophy.

In terms of social organisation, this is often literally a fight for life or death, not merely a question of negotiating power sharing agreements. Could there be a difference here between a rebellion and an insurgency? A traditional rebellion is an organised resistance or opposition to a government (or other authority), but the rebellion itself does not normally seek another form of government or authority.

⁵⁹⁴ See the interesting debate by 'COIN-istas' on the American site *Small Wars Journal*, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/>.

Because of this, the authorities in a threatened country may discuss the underlying political and socioeconomic causes of dissent with the rebels, and then institute appropriate reforms.

It has historically proven very difficult to do the same with a dedicated insurgent bent on overthrowing a constituted government (and all that comes with it in terms of the political system, economic philosophy and ideology). The true insurgent (or revolutionary) does not seek compromise – he wants to win. Probably we today can sense this thinking among the cadres of, for example, al-Qaeda and in parts of the Taliban movement.⁵⁹⁵

4.4.2. The early development in Iraq – 2003–2005

After only minor Iraqi resistance, Baghdad fell on 9 April 2003. The *Sunnis* of the divided Iraqi population, in particular, considered that the army had betrayed them and thus felt humiliated. Almost overnight, the world as they knew it had been turned upside down. Despite this, it would take almost a year before resistance to the American occupation of Iraq would result in a well-organised and openly armed insurgency.⁵⁹⁶ As mentioned earlier, the Americans and their allies got into trouble early in Iraq. In the late fall of 2003, the different insurgency groupings had already become a security problem, but nobody talked much officially about the new development. The Allied Coalition's tactics for security handling were not improved, and the local/regional intelligence picture was still under development. And as Iraq is a very divided country, we saw the situation develop in different ways in different parts of the country.

To better understand the need for a radical re-evaluation of the organisation and training of Western forces for war in a Third World environment, we should look at the changes implemented by the Americans between 2001 and 2010.

A COIN campaign had to be constructed and executed, but in early 2004, this had not as yet been done. The objective of such a campaign is often termed 'winning the hearts and minds' of the population, and its logic is simple. Insurgents cannot operate efficiently without civilians learning something about their location and identities, i.e. recruiting, raising funds and preparing weapons and explosives all entail observable actions. According to COIN theory, the more effective the government is at providing services to civilians, the more likely it is that they will prefer the government over the insurgents. In turn, the population will provide the government with a steady stream of tactically useful information, such as calls to anonymous tip lines about the location of weapons caches, that the government can use not only to defeat the insurgents

⁵⁹⁵ See an evaluation posted on the Internet: '*Thoughts on Intervening in Protracted Insurgencies: When and How?*' <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/6891151/Insurgency%20Intervention.ppt#256>.

⁵⁹⁶ In April 2004, battles broke out between American forces and the Shiite Muslim Mahdi militia. At almost the same time, forces from the U.S. Marines carried out an abortive operation to take control over the Sunni Muslim city of Fallujah.

but also to prevent their reappearance. But did that development-based strategy work in Iraq? It did not in the period from late 2003 to 2006.⁵⁹⁷

One of the more interesting books written about this divided country concerning this early period of the long war in Iraq is Wayne H. Bowen's *Undoing Saddam: From Occupation to Sovereignty in Northern Iraq*.⁵⁹⁸ The book is a highly readable critical description of the early Coalition efforts to engage in so-called nation building in the Kurd-dominated provinces in Northern Iraq. He writes about ethnic conflict, terrorist attacks and some of the strategically or tactically unwise actions of the Coalition Provisional Authority and U.S. forces in this important early period of the Iraqi civil war post the Saddam regime. I think David Kilcullen has made an important point about the driving forces that lead young men to join local insurgencies. In the Preface of his book *The Accidental Guerrilla*, he wrote: 'The local fighter is (...) often an accidental guerrilla – fighting us because we are in his space, not because he wishes to invade us. He follows folk-ways of tribal warfare that are mediated by traditional cultural norms, values, and perceptual lenses; he is engaged (from his point of view) in "resistance" rather than "insurgency" and fights principally to be left alone.' And as long as he fights in his own area, the insurgent is a dangerous opponent.⁵⁹⁹

I have chosen to include part of a text written by the *Guardian* journalist Rory McCarthy (2004), describing the motivations some of the Iraqis he interviewed gave for becoming fighters against the Coalition. The edited text below should be self-explanatory and should shed light on at least some of the driving forces behind the growing insurgency in Iraq following the 2003 Coalition invasion:

(...) He did not fight when America invaded last year, but did not welcome the war either. "I didn't fight. I stayed at home. If you fight for Saddam and he wins, you are not winning. If America wins, you are not winning," he said. "They freed us from evil but they brought more evil to the country."

As the weeks passed, the clerics in the mosques instructed him and his friends to take up arms. "We fight the Americans because they are non-believers and they are coming to fight Islam, calling us terrorists," he said.

597 The American professor A. H. Cordesman, CSIC, covered the development of the war in Iraq in a series of reports between 2003 and 2009. For this early period, see, for example, Anthony H. Cordesman, with the assistance of Eric M. Brewer and Sara Bjerg Moller, 'Iraq's Evolving Insurgency and the Risk of Civil War', Working Draft, Revised: April 26, 2006, *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/060424_iraqinsurgpt.pdf.

598 Wayne H. Bowen's book *Undoing Saddam: From Occupation to Sovereignty in Northern Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2008), pp. 103–166, 177–181.

599 Kilcullen (2009), p. xiv.

The real resistance

Theirs is a story rarely told, a brief insight into the lives of thousands of Iraqi men who have spent the past 18 months fighting a costly guerrilla war against the most powerful army in the world.

Their motivations vary: some are undoubtedly from Saddam's military and intelligence apparatus, others fight to defend tribal or nationalistic honour, but alongside them a much more extreme Islamic militancy has emerged.

The US military has in the past dismissed the fighters as "anti-Iraqi forces" and "terrorists". Several US commanders announced that the back of the insurgency has been broken by the assault on Falluja.

However, Lieutenant General Lance Smith, deputy chief of US central command, told Reuters yesterday: "[The insurgency] is becoming more effective. They may use doorbells today to blow things up. They may use remote controls from toys tomorrow. And as we adapt, they adapt." The Iraqi fighters, who describe themselves as the "mujahideen", the holy warriors, or for the more secular, the "muqawama", the resistance, insist there is more fighting still to come. (...)

(Abu Mojahed) said his targets were the US military and "those supporting them", and that his men had attacked helicopters, tanks and individual soldiers, although he would not describe specific incidents. Unlike other more secular elements in the insurgency, the Salafis have their own agenda for the future of their country, shaped in a language of anger, revenge and rigid Islamic conservatism.

"We fight for our land, against those who are fighting Islam, for our country and for our women," he said.

(...)

From bad to worse

"You could say we were hypnotised by it," he said. Like others, he was grateful that the war brought the dictator's fall, but was angered by the American occupation that followed. "Thanks to the Americans for getting rid of Saddam, but no thanks for still staying in Iraq," he said.

"The idea of jihad came step by step as I watched what the Americans were doing to our country," he said. "In the beginning we were only cousins and friends, and later other people came to join us, people who were presented to us by the sheikhs." (...)

He fought in Falluja in April, during the first attempt by the US Marines to take control of the city. "There are many people who have died in my group," he said. "But only one of them really broke my heart. He was a cousin of mine, but it was written for him to be in heaven." The emir, or commander, of their group was also killed in Falluja in April. "He was a friend from childhood," Abu Rahman said.

Because of the intense fighting, it took five days to retrieve the emir's body. "He was always telling us to pray for him to die that day. He would fight with us, not like those leaders who stay in the back. We made a celebration like a wedding party when he died."

Abu Rahman said that although he belonged to a tribe, his motivation was religious, not tribal. He also said some Iraqi police and soldiers should not be touched, and were "serving for the good of their country". Foreign contractors should not be targeted either, he said.

In the end, he said, it was the lack of reconstruction and the continued occupation that had left people so embittered.

*"We don't want them, thanks. We can rebuild our own country; we have a long and ancient history. All we are asking is for them to pull out."*⁶⁰⁰

As early as the summer of 2003, the American coalition had seen a number of terrorist attacks directed at the coalition forces. In retrospect, one can obviously ask oneself whether the ongoing insurgency would have broken out if the Americans had prioritised a free election at an early stage, had not immediately *disbanded* the Iraqi military forces and had prioritised the rapid restoration of water and electricity supplies during this first year. Among the most important post-invasion errors made by the Bush administration were the decisions after the fall of the Saddam regime to not immediately reinforce the occupation forces with two additional divisions. Had this been done they could have helped keep the lid on the insurgency (including keeping law and

⁶⁰⁰ Rory McCarthy, 'For faith and country: insurgents fight on. As a US general conceded Iraqi cells are getting more effective, Rory McCarthy speaks to two fighters', *The Guardian*, 16 December 2004.

order, which broke down, especially in Baghdad). But the most serious blunder was the orders issued by the head of the American (Coalition) occupation, L. Paul Bremer III, to disband the old Iraqi army, including banning thousands of Baath Party officials from returning to their government jobs. This had grave consequences. Many of these now jobless former soldiers and officials became cadres in the growing insurgencies. In the autumn of 2003, it became more and more obvious that the Americans had an insufficient number of troops to exercise full control over large parts of Iraq – the area north and west of Baghdad in particular.⁶⁰¹

In the spring of 2003, General James Mattis had led the U.S. 1st Marine Division into Iraq to start the war. As his division prepared to ship out, Mattis called in experts in Arab culture to lead cultural sensitivity classes. When Mattis led the 1st Marine Division into Iraq in early 2003, he had insisted that everyone shave as military decorum dictates (and because intelligence reports suggested Iraqis might try to pass themselves off as U.S. forces). That was the traditional way to do warfare, U.S. style. Now just months later, General Mattis wanted his men to grow moustaches to look more like the people they were working with.⁶⁰² What had changed?

In the winter of 2003-04, the U.S. military and the Coalition needed to take back control over the important Al-Anbar province and turned to the U.S. Marines and General James Mattis to lead the effort. When Mattis had led the first attack on Iraq in 2003, his focus was on the use of so-called quick *overwhelming force*. (When he judged that a colonel was not taking enough risks, he took the extraordinary step of relieving him of his command.) Now he was asking his soldiers for the same risk-taking but at a different pace. In Al-Anbar province, the Americans saw some of the hardest fighting of the entire Iraq campaign, against a growing insurgency in which the enemy used roadside bombs and often also Iraqi National Guard and police uniforms. The campaign in Al-Anbar would test and shape Mattis' views about risk, the limits of military force and the necessity of adapting quickly. The strategy he developed for Al-Anbar province would require two things: lethal force and an intellectual theory of restraint.⁶⁰³ And very important: once enemies were identified, they were to be killed as precisely and swiftly

601 John Ehrenberg, J. Patrice McSherry, José Ramón Sánchez and Caroleen Marji Sayej (editors), *The Iraq Papers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). In Part One of this book, especially in Chapters 4 and 5, the authors present many important documents and articles published about the liberation of Iraq, the occupation and the growing insurgency, pp. 175-249.

602 Journalist Thomas E. Ricks describes this change in his book *Fiasco* (Ricks, (2006)). Marines were, for example, taught to remove their sunglasses when talking to Iraqis, and when searching a home, to respect the head of the household by seeking his permission to enter rather than 'roughing him up'. Ricks's book was based on hundreds of interviews and more than 37,000 pages of documents, and officers and officials at the White House and Pentagon were interviewed. See also a review of Ricks' book: Michiko Kakutani, 'From Planning to Warfare to Occupation, How Iraq Went Wrong', *The New York Times*, July 25, 2006, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/25/books/25kaku.html?_r=1&pagewanted=print. http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/25/books/25kaku.html?_r=1&pagewanted=print.

603 Ricks (2006), p. 265, p. 311, pp. 319-20. General Mattis wrote to his troops before they launched their campaign into Al-Anbar, and told them their primary order was 'First do no harm.' In dealing with insurgents Mattis asked his soldiers to strive to delay hostilities. 'Stay friendly one more month, one more week, one more minute.' Through restraint and enemy over-reach, the U.S. Marines would slowly gain credibility with the locals.

as possible. To emphasise the special treatment for this intractable constituency, Mattis changed the rules of engagement (ROE) before going into Fallujah from 'capture or kill' to 'kill or capture'. He put the emphasis on fighting the insurgents to make it clear to the aggressive Marines that in the battle for Al-Anbar they were being asked to apply their offensive capacity more precisely, not give it up.⁶⁰⁴ The following quote, taken from an article by John Dickerson gives at least one perspective on how this U.S. general approached this difficult situation using modern theories/concepts about fighting insurgents:

(General) Mattis was at Camp Pendleton just north of San Diego when the call came to return to Al-Anbar. His first response was to turn to his library for a solution to the changing war in Iraq. What at first seems new becomes familiar by historical analogy. Instead of starting from scratch, he looked to apply the lessons of previous counterinsurgencies in Algeria, the Philippines, and Vietnam.

Among his key texts was the classic Marines 1940 Small Wars Manual which outlined principles for identifying and fighting an insurgency. The lessons in the reading were clear: The public was the prize. Win over the public and the insurgency loses its base of support. At the time, U.S. forces were locked in a brutal struggle that was alienating Iraqis. The more doors that were kicked in and houses reduced to rubble, the stronger the insurgency grew.

Mattis assigned his officers hundreds of pages of reading, which included news articles about mistakes the Israelis had committed in Lebanon, several accounts of shootings of civilians in Iraq, and T.E. Lawrence's "27 Articles" about fighting in Arabia. The readings offered two lessons about risk. The first was that the risks of using too much force were greater sometimes than using no force at all. In a struggle to win over the population, collateral damage creates new insurgents with lifetime grudges, creates sympathy in the local population for anyone wanting to hurt Americans, and limits the useful flow of intelligence from potentially sympathetic Iraqis. The second lesson was that in a war for the population, helping restore electrical power or even handing out water can lower the risk of violence more in the long run than rolling tanks down the street.⁶⁰⁵

604 Ricks (2006), pp. 398-405.

605 John Dickerson, 'Risk. A Marine General at War. Gen. James Mattis thinks about when, and how, American troops should put their lives at risk', *Slate*, http://www.slate.com/articles/life/risk/2010/04/a_marine_general_at_war.html.

An important section of Dickerson's evaluation is the following description of how the political leaders in Washington D.C. reacted to the *first battle* for Fallujah (a battle that did *not* succeed):

Mattis believes that some military and political leaders strayed from this fundamental fact in confronting the Iraqi insurgency. They assumed the new threat could be fought with modern approaches that were not as grueling and painstaking as the counterinsurgency. "The historic lessons were there," he says of the Al-Anbar campaign. "We just tried to apply them to the current situation rather than ignore them and go with the American way of war, which is: Let's hold our breath and pick up our laundry on Wednesday, get a haircut Friday, and get the tanks lined up to attack similar weapons systems.

*The public and politicians favor minimal casualties; less collateral damage; and short, winnable wars. This leads to a focus on technological solutions and away from seeing war as a long slog determined by human qualities of intuition, courage, and bravery. "A major attraction of [technology-dependent] war is that few Americans will be at risk," writes military analyst Colin Gray. "The problem is that such a technology-dependent, standoff style is not appropriate for the conduct of war against irregulars."*⁶⁰⁶

Thomas E. Ricks argues in one place in his book *Gamble* that the invasion of Iraq 'was based on perhaps the worst war plan in American history'. Obviously, both the politicians in the Bush administration and their generals had to do something to sort out the growing mess in Iraq.⁶⁰⁷

The attack in the spring of 2003 was based on an incomplete campaign plan that 'confused removing Iraq's regime with the far more difficult task of changing the entire country'. And most important: the result of going in with too few troops and no larger strategic plan. Ricks writes in his book *Fiasco* 'that the U.S. effort resembled a banana republic coup d'état more than a full-scale war plan that reflected the ambition of a great power to alter the politics of a crucial region of the world'.⁶⁰⁸

By 2005, the losses among Coalition soldiers and especially among Iraqi civilians were rising fast – something had to be done. The Bush administration slowly understood that the war was not over, but in early 2005 they still had no answer.

⁶⁰⁶ Dickerson (2006).

⁶⁰⁷ Thomas E. Ricks, *The Gamble. General Petraeus and the Untold Story of the American Surge in Iraq, 2006-2008* (Penguin Books, 2009), see especially Chapter 4, A Strategy is Born, pp. 106-148 and pp. 160-199. In this book Ricks tells the story about the American 'turning operation' in Iraq. The book is a follow up on his book *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2003-2005* (Ricks (2006)).

⁶⁰⁸ Ricks (2006). See the description of the war plans, pp. 109-111 and about the start of the insurgencies, pp. 158-172.

According to most experts' views on guerrilla warfare, this kind of warfare is extremely resistant to conventional military force, particularly in its early stages, because the massed military systems that dominate mainstream operations cannot engage the guerrilla forces effectively. Even if so-called collateral damage were not an issue (but it almost always is!), the mass annihilation or deportation of a population does not, in itself, guarantee the elimination of the guerrilla force. Theoretically, as long as a single survivor knows the location of the insurgent's weapons caches, the guerrilla movement can revive itself.

Different kinds of forces used in connection with insurgency and COIN

In modern military thinking, a second, parallel military structure has emerged: counterinsurgency forces. The basic units carrying out these counterinsurgency missions normally have two components:

1. Special Forces are highly trained and motivated light infantry, intended to carry out the primary missions.
2. There are more conventional forces, either directly attached to the primary group or available on request, designed to multiply the force when it becomes engaged.

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, lightly equipped counterinsurgency forces may try to overcome the lack of 'surgical precision' they normally have compared to (heavy) conventional forces. For example, we may see very close coordination between SoF and air power, as during the attacks on the Taliban regime in late 2001 and early 2002. Special Forces may use a different approach to warfighting, and they are supposed to be able to carry out a number of functions. Some of them are: ⁶⁰⁹

1. Collect intelligence on insurgent/guerrilla concentrations to better understand the ongoing insurgency, and, if possible, for use against the insurgents' larger formations.
2. Counterinsurgency forces (like Special Forces and specially trained police units) are used to recruit and train indigenous forces to engage guerrilla forces.

609 Military details are described in the following updated U.S. Service Publications:

- a. U. S. Air Force, *Irregular Warfare*, Air Force Doctrine Document AFDD 2-3, 1 August 2007.
- b. U. S. Air Force, *Foreign Internal Defense*, Air Force Doctrine Document AFDD 2-3.1, 15 September 2007.
- c. U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Civil Affairs Operations*, Field Manual FM 3-05.40 (FM 41-10), September 2006.
- d. U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Special Forces Unconventional Warfare Operations*, Field Manual FM 3-05.201, September 2008.
- e. U. S. Department of the Army, *Special Forces Foreign Internal Defense Operations*, Field Manual FM 3-05.202, February 2007.

Information is also available in the following U.S. Strategic Guidance and Policy documents:

- a. U. S. Department of Defense, Directive Number 3000.5 (DODD 3000.05), *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*, November 28, 2005.
- b. U. S. Department of Defense, Directive Number 3000.07 (DODD 3000.07), *Irregular Warfare*, December 1, 2008.

3. Organise operations designed to drive a wedge between the insurgents and the population.
4. Engage guerrilla forces on a symmetrical level, while having access to technologically superior force as needed.

In the early period of the 'COIN war' in Iraq, lack of good intelligence was a problem. Imprecise intelligence can of course be compensated for with large-scale operations and massive firepower. If you do not have precise knowledge of the location of insurgents, you may try to use large, mobile formations to move in and (temporarily) occupy a region in an attempt to identify, engage and eventually destroy local insurgent/guerrilla formations. This creates a new problem. The conventionally trained infantry will use battalions to search for insurgent squads. In this case, massive superiority in forces will not necessarily translate to the desired strategic effects. The insurgents, disaggregated into the smallest practicable units, can probably not be *strategically* crushed. The nature of these kinds of military operations may also create local political problems if they get out of control.⁶¹⁰

Operations of this sort are normally not dominated by specialised counterinsurgency units, which were at least trained in discriminatory warfare (i.e. trying to distinguish guerrillas from the neutral or friendly population). Due to the nature of operations in Iraq, Western regular troops were used to seize an area and search for the guerrillas. Since such areas were heavily populated and since Western troops had little ability to discriminate, these kinds of operations frequently resulted in mishandling of the local civilian population, created hostility against the Western forces and created sympathy for the insurgents. And this is important: If the military leadership were to later bring in specially trained counterinsurgency troops into the same area, they would be already handicapped in their efforts to 'pacify the region'. This description does not of course tell the whole story of the period from 2003 to 2005 in Iraq, but the lack of COIN-trained troops had consequences. Together these points describe the essential problem of counterinsurgency.

At its lowest level, before it evolves into a stage where it has complex logistical requirements that are supplied from secure areas in and out of the country, guerrilla war is political rather than military in nature. The paradox of insurgency war is that it is easier to defeat the insurgency militarily once it has developed proper guerrilla forces and these have matured into a more advanced, and therefore more vulnerable, entity. However, by the time these forces have evolved, it is likely that the *political situation* in the country will have deteriorated to the point that even heavy attrition among the insurgent troops will be overcome through *massive* recruitment within the disaffected

⁶¹⁰ Ricks (2006), pp. 158-188. This very critical description of the U.S. performance in the spring and summer of 2003 gives the reader an overview.

population. In other words: The loss of the *political war* makes a war of attrition difficult and lengthy. As both the Soviets and U.S. have earlier discovered, the ability of the foreign force to absorb casualties normally *is inferior* to that of the local insurgent forces if the indigenous force is politically or religiously motivated.

Since the process of suppressing early-stage guerrilla movements almost guarantees the generation of massive political hostility, the later war, which should be favourable to the counterinsurgency forces, turns out to be impossible to win. The insurgents can overcome even extreme attrition ratios through recruitment, as we saw during the different phases of the (three) Vietnam wars (1946–1975).

In this context, we should look at the work done on a new U.S. COIN doctrine (2006), FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, under the leadership of General David Petraeus. As written in the Preface to the 2006 doctrine:

This field manual/Marine Corps warfighting publication establishes doctrine (fundamental principles) for military operations in a counterinsurgency (COIN) environment. It is based on lessons learned from previous counterinsurgencies and contemporary operations. It is also based on existing interim doctrine and doctrine recently developed.

*Counterinsurgency operations generally have been neglected in broader American military doctrine and national security policies since the end of the Vietnam War over 30 years ago. This manual is designed to reverse that trend. It is also designed to merge traditional approaches to COIN with the realities of a new international arena shaped by technological advances, globalization, and the spread of extremist ideologies – some of them claiming the authority of a religious faith.*⁶¹¹

And as part of the Preface to the December 2006 manual, only three books/texts were mentioned in an acknowledgement. They were:

1. David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1964. Reproduced with permission of Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., Westport, CT.
2. Dan Baum, 'Battle Lessons, What the Generals Don't Know', *The New Yorker*, 17 January 2005. Reproduced with permission of Dan Baum.
3. Sir Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam*, 1966. (Reprinted by Hailer Publishing).⁶¹²

⁶¹¹ FM 3-24 (2006), p. vii.

⁶¹² FM 3-24 (2006), p. viii.

The three texts were of course not the only sources used, but putting them in the Preface gives a signal to the readers about the new intentions of the manual. Another signal of the new understanding of the winds of change: the American political and military leadership understood that something had to be done. The new signals given in the 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (QDR) can be looked upon as a first step in a change in the direction of the use of U.S. military power.⁶¹³ The report writers made it clear that the Department of Defense (DoD) was committed to transforming itself. The QDR-Report signalled that DoD would continue to transform its regular or conventional warfare capabilities, and the *Report* also made it clear that DoD must 'give greater emphasis to the war on terror and irregular warfare activities, including long-duration unconventional warfare, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and military support for stabilization and reconstruction efforts'.⁶¹⁴ This was a new signal, and stood in contrast to the ten plus years before the new QDR. The strong technological focus of the earlier years was muted, and terms/abbreviations like RMA, NCW, EBO and EBAO lost the 'leading role' they had had in official writing before 2006.

The new trend was partly the result of the developments in the ongoing wars in Afghanistan, but especially in Iraq from 2003-2006. We saw a greatly improved understanding in important circles that so-called humanitarian, peacekeeping or peace enforcement missions can quickly deteriorate into a conflict with *insurgency* elements. If this happens, the nature of the military mission is transformed dramatically. Not only do the manpower and equipment requirements go up substantially, but also the conditions for mission success change. To meet these challenges, the U.S. armed forces have produced an impressive new range of doctrinal documents after 2006 on the tactical, operational and strategic level, with consequences for NATO as well. The training of troops and the education of officers have also changed. Today COIN has become a very familiar word, something it hardly was in 2001.

This development has also resulted in a very strong increase in the number of articles and books published about all the different forms of insurgencies or irregular warfare. As regards the resolution of these types of conflicts, four important matters that may determine the long-term outcome are often discussed:

1. The nature of the victory (i.e. the extent and type of the victory, whether it was a 'total victory', and similar factors count);
2. The character of the winner (How does the winner communicate with the loser? How do they behave and what is their attitude towards the losers? The ability

613 U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (QDR), 6 February 2006, <http://www.defense.gov/qdr/report/report20060203.pdf>, pp. 3–4.

614 QDR (2006), *ibid.*

to take action in the local community to look after security in general, being respected as ‘hard but fair’, etc.);

3. The nature of the defeat (loss of core military capacities, no possibility of continuing the war, etc.);
4. The character of the losing side (Did they really lose [in their own eyes])? Do they see themselves as losers? Do they accept a defeat and get on with things – or do they want revenge?).

But such a short description is of course only a way of organising our thoughts – nothing more. And as written earlier, Iraq has probably been the most important area for the new development of U.S. military theory and especially for the practical testing of these theories. Although insurgent groups began the ‘continuation war’ in Iraq in the summer of 2003, this is by no means a unique war. As previously demonstrated, there have been more than 80 major wars since 1945 and the majority of these have been of the nature of civil war, including guerrilla warfare. For the same reason, there is extensive literature available for those who would like to study how these earlier wars were conducted. The quality of the literature obviously varies, but there is always something to be learned by studying earlier conflicts. Below I will go through some of the terms and problems connected with insurgency and COIN.

What use are *routine patrols*? Adherents of the use of patrols often emphasise that there are many areas where patrolling is effective, particularly as a ‘confidence building measure’ and also in connection with local intelligence gathering. But the picture is not so entirely positive if we study many insurgency conflicts. We have often seen that the soldiers do not understand why they are risking their lives, and they have not been given any clear mission that forms part of any *executive strategy* for the war. Although it has been stated that this is a way in which to demonstrate one’s presence (‘showing the flag’), the impact of patrols like this has been debated. If this is to function as intended, it is necessary to operate according to a clearly formulated mission, and these activities must be effectively led and controlled by the local military leadership.⁶¹⁵

Clean-up operations and similar activities carried out on a large scale, what the Americans in Vietnam called *large-scale sweeps*, have rarely led to lasting progress for

615 Kilcullen (2007), about patrolling in urban areas:

Multiple small patrols (4 to 6 man teams) working 1-200 yards apart, in one area.

- Should be close enough to “pile on” in the event of an incident, distant enough not to become one target.
- Each is too small to be a valuable target, and enemy is never sure where all teams are – this has a deterrent effect.
- Overt and covert OPs, raid towers, sniper pairs provide persistent overwatch.
- In event of an incident, on-scene commander establishes incident control point and coordinates deployment of other teams.
- Satellite patrols orbit larger teams and static sites.
- Vehicles provide overwatch, base of fire, carry heavy equipment, provide snap VCPs or outer cordon, or used for deception.
- Mix of foot and vehicle patrols keeps enemy off-balance.

the security forces. It is obvious that the security forces should attack the insurgents when things look promising, but normally this type of raid only leads to a few of the adversary's fighters being taken out. It is normally more cost-effective to try to capture the insurgents' *base areas* – and then 'permanently' control these areas. The insurgents cannot then retake base areas in a week or two, and use the areas as if nothing had happened.

The French, and later the Americans, also expended great resources on operations directed at the opponent's units, and they often managed to temporarily capture the insurgents' base areas. But as they usually left these areas after some time, they gained little reward for their efforts.

Isolated outposts or (many) *small garrisons* just sitting and waiting for the insurgents to 'come back and get them' have a very disruptive effect on soldier morale, and are normally tactically unwise. If a system of outposts is to work, it must be used in connection with the safeguarding of communication lines – and it must be easy to reinforce the outpost if there is a threat of attack. Here, it is also important what kinds of forces are used to man the outposts/garrisons. If they are manned by locally recruited forces, this affects the situation. If the insurgents are forced to use their resources to fight their own tribesmen/nationals, the war will take on a different character than if the insurgents are fighting against a foreign occupying force.

Nor should any of the activities mentioned above be used to establish so-called *front lines*. The conventional types of military front lines normally do not exist in this form of warfare. On the other hand, the active use of military posts and control with geographical areas can provide a positive result on some occasions, as this may contribute to denying the insurgents the opportunity of using certain areas and routes for an advance. In doing so, the insurgents may be channelled, or forced, to go through the areas that the government forces want them to use, where, for example, the government's Special Forces or infantry battalions are active.⁶¹⁶

If a threatened regime, possibly with support from the West, is to have any hope of winning against a well-organised insurgent movement, it must be equally well organised and have the political will to keep going for a long time. Without such a political will, including being able to provide the security forces involved with the political and material support they need, it is likely that the ruling regime (or more tangibly: the regimes that have now been established in both Afghanistan and Iraq) will ultimately fall.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁶ The following U.S. documents describe different kinds of warfare, and are available on the Internet. These are only examples from different levels – not a complete listing: U. S. Department of the Army, *Training for Full Spectrum Operations*, Field Manual FM 7-0, December 2008, JP 3-24 (October 2009). U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *The Operations Process*, Field Manual FM 5-0, March 2010. U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Command and Control for Joint Air Operations*, Joint Publication JP 3-30, January 2010.

⁶¹⁷ With reference to Martin van Creveld: if one is to win against a low technology adversary who fights on other terms, one must, according to the same author, organise oneself accordingly and fight on the same terms. See van Creveld (1991).

A regime under attack (including its eventual Western supporters) must, according to most COIN theory, establish a credible strategy for the coming operations as early as possible. At the beginning of a growing insurgency it is also very important that both the top political and military leaders work out what type of warfare they will be facing and they should not believe that they will encounter any other type of warfare *than that which is most likely*. This may be difficult, as another historical unfortunate tendency has been to assert that the insurgency ‘will soon be overcome’, i.e. trying to turn the conflict into something that ‘will solve itself’.

If the political deterioration in a country has gone so far that the enemies of the ruling regime have been able to develop a growing insurgency, the regime must fight it to survive. If the regime is unable to analyse the situation and decide on reforms and political and military mobilisation, it will probably fall. And if the regime does not have any real popular support, it probably will fall anyway! And according to Clausewitz this is the most important strategic task that a threatened political and military leadership should cope with, and also the most demanding.⁶¹⁸

The last point obviously applies with regard to the waging of all forms of war, but, as the United States and a few other states have normally preferred to wage conventional war, they will probably also continue to try to do so in the years ahead. Another unfortunate trend is that they will attempt, as far as possible, to ‘force’ the enemy into their own preferred form of war, instead of accepting that the enemy has probably not intended taking them on with conventional forces.

4.5. Studies of two wars with different results

4.5.1. Introduction

The two wars studied here are the war conducted in Malaya by UK forces between 1948 and 1960 and the Vietnam War during the period of heavy American involvement between 1965 and 1972.

In 2001, the U.S. military, with the exception of the Special Forces (SoF) and some intelligence units, was mainly trained for fighting other states’ conventional forces. But 9/11 and the American reaction to this attack changed this. Within a relatively short time, the Americans with some allied support were involved in two long-lasting wars, Afghanistan and Iraq. And as discussed earlier, after 2005 it had become obvious to almost every participant, including the Bush administration, that the war in Iraq was not going well, and that even the war in Afghanistan had its problems. From 2004, we saw a growing stream of articles and later also books discussing the mounting problems. Because of

⁶¹⁸ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (London: David Campbell Publishers Ltd., Everyman’s Library, 1993, originally published in German 1832). See the Third book ‘On Strategy in General’, pp. 207–214.

the negative development, more money became available for research. An important part of this ‘intellectual surge’ was studies of almost forgotten U.S. experiences from earlier wars, but especially from Vietnam. (The new interest was a fact from late 2003.)

Below I will look into some of the experiences from earlier protracted ‘revolutionary wars’, and discuss some of the problems encountered in selected books, articles and documents.

Two modern attempts describing how to combat well-organised insurgent forces have often been dealt with in the existing literature. These are the protracted British war against primarily Chinese insurgents in Malaysia in the period from 1946 to about 1960 and, before that, France’s colonial war in Indochina in the period from 1946 to 1954. But most books and other texts are written about the ‘continuation war’ in South Vietnam, from about 1958 to 1973. It is still debated why the USA entered the war in South Vietnam. Important factors included the Maoist takeover of China, which had been an Asian ally of the U.S., and North Korea’s attack on South Korea (the Korean War).

4.5.2. The Vietnam War

As seen from an American perspective, the Vietnam War lasted from 1965 to 1973, but this is of course only part of the story. Things were not, however, to go well in Vietnam where, first, France and, later, the United States were to prove to be less successful in their attempts at learning how to emerge victorious from a lengthy ‘counterinsurgency’.⁶¹⁹

To understand this war, it is important to remember that the war between the colonial power France and the Việt-Minh (1945-1954) was the starting point – a war that the Americans did not directly intervene in. (France as a member of NATO got military support from the USA, mostly through the so-called Marshall Help.) After the Second World War, the USA was officially against the colonialism that both the United Kingdom and France had practised before the war. And as Jeffrey Record quoted from the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, 26 May 1954: ‘Indochina is devoid of decisive military objectives and the allocation of more than token US armed forces in Indochina would be a serious diversion of limited US capabilities.’⁶²⁰

So why did the USA become involved? The Cold War, the fear of Communism and especially the Korean War became important factors behind the later developments in Vietnam. I think the following quote from an article written by the

619 Phillip B. Davidson, *Vietnam at War: The History 1946–1975* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1988). The book provides a study of the about 30-year long period of war in Vietnam.

620 JCS Memorandum to the Secretary of Defense. Reprinted in George C. Herring (ed.), *The Pentagon Papers, Abridged Edition* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), p. 16. From Jeffrey Record, ‘Vietnam in Retrospect: Could We Have Won?’ *Parameters*, Winter 1996–1997, pp. 51–65.

American Stephen Biddle in *Foreign Affairs* may be a good starting point for this description of the Vietnam War experiences:

From the outset of the Vietnam War, efforts to coax the Vietnamese people away from the communists and into supporting the Washington-backed government in Saigon were a crucial part of U.S. policy. "The task," President Lyndon Johnson said in 1965, "is nothing less than to enrich the hope and existence of more than a hundred million people." The United States transferred \$2.9 billion in economic aid to South Vietnam between 1961 and 1968 alone. (...). By then, thanks to U.S. pressure, elections at all levels of government had taken place throughout South Vietnam. The plan was to undermine the Vietcong by improving the lives of the South Vietnamese through economic development and political reform.

Of course, the counterinsurgency was about more than winning hearts and minds; it was also about fighting. At first, following Congress' decision in 1965 to commit large-scale U.S. ground forces, Americans did much of South Vietnam's defensive work. But in 1969, the Nixon administration changed course and decided to transfer responsibility for ground combat to the South Vietnamese. "We have adopted a plan which we have worked out in cooperation with the South Vietnamese for the complete withdrawal of all U.S. combat ground forces and their replacement by South Vietnamese forces on an orderly scheduled timetable," Richard Nixon declared. "This withdrawal will be made from strength and not from weakness. As South Vietnamese forces become stronger, the rate of American withdrawal can become greater." The strategy, which became known as "Vietnamization," led to the complete withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from Vietnam by 1973. After that, South Vietnamese troops who had been trained and equipped by the Americans conducted all ground operations.⁶²¹

The debate over the Vietnam War has made ordinary discourse about it difficult in the USA. If we look at the huge volume of published literature about this war, it seems that people can hardly discuss the war without stepping into some kind of controversy. The thinking about this war is often a function of the person's political views/biases rather than based on the factual information available. Particularly apparent in much of the writing is the unwillingness among those who served in the government and the military to admit error. Because of this, much of what is written about the war is more in the nature of apology than clear analysis. (See the presentation of important American sources in Chapter 1.)

⁶²¹ Stephen Biddle, 'Seeing Baghdad, Thinking Saigon', *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2006.

But if we look at some of the most important writers on the Communist/North Vietnamese side, we will also see differences in views. Writers like Mao Zedong, Vo Nguyen Giap and Trường Chinh (1907–1988) all wrote about the need for revolutionaries to move from guerrilla actions to what in Maoist terms is called ‘mobile warfare’. Mobile, or conventional, warfare is described as a very important/necessary element for victory. With reference to my earlier presentation of Mao, he wrote that regular forces were of ‘primary importance’, and he wrote that mobile warfare was ‘essential’. He called guerrilla warfare ‘supplementary’ because it could not ‘shoulder the main responsibility in deciding the outcome’.⁶²² Regarding the progression of the Vietnamese so-called ‘Resistance War’, General Giap wrote about how guerrilla warfare would develop into ‘mobile warfare combined with partial entrenched camp warfare’.⁶²³ The important North Vietnamese ‘ideologue’ Trường Chinh wrote in one of his books that the final stage of revolutionary conflict, which he named ‘positional warfare’, would play ‘a paramount role’ in the final victory. In theoretical terms, the conventional attacks by North Vietnamese regular divisions in 1975 represented the revolution moving into its ‘final stage’.⁶²⁴

More important than evidence of the close fit between revolutionary war theory and the war’s development through three stages was the revolutionaries’ belief that a conventional military attack would finish off the enemy. This was due to the revolutionary nature of Communist goals in Vietnam. According to General Giap, ‘The aim was to realize the political goals of the national democratic revolution as in China, to recover national independence and bring land to the peasants, creating conditions for the advance of the revolution of our country to socialism.’⁶²⁵ And, of course, the goal was to achieve control throughout the entire area of Vietnam, not only in the liberated North Vietnam. According to their own writings, the North Vietnamese Communist leadership would consistently seek to overthrow any government standing in its way: including the American-supported regimes in South Vietnam that followed after the fall in a military *coup* of president Ngô Đình Diệm (1963). The Communist leaders in Vietnam neither swayed from their commitment to unification nor effectively hid that commitment. The ten-point programme of the NLF, distributed throughout the world in February 1961, called for ‘peaceful reunification of the

622 See, for example, the two books, Mao (1937/1961), p. 56, 113. Mao Zedong, *Mao Tse-Tung on Revolution and War*, edited by M. Rejai (New York: Doubleday, 1969), p. 288.

623 See Vo Nguyen Giap, *People’s War, People’s Army. Foreword by Roger Hilsman* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1962), pp. 103–104. New printing: Vo Nguyen Giap, *People’s War People’s Army: The Viet Cong Insurrection Manual for Underdeveloped Countries* (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2001). Trường Chinh, *The Resistance Will Win in Primer for Revolt*. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), p. 116. Complete text reprinted in Trường Chinh, *Selected Writings*. (Hanoi: Thế Giới Publishers, 1994), pp. 80–204.

624 Van Tien Dung, *Our Great Spring Victory: an Account of the Liberation of South Vietnam*, translated by John Spragens, Jr., afterword by Cora Weiss and Don Luce (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977), p. 12. General Van Tien Dung led the final offensive against South Vietnam in 1975.

625 Giap (1962), p. 69.

fatherland', and the Communist-dominated so-called 'front' reaffirmed its goal of a unified Vietnam in subsequent statements. A very long statement of the NLF political programme broadcast in September 1967 observed that 'Vietnam must be reunified', calling reunification 'the sacred aspiration of our entire people', and a 1969 statement called 'unity' one of 'the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights'.⁶²⁶

The National Liberation Front (NLF) consistently spoke of self-determination for the South. The Communist commitment to a unified Vietnam was clearly promulgated, and these facts could only have remained hidden from people such as non-Communist leaders of the NLF due to their own naiveté or wishful thinking.⁶²⁷ The clear aim was political unification under Communist leadership.⁶²⁸ The Communists had a very strong will to win in Vietnam. The American General Douglas Kinnard made an important survey among his colleagues after South Vietnam had ceased to exist. Many of them admitted that the Communist will to win was not sufficiently considered.⁶²⁹

In retrospect, knowing the tremendous casualties taken by the Communists in the course of their resistance since 1945, one can not assume that the destruction of the North Vietnamese *conventional* military power would have ended the war. The history of conflict in Indochina and the continuation of the fighting long after the United States' withdrawal indicate that the physical conquest of the North Vietnamese base in North Vietnam might have been needed to destroy the Communist will to continue the war. From the perspective of many Westerners, including the Americans, Asian Communists' determination in the face of such high costs may appear irrational. Maybe it is, but revolutionaries in particular have demonstrated a capacity for such fanatical behaviour too frequently to be ignored.⁶³⁰

Both during and after the Vietnam War, a number of people who participated in the war, or have studied the war, have argued against the limitations placed on the use of American forces in Vietnam, accusing civilian leaders of not listening to military advice, etc. Particularly committed to this point of view are members of the U.S. Air Force. For example, Colonel Alan Gropman, U.S. Air Force, has argued that the war

626 Communist documents: The 1961, 1965 and 1967 statements about the aims of the NLF, from 'NFLSV Position Statements' in Part VI B, Negotiations 1965–1967, *United States–Vietnam Relations, 1945–1967*, study prepared by Department of Defense, Book 12 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 189, 197, and 233. The 1969 statement is published as Appendix 17 of George McTurnan Kahin and John W. Lewis, *The United States in Vietnam*, revised ed. (New York, Dell Publishing Co., 1969), p. 513.

627 Harry G. Summers, Jr., *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982). This book has in many ways become the U.S. military's unofficial explanation of what went wrong in Vietnam. It is well written, but gives only part of the truth about the American intervention in Vietnam.

628 Troung Nhu Tang, 'The Myth of a Liberation', *New York Review of Books*, 21 October 1982, p. 32.

629 Douglas Kinnard, *The War Managers* (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1977), p. 169. One of the better early books about the Vietnam war, seen from the U.S. side.

630 Blaufarb, (1977), p. 288. See also Richard A. Hunt and Richard H. Shultz, Jr., editors, *Lessons from an Unconventional War: Reassessing U.S. Strategies for Future Conflicts* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982). This book makes it clear that the American approach in Vietnam was not in harmony with (at that time) counterinsurgency theory. For a survey of the debate between 'The Counterinsurgency School' and 'The Hawks' during the Vietnam War, see George C. Herring, 'American Strategy in Vietnam: The Postwar Debate', *Military Affairs*, No. 45, April 1982, pp. 57–63.

in Vietnam did not have to end in defeat at all. American objectives in Vietnam could have been achieved, Gropman wrote, had the United States used its air power, which he saw as a 'major unplayed trump card'.⁶³¹

He also argues in his book that the United States' political leadership never sought more than a stalemate.⁶³² Such a statement can hardly be correct. Numerous official documents from these years, including hundreds of analyses published by, for example, RAND both during and after the U.S. forces had left South Vietnam, the so-called Pentagon Papers and memoirs of high-ranking persons in the different administrations tell a different story. Probably we can look upon his view in this way: it provides evidence that Gropman (and some of his Air Force colleagues) still do not understand the real nature of the war in Vietnam.

The following comment, written by Lewis Sorely, demonstrates some of the 'new thinking', discussing whether there is anything to be learnt from the Vietnam War:

More than 30 years have passed since North Vietnam, in gross violation of the 1973 Paris Peace Accords, conquered South Vietnam. That outcome was partly the result of greatly increased logistical support to the North from its communist backers. It was also the result of America's failure to keep its commitments to the South.

Those commitments included promises to maintain a robust level of financial support, to replace combat materiel, and even the use of air power to support the South in case of aggression by the North. That failure was the doing of a U.S. Congress that had tired of the country's long involvement in a war in Southeast Asia and cared nothing for the sacrifices of its own armed forces or those of the South Vietnamese people. (...)

We now know, or should, that virtually everything changed when Abrams took command. The changes grew out of his understanding of the nature of the war, and of his conviction that upgrading South Vietnam's armed forces and rooting out the enemy's covert infrastructure in rural hamlets and villages must be accorded equal priority with combat operations. Even combat operations were radically reconfigured.

Westmoreland had concentrated on a buildup of American forces – eventually peaking at 543,400 by 1969 in response to his repeated requests for more

⁶³¹ Alan L. Gropman, *Airpower and the airlift evacuation of Kham Duc. USAF Southeast Asia Monograph Series, Volume V, Monograph 7. 1 Jan. 1979* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1979. reprinted: Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, April 2005.)

⁶³² Gropman (1979/2005).

*troops – to be used in large sweeps called “search and destroy” operations. The measure of merit was “body count,” the number of enemy killed, based on his conviction that if enough casualties were inflicted on the North Vietnamese and their Viet Cong elements in the South they would be induced to cease their aggression.*⁶³³

The Vietnam expert Jeffrey Record has written and compared the development in Vietnam with the development in Iraq. As early as in 1996, he wrote:

The Vietnam War admits of no easy definition. What began in the late 1950s on the communist side as a low-grade and militarily self-sustaining insurgency in the South had by 1975 evolved into straightforward North Vietnamese conventional aggression. But the fact of communist conventionality in 1975 proves nothing about the character of the war in 1960 or 1965. Vietnamese communist revolutionary war doctrine, based on Chinese theory and practice, envisaged just such a progression from guerrilla warfare to conventional military victory. Phillip Davidson, who served as the chief US military intelligence officer during the height of the war, persuasively argues that “the real question” in the postwar debate over strategies pursued and not pursued in Vietnam “was not what was the proper strategy to guide the ground war in South Vietnam, but what kind of war was the United States fighting in Vietnam at any given period.” World War II was conventional from start to finish; the Vietnam War started as one kind of war and ended as another.

*The US war effort was compromised not only by failure to appreciate the complexity and evolution of the war’s character, but also by a fundamental ignorance of the country, its history and culture. There was, too, an inability to grasp the fact that no foreign participant in someone else’s civil war can possibly have as great a stake in the conflict’s outcome – and attendant willingness to sacrifice – as do the indigenous parties involved. Some of the best and the brightest in Washington eagerly embraced the Vietnam War as a test of US ability to master a limited war in the nuclear age, but failed to understand that for Hanoi and the NLF the war was as total as had been the Civil War for the United States.*⁶³⁴

Jeffrey Record and many others who have been writing about the Vietnam War and its consequences emphasise that the United States was not *militarily* beaten in Viet-

633 Lewis Sorley, ‘The Real Afghan Lessons From Vietnam. The “clear and hold” strategy of Gen. Creighton Abrams was working in South Vietnam. Then Congress pulled the plug on funding,’ *The Wall Street Journal*, 11 October 2009 <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703746604574463024150622310.html>.

634 Record (1996-97), pp. 51–65.

nam. Indeed, by 1973 the United States and its South Vietnamese ally had stalemated the North Vietnamese conventional military threat and were *decisively* defeating the indigenous southern insurgent component of the Communist threat. After the *militarily* failed Communist Tet Offensive, which *politically* and militarily became the ‘tipping point’ of the Vietnam War, the North’s Communist leadership relied increasingly on *conventional* military operations, and it did so in part because of a dramatic loss of support from the Communist political base in South Vietnam. James Robbins in his book *This Time We Win: Revisiting the Tet Offensive* focuses on what really happened during the Tet Offensive 1968.⁶³⁵ In his review of Robbins’ book, Brigadier General H.R. McMaster, later one of the so-called ‘COIN-istas’, wrote the following comment: ‘For over forty years the American experience in the Tet Offensive has been used and abused by those who try to apply the analogy of Tet to contemporary policy. *This Time We Win* corrects simplistic interpretations of Tet that are often used to create the impression of inevitable defeat in Vietnam and other conflicts. This book deserves a wide readership.’ In his book, Robbins demonstrates, contrary to probably the most common view today about the ‘American Vietnam War’, that most Americans supported the war in Vietnam, and argues that U.S./South Vietnam were on their way to winning that war. The fighting during the Tet Offensive showed (according to Robbins) that the enemy was weak, and that the U.S. strategy was working. The real failure was the lack of understanding of the evolving situation in Vietnam among the American elite, especially at the highest levels. Robbins has a very realistic view of the demands/pressure on both political and military leadership in war, even if he criticises those who fail to display it. Robbins also shows the mistakes of particular individuals, but there is no simplistic criticism in his book. The book is well researched, and he provides a sophisticated description of the development during these long-lasting wars, making it a valuable source for anyone who is interested in studying complex modern wars. (See Chapter 3 of this book, *hybrid warfare*.) This book may also be very helpful for persons who want to understand counterinsurgency and wartime leadership during any era, including our own time. Everyone studying today’s irregular wars may learn something by reading this book.

And Vietnam became an important war. The USA gave up its military activism in Asia during the Carter administration in the mid and late 1980s, and almost all U.S. leaders at that time became strongly against a new U.S.-led COIN war in the Third World. The ‘newborn’ Communist-led Vietnam became an important player in the area. Its activities included exercising *de facto* control over Laos, a war with China and an invasion of Cambodia when the Red Khmers became too extreme even for the Vietnamese.⁶³⁶

⁶³⁵ James Robbins, *This Time We Win: Revisiting the Tet Offensive* (New York, NY: Encounter Books, 2010).

⁶³⁶ Odd Arne Westad and Sophie Quinn-Judge, *The Third Indochina War: Conflict between China, Vietnam and Cambodia*,

The NLF's military organisation never recovered from their disastrous Tet losses. In the next three to four years, the NLF's political and military strength was further compromised by the (forced) flight of millions of rural Vietnamese into the cities. Very important was also the so-called *pacification programme* that both destroyed the power of many remaining Communist cadres, as well as delivered genuine land reform and prosperity to much of rural South Vietnam. By virtually all accounts, the percentage of South Vietnam's population under effective Communist control dropped sharply during the period between the Tet Offensive (1968) and the Paris peace agreement (1972).⁶³⁷

But if the original insurgent threat had receded, the conventional military threat posed by an expanding and increasingly well-equipped North Vietnamese army had gained strength, and the long-term military balance in Vietnam looked bleak for Saigon.⁶³⁸ For a North Vietnamese view, see the book of General Van Tien Dung, *Our Great Spring Victory*. He commanded the North Vietnamese forces invading South Vietnam, 1975. And, of course, see General Giap's own bragging book about the victory, published in English in 1976.⁶³⁹

I will end this review with the following quote written by Gilbert Taylor taken from the hardcover edition of H.R. McMaster's book (1998) Dereliction of Duty: Johnson, McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies That Led to Vietnam. The quote should need no further comment. The "error not of values and intentions but of judgment and capabilities" to which Robert McNamara admitted in In Retrospect (1995) leaves out his deceptions that helped plunge America into the Vietnam War. McNamara may not have remembered them in his memoir, but army officer McMaster found them in the Joint Chiefs of Staff's archives for the crucial decision-making years of 1964 and 1965. Distilled to its essence, McMaster's thesis proposes that the plans and advice on Vietnam prepared by the nation's military advisers were systematically side-tracked by McNamara. Two facts exemplify the whole dense forest of facts McMaster explores: the prediction of the Joint Chiefs of the Army and Marine Corps that "victory" would require five years and 500,000 troops only reached LBJ's ears once (he didn't listen, obviously), and the Pentagon war games of McNamara's theory of "graduated pressure" eerily ended in stalemate. McNamara suppressed all such warning signs, theorizes McMaster, because he

1972–79 (London: Rutledge, 2006).

637 See, for example, Phillip B. Davidson, *Vietnam at War. The History 1946–1975* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1988), p. 320–321. Guenter Lewy, *America in Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 192. and George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950–1975* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1979), p. 240.

638 Davidson (1988), p. 477.

639 Van Tien Dung, *Our Great Spring Victory*, trans. John Spragens, Jr., translated by John Spragens, Jr., Afterword by Cora Weiss and Don Luce (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977), pp. 19–20. Giap (1976), pp. 33–54.

*was responding to LBJ's anxiety to keep Vietnam's "noise level" down until the 1964 election was over and the Great Society safely enacted. As damning of the civilian leaders as he is, McMaster doesn't blithely exonerate the brass. They didn't heed their own warnings and acquiesced in McNamara's incrementalist policy, in the hope of eventually getting the huge force they confidently advised would be needed to win. Writing about an ocean of memos, meetings, and reports as he does, McMasters delivers a narrative more diligent than dramatic, but his take on pinpointing the architect(s) of the Vietnam fiasco should prove, nonetheless, of high interest.*⁶⁴⁰

Summing up – as described above, in Indochina and later in South Vietnam, it proved very difficult to win the war against the highly-motivated Communist leadership that had its centre in North Vietnam. The regime here accepted, for instance, great losses, something that proved difficult for the Americans in the long run. But factors other than motivation and an effective political line were of importance for the outcome. During the Vietnam War, especially between 1965 and 1969, the U.S. Army in particular was marginally willing to adapt to the local conditions. On their part, the Americans chose, during the first years of the war in South Vietnam (the period from 1958 to about 1968), to see the war as primarily a *conventional war*, as it had done during the Korean War.

It was also important for the outcome in Vietnam that North Vietnam could act as a safe base area for the war in South Vietnam and that they almost unopposed could use eastern parts of Laos and Cambodia to get soldiers/supplies through to the battle areas in the south.

From 1968, the war changed character, with North Vietnam in practice taking over the active waging of war with its more conventionally arranged main forces. From that point on, the South Vietnamese freedom movement, the National Liberation Front (NLF), took on a more marginal role. As previously indicated, the Communist military defeat in the 1968 Tet offensive should theoretically have been a clear advantage for the U.S. and their South Vietnamese allies but by then it was too late – American public opinion and the political elite at home had tired of the war, and the international mood had turned against the United States. And as described by Sorely:

In the later years, Abrams, along with Ellsworth Bunker (at the head of the embassy in Saigon) and William E. Colby (in charge of support for pacification) devised a more viable approach for conducting the war even as U.S. forces were being incrementally withdrawn.

⁶⁴⁰ H.R. McMaster (1998). See the back of the hardcover edition of this book.

*Security for the South Vietnamese became the new measure of merit. Instead of “search and destroy,” tactical operations were now focused on a “clear and hold” objective. Greatly increased South Vietnamese territorial forces, better trained and equipped and integrated into the regular army, provided the “hold.”*⁶⁴¹

4.5.3. Malaya 1948–1960

This war is one of the few wars/conflicts after 1945 with a clear victory for a former colonial power. This war may be characterised as a war between a colonial power (United Kingdom) and mostly Chinese insurgents. In Malaysia, as previously mentioned, the British after some initial problems were successful in adapting to local conditions and the British forces also overcame the Communist rural district-based insurgent/guerrilla movement.⁶⁴²

The Malayan Emergency was officially declared by the British-controlled government on 18 June 1948 after three estate managers were murdered in Perak in northern Malaya. The men were murdered by guerrillas belonging to the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) led by Communist leader Chin Peng, an outgrowth of the anti-Japanese guerrilla movement that had emerged during the Japanese occupation (Second World War). The official aim of the Party was to make Malaya a (Chinese-led) Communist state. Despite never having had more than a few thousand members, the MCP was able to draw on the support of many disaffected Malayan Chinese. There was always an ethnic element in this unrest. The internal scepticism between the dominant Malay population and the Chinese minority was not new. The harsh post-war economy in the area and local social conditions also contributed to the rise of anti-government activity. And on the political level, the British promises of a path to full Malayan citizenship for the Chinese minority had not been fulfilled, which had upset the Chinese.

Another factor that was of importance for how the situation would develop was that the Malayan government was slow to react to the MCP's attacks in Malaya, and the government did not appoint a *director of operations* to counter the insurgency until March 1950. The new director planned to address the underlying political, economic and social problems facing the Chinese community while, at the same time, bringing back government control to the fringe areas where the MCP received much of its support. Before this plan could be implemented, however, the situation went from bad to worse, with the assassination of the British High Commissioner in October 1951. After this attack the British decided to meet the challenge posed by the insur-

⁶⁴¹ Sorley (2009).

⁶⁴² Anthony Short, *The Communist Insurrection in Malaya 1948–60* (London: Frederick Mullen Ltd., 1975). This book provides a good historical account of the war.

gents with military force. The Malayan government stepped up its counterinsurgency measures. The Emergency became a 12-year jungle war fought by the British, British Commonwealth and Malay forces against the army of the Malayan Communist Party. Prolonged operations were undertaken against the Communists in an effort to destroy their base of support in local communities and to drive them into the jungle, where it would be difficult for them to receive supplies from local supporters.

British warfare in Malaysia was also, as previously demonstrated, characterised by somewhat different traditions if compared with American warfare. The British Army had a long tradition and experience as a 'colonial police force' and the existing organisational culture, and even British historical tradition and the mentality it had created, proved better able to tackle and translate the experiences gained into a functioning programme for counterinsurgency with regard to what, in Great Britain, was called the 'Malayan Emergency'.⁶⁴³

Initially this long history of colonial warfare did not prevent the British from making a series of mistakes in Malaya. Both the British and Commonwealth forces sent to Malaya were caught unprepared. Much of their jungle fighting expertise had been wound down and many of their troops were raw and young inexperienced UK national servicemen. Eventually the British developed new and successful jungle fighting techniques that solved the initial problems. One example of a 'new' COIN tactic was: In addition to military operations the British developed and organised a massive resettlement of nearly 500,000 jungle fringe dwellers to new villages, so-called 'protected villages', in other regions of the country. This method also strangled the flow of intelligence to the MCP in the countryside. The MCP had also in the early part of the insurgency been supported by a large network of Chinese spies who lived in towns and cities. This support now dried up. Resettlement became an important method to cut off supplies and contacts to the MCP, and is said to have been a major factor in British success in the war. Another major factor in the last part of this war was that the British gave Malaya independence in August 1957. This also put an end to any political justification of an armed insurrection.⁶⁴⁴

The long British tradition of closely linking military operations to the overriding political objectives was of importance for the end result here. Another important reason was that the Communist insurgents were mostly recruited from the Chinese minority, and thus easily isolated from the Malay population. As an old colonial power,

⁶⁴³ Two interesting newer comparative studies of the wars in Malaya and Vietnam are Nagl (2002) and Sarkesian (1993). Sarkesian's book has not been updated, but it does provide the reader with a comparative analysis of unconventional conflicts using Malaya and Vietnam as examples. He uses the terms of its time, and writes about developing effective policies and operations for what he calls 'counter revolution', 'drug wars' and other types of Third World conflicts.

⁶⁴⁴ Thompson (1966/2005). In his book, Sir Robert describes how they learnt from mistakes and developed the COIN strategy and tactics used during this long conflict. This book is still regarded as one of the most important theoretical works on COIN warfare.

the British had a tradition of using *locally recruited forces* (in Malaya mostly ethnic Malayan) and acquainting themselves with local traditions.

By 1960, the previously about 10,000-man-strong and experienced MCP insurgent army had been defeated and reduced to a few hundred men operating near the Thai border. The Malay Government declared the end of the Emergency in July 1960. The Communist leader of the MCP during the war, Chin Peng (1924 -), escaped from Malaya and fled to China. (He is today living free in Bangkok, Thailand.)⁶⁴⁵

The Americans have often set more *limited objectives* for their military engagements, such as, for example, base rights and letting local authorities govern as they please, as long as they do not interfere with the American military forces or what they look upon as U.S. national interests.

But even the British have not always been able to learn from earlier experiences. There has sometimes been a preference to portray the problem as being only a terrorist issue. This may lead to the conclusion that the antidote is, by definition, counter-terror (CT). Normally CT has been looked upon as a matter of (local) security (i.e. a police responsibility). This may result in a series of counterproductive actions when applied to a real (and growing) insurgency. Applying only 'police thinking' in operations to stamp out a growing and qualifiedly led insurgency is a sure way of intensifying the insurgency. As described above, it took some time before the British forces learnt that in Malaya. The British General Sir John Panton Kiszely wrote about these problems in an article published in 2007:

*It is perhaps surprising that the lessons of the Malayan Emergency were not more obviously learnt in Britain's subsequent counterinsurgency campaign in Cyprus. For example, one of the clearest early lessons from Malaya, stated in the "Report of the Police Commission of Malaya 1950," had been the importance of an impartial, disciplined police force. But only five years later, the British commander in Cyprus, Field Marshal Harding, was basing his campaign on a police force renowned not only for its partiality and ill-discipline, but also for its corruption and brutality, thus playing into the hands of the EOKA insurgents and their leader, Colonel Grivas.*⁶⁴⁶

In the same article General Kiszely also commented on other possible pitfalls:

⁶⁴⁵ Chin Peng, see 'Chin Peng fails to restore civil suit against government', *The Star online*, July 27, 2010, <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2010/7/27/nation/20100727155213&sec=nation>. See also a description of him and the Party in 'Chin Peng', *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chin_Peng.

⁶⁴⁶ John Kiszely, 'Learning about Counterinsurgency', *Military Review*, March-April 2007, p. 6.

There are thus a number of factors – all essentially cultural challenges – which, if allowed to, can adversely affect the military’s ability to learn appropriately. (...)

Foremost amongst these is the perception that a military has of counterinsurgency. If it views it as a type of war fighting – easy to do, because counterinsurgency often looks, smells and feels like war fighting; indeed, some participants at some moments may be fighting for their lives – it is liable to make fundamental errors in application, not least in breaching one of Clausewitz’s most important dicta: “The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgement that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish... the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature.”⁶⁴⁷

Of what relevance are these wars to the ongoing wars in Afghanistan and (still) the small-scale civil war in Iraq? Undeniably, the world has changed greatly since the 1960s. Here, one would have to say that this form of warfare, in the Third World in particular, has obvious fundamental features in common with the conflicts we also see today. A more active military undertaking directed at the Third World also requires a totally different understanding of other forms of warfare than the military operations the Soviet Union’s and NATO’s conventional forces would have conducted if war had broken out in our own region during the Cold War. For the same reason, this requires other insights and knowledge on the part of both officers and soldiers than was the case only 15 years ago.

Robert W. Komer, a very experienced American COIN and Third World expert, has written an evaluation about COIN in Malaya, published by RAND as a report in 1972 and still interesting today. He wrote in the Summary of his report:

What seems most striking in retrospect about the experience of the British and Malayan government in containing and ultimately defeating the Communist insurgency in Malaya is the wide range of civil and military programs tied together by unified management in a successful counterinsurgency response. Though many mistakes were made in the early years and the whole process took from 1948 to 1960, the United Kingdom and the Government of Malaya gradually evolved what stands out as an almost classic “long-haul low-cost” strategy well adapted to the problem they confronted.⁶⁴⁸

⁶⁴⁷ Kiszely (2007), p. 8.

⁶⁴⁸ Robert W. Komer, *The Malayan Emergency in Retrospect: Organization of a Successful Counterinsurgency Effort*, A Report prepared for Advanced research Projects Agency, R-957-ARPA, RAND Corporation, 1972, <http://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/2005/R957.pdf>, p. v.

4.6. Counterinsurgency – what is important?

Are the United States and Western forces in general able to combat lengthy guerrilla warfare? Debate over this question has been constant since 1945. The large number of conflicts of this type is in itself evidence that these wars/conflicts in fact seek to resolve political and social antagonism by military means.

It has proved to be the case historically that insurgency through guerrilla warfare has been successful, but there is absolutely nothing to indicate that a lengthy insurgency will automatically always succeed. Insurgent/guerrilla groups have their own weaknesses and limitations. For instance, if a guerrilla movement has to survive under difficult physical and psychological conditions, particularly in those insurgencies that have a strong core group of ideologically motivated leaders, it is not uncommon to see factionalism, fractionalisation and an internal split after a period.

Dr. David Kilcullen, the former senior counterinsurgency adviser to General David Petraeus during the 2007 ‘surge’, who later worked as a counterinsurgency adviser to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan during 2009-2010, is still an influential expert on COIN. In an interview with Dr. Kilcullen, Octavian Manea asked him the following question: ‘What does the historical record of past insurgencies tell us? Is there any common pattern?’ According to the interview, Kilcullen still holds the view that the ‘founding fathers’ writing about COIN in the 1950s and 1960s are still relevant, but the *practice* in the field has moved on significantly in the last five or six years. But the views communicated in the interview also tell us something about the difficult problems Western forces stand up against in Afghanistan:

There are approximately 385 examples of counterinsurgency efforts across the world since the end of the Napoleonic wars. This gives us enough research data on which we can make some judgments about particular trends and enduring themes. One is that the government usually wins. In about 80% of cases the insurgent loses and the government wins. That said, if you look at examples where the government wins you usually find two common features – first, it is usually a government that is fighting in its own country (it is not an expeditionary, interventionist third party) – and second – it is almost always a government that is willing to negotiate. Insurgency is about motivating a large number of people, sometimes millions of peoples, over decades, to take action on grievances to fight the government. You cannot motivate millions of people for decades with false grievances. The grievances have to be real. So you’ve got to deal with those grievances. If you do not deal with them, the historical record shows that you are much less likely to succeed. My numbers

*are: if you are fighting in your own country and you are willing to negotiate with the enemy you have about 80% chance of success. If you are fighting in somebody else's country and you are not willing to negotiate you have only 20 % chance of success.*⁶⁴⁹

It is also important to understand that contrary to what we often read in today's literature, a threatened state (or threatened regime) very often wins against the rebels/insurgents. This fact may be of interest to both easily shaken political leaders responsible for the military activities, and to the military leaders responsible for the planning and execution of the military campaign against the insurgents.

But it is also important to understand why politically and/or religiously motivated groupings choose to use violence against their political enemies. The large number of conflicts of a guerrilla nature in itself suggests that there must be clear advantages associated with fighting a guerrilla or insurgent war. When an insurgent movement is well led and one chooses the right strategy and manages to adhere to realistic objectives, it has proved possible to win this type of war, i.e. force the desired political, economic, psychological and finally military collapse of the ruling regime in the state under attack. It is necessary for the ruling regime to undertake significant efforts if it is to be successful in combating this type of warfare – these efforts will normally be lengthy, and the psychological efforts necessary in order to regain positive control of its own population should be seen as particularly demanding.

Normally, a competent regime threatened by a large insurgency will attempt to isolate the population from the insurgent movement. Even if it were to be successful in dividing the population from the insurgent movement, this does not, however, automatically mean that the regime gains *legitimacy* among the people. It has proved particularly difficult to establish durable legitimacy where the regime deploys physical methods, such as, for example, the forced movement of the population to so-called 'protected villages' or 'strategic villages', which was done with success in Malaya, and with some success in South Vietnam, as part of pacification programmes like *Phoenix* and *Phung Hoang* in South Vietnam.⁶⁵⁰ *Phung Hoang* was a South Vietnamese programme 'created in 1967 to destroy the political, financial and intelligence network operated by the Viet Cong within the hamlets and villages of South Vietnam'.⁶⁵¹

649 Interview with Dr. David Kilcullen conducted by Octavian Manea, editor of *FP Romania* (the Romanian edition of *Foreign Policy*): Octavian Manea, 'Interview with Dr. David Kilcullen', *Small Wars Journal*, November 7, 2010, <http://smallwars-journal.com/jrnl/art/interview-with-dr-david-kilcullen>., p. 4.

650 Marl Moyer, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey. Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorism in Vietnam*. Foreword by Harry G. Summers Jr. (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, Second edition, 2007), pp. 6–8, pp. 41–48, pp. 133–35.

651 'Phung Hoang', *Vietnam War Dictionary*, VietnamGear.com, <http://www.vietnamgear.com/dictionary/phung%20hoang.aspx>. According to the Vietnam War Dictionary: '(...) The program, which was supported by U.S. Phoenix advisors, employed the National Police, intelligence agencies and military units to identify, capture and detain or eliminate Viet

In the interview mentioned above, Kilcullen gave the following answer to the questions ‘Under what tactical conditions could we see a community or a village choosing or flipping a side? What are the core driving motivations?’:

We see a number of different population survival strategies in insurgency environments. They are surrounded from all sides by threats and by people demanding their allegiance – and willing to hurt them if they don't get their allegiance. What they are looking for is a consistent predictable system which gives them order, allows them to be safe; they are looking for a space within that system – in which they believe that if they are following the rules we set, they are going to be safe. I describe this as a theory of normative systems in counterinsurgency – a system of rules plus punishments. Legal systems or road rules are an example. You launch yourself on a highway and even if at times the road is chaotic you are confident to drive that route because you know the rules of the road, as everybody does. That is a normative system. There are the rules of the road that make you feel safe, even if you don't particularly like the police. Who is enforcing the rules is a separate issue from what the rules are. The rules make you to feel safe even if you don't like the person who is enforcing them. We see this all the time with organizations like Al-Qaeda, Hezbollah and the Taliban. The population wants predictability, order and safety and that safety comes from knowing where you stand and knowing that if you do this or don't do this, following the rules, you will be safe. Even if they don't like Hezbollah or the Taliban in particular, they still feel safer living within the set rules. So, creation of safety it (...) is a lot about predictability, consistency, and reliability.⁶⁵² But historically there have been several types of insurgent movements that did not necessarily need a population in order to support themselves. A guerrilla force with a strong foreign sponsor will belong to this group. An ethnically-based insurgent movement that operates in another ethnic national group's area will normally have to force support. If the ruling regime does not have legitimacy among the majority of people, the fall of the ruling regime may be eventually caused by a psychological defeat, not necessarily a clearly defined military defeat.

A constant problem, particularly during the early phase of an insurgency, is that the insurgents cannot expect to win in combat against the regime's ordinary military forces, and there are probably few historical examples of many small guerrilla attacks in themselves being enough to defeat a militarily strong regime. This is also one of

Cong cadres. Of the 81,740 members of the Viet Cong Infrastructure neutralized under the Phung Hoang Program, approximately 26,000 were killed.'

652 Manea (2010).

the reasons why most successful guerrilla organisations that have succeeded in taking over government in a country have conducted a lengthy war, something that requires a long-term perspective on political struggle and warfare. In other words, it requires both patience and a strong will to keep the war going. It has also proved to be the case that the existing theories concerning guerrilla war are hardly of a 'universal' nature. This applies, to a greater or lesser extent, to most theories that have been used by both guerrilla and terrorist movements and those fighting against them.⁶⁵³ The participants that have been able to make good local adjustments on the basis of available theories and historical experiences and who have, at the same time, been able to carry out the necessary changes in both tactics and their long-term strategies have normally succeeded best.

Mao's theories on protracted warfare, where the insurgents base themselves in rural areas and then 'encircle the towns' in the next phase, have not worked well in Latin America. In Peru, El Salvador, Guatemala and Columbia, so-called long-term strategies have only served to give the governments time to react, reform and develop a counterinsurgency strategy. Obviously, the U.S. has not stood on the sidelines waiting for a country in Latin America to fall to an insurgent movement. The two revolutions that actually *have* taken place, in Cuba and Nicaragua, both ended in victories for the revolutionaries as a result of the insurgent movements exploiting a time-limited situation where there were serious political crises in the two countries.⁶⁵⁴

It is probably possible to establish some fundamental guidelines with regard to what one should/should not do. But, if an insurgency is to succeed, the principles one follows must be adapted to the individual (local) situation. The same obviously applies to those combating an insurgency. One must have an insight into local conditions and the conceptions and attitudes that apply there.

⁶⁵³ It is not uncommon for some insurgent groups to be accused of being involved in criminal activity, such as the drugs trade. The Colombian insurgent movements FARC and ELN are often presented as examples of drug-funded insurgent movements, something both groups deny. In 1980, the Maoist guerrilla movement in Peru began its armed struggle and was almost immediately called 'narco-terrorists' by the country's authorities. An alleged or real combination of insurgency and drug trading would obviously mean the boundaries between counterinsurgency and the fight against drugs becomes correspondingly hazy. If we study the U.S. security policies vis-à-vis some Latin American countries, it is not always easy to see where the fight against drugs stops and counterinsurgency begins. For example, a great deal of assistance has gone to Colombian 'anti-drugs battalions'. (See, for example, Angel Rabasa & Peter Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001), pp. 62–63.) In Peru, from the end of the 1980s, there was a risk of being stopped by Peruvian DEA forces in areas in which the Maoists were active. At a time when American support for a counterinsurgency would have been controversial, these forces were armed and uniformed like a military force. It is important to understand this link between counterinsurgency and the fight against drugs, as it has broad political and popular support in the U.S. Afghanistan also falls within this context. The U.S. would perhaps like to establish bases in the long term, not just as a means of having a presence in order to politically influence Pakistan and the region in general, but as a means of reducing opium production.

⁶⁵⁴ If we compare Maoist strategy for guerrilla warfare with Che Guevara's so-called 'foco' theory for guerrilla warfare, we see that this is not based on the same fundamental ideas. Both Cuba and Nicaragua were the result of a revolution in accordance with *foco* principles, not a Maoist people's war as such. It is outside the framework of this book to go into the differences in greater detail. See also Jon Lee Anderson, *Che Guevara: ständig mot segern 1928–1959* [Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life] (Stockholm: Leopard förlag, 2002), and particularly Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (New York: Vintage, 1969, La Vergne, TN: BN Publications, 2007 ('Print on Demand Book'), originally published in Spanish 1961).

4.6.1. COIN – must it be relearned each time?

In many ways, we can see that the debate on counterinsurgency has been given fresh impetus and new content as a result of the ‘continuation war’ in Iraq from the summer of 2003. One symbol of this could be how the former American Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld described further developments in Iraq in a memorandum in mid-October 2003. In it, he speculated whether the American forces were prepared to deal with a lengthy guerrilla war in Iraq. The memorandum triggered lengthy debate in U.S. military circles, focusing on what is required of modern counterinsurgents and what works in connection with COIN as a form of combat. From April 2004, the debate picked up fresh momentum given the rapid escalation of the use of violence against the coalition forces and Iraqis who supported and helped them in Iraq. In many ways this may be regarded as the starting point of the American development of a new era of counterinsurgency theories, tactics and to some level, also a new military strategy for how to conduct military campaigns in the Third World.

An examination of several of the leading Western journals has shown that, during the period from about 1990 to 2005, in clear contrast to the period from about 1950 to 1980, very few important theoretical works had been written about the central aspects of counterinsurgency.⁶⁵⁵ Instead, in these same journals in the 1990s, they wrote of phenomena such as ‘*Revolution in Military Affairs*’ (RMA), ‘*RMA-associated technologies*’ and *Network Centric Warfare* (NCW), etc., with the main emphasis normally on command and control developments, the introduction of various forms of precision weapons systems and the associated so-called ‘targeting’ processes. In particular, the American debate on what was seen as the battleground of the future and the description of the operational art that would be suitable in that context has been extremely focused on technology and organisation, particularly up to the terrorist attacks against the USA on 11 September 2001.

In other words, development centred primarily on the *conventional* battleground with war between states, and not on how war would look like in the Third World or when well-organised terrorist groups were at large against Western states or their allies ‘with other means’ than conventional forces.

Apart from the introductory American RMA debate of the 1990s and the later, equally technically focused discussion on ‘*Network-Centric Warfare*’ (NCW) from the late 1990s, the debate has now changed. The catchwords *Effects-Based Operations* and *Rapid Decisive Operations* (RDO) forced their way into the debate after 2001, and especially EBO (later replaced by EBAO) has dislodged RMA and partially dislodged

⁶⁵⁵ This applies to most leading journals that are receptive to so-called strategic studies and similar political and military theory works. Frank Cass (taken over by the Taylor & Francis Group in 2004) in London has, however, published some smaller ‘simple’ journals that are receptive to articles about the various forms of guerrilla warfare and terrorism, where counterinsurgency is part of the content of the articles. Today the blog smallwarsjournal.com is maybe the leading day-to-day forum for the very intensive debate about insurgencies and COIN.

NCW. Together, these four concepts could be said to represent the core of Western military debate in the period after the end of the Cold War. However, the existing U.S. doctrines like FM 3-0, *Operations* and FM 5-0, *The Operations Process*⁶⁵⁶ use the slogan *full spectrum operations*, which is defined as follows:

Full spectrum operations

Army forces combine offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations simultaneously as part of an interdependent joint force to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative, accepting prudent risk to create opportunities to achieve decisive results. They employ synchronized action—lethal and nonlethal—proportional to the mission and informed by a thorough understanding of all variables of the operational environment. Mission command that conveys intent and an appreciation of all aspects of the situation guides the adaptive use of Army forces. (FM 3-0).⁶⁵⁷

Today *full spectrum operations* is the most important term in the U.S. military doctrine hierarchy.

Parallel with this ‘pure military’ debate, another debate has been going on where concepts such as ‘nation-building’ and the various forms of ‘peacekeeping’/‘stabilisation operations’ have been discussed. It is also of interest for developments today that the so-called ‘nation-building operations’ of the 1990s, like those we saw in the Balkans, were not, in practice, faced with a determined and violent insurgent movement that deliberately attacked those who came to ensure new social development. The developments in the wars in the Balkans coincided with the fact that the not insignificant skills that the United States, for instance, had developed with regard to counterinsurgency in the 1960s and 1970s within its political leadership had begun to wane from the early 1990s.⁶⁵⁸ A new generation of officials without political or personal

656 U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Operations*, U.S. Army Field Manual FM 3-0, June 2001. FM 3-0 (2008). U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *The Operations Process*, Field Manual FM 5-0, March 2010. According to the Introduction Chapter: “The emergence of full spectrum operations drives key changes in capstone doctrine. The Army established *full spectrum operations* in FM 3-0 (2001), shifting sharply from an “either-or” view of combat and other operations to an inclusive doctrine that emphasized the essentiality of nonlethal actions with combat actions. This edition of FM 3-0 continues that development. In FM 3-0 (2001), stability operations were “other” joint missions stated in an Army context. The current edition describes stability operations as tactical tasks applicable at all echelons of Army forces deployed outside the United States. In addition, civil support operations are also defined as tactical-level tasks, similar to stability tasks but conducted in the very different operational environment of the United States and its territories.”

657 FM 3-0 (2008), *Operations*. p. 3–1.

658 Blaufarb (1977), pp. 286–295. Blaufarb wrote: ‘If we confine ourselves to doctrine and theory, the interest in counterinsurgency of the U.S. military services, and most particularly of the army, remained high throughout the 1960s. A process of earnest study by military intellectuals of the available field experience, and reformulation of manuals and training courses and after. “Counterinsurgency” disappeared as a description label to be replaced by “internal defence and development” as a general term for a whole range of activities related to assisting less-developed countries, and by “stability operations” to describe the specific operational activity of the armed forces. A field manual specifically called “Stability Operations – U.S. Army Doctrine” was prepared which gave liberal emphasis to noncombat roles for the military,’ U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Stability Operations*, Field Manual FM 31-23, December 1967. p. 286.

experience of the earlier so-called ‘counterinsurgency era’ that ended at the close of the 1970s had, in the 1990s, taken over the majority of top positions.

Similarly, if we look at the specialist literature dealing with insurgency and terrorism from the period from about 1980 to 2000, much has been written about terrorism in extremely general terms but little about the problem that has now become much more acute: how a determined insurgent movement organises and implements strategic campaigns of terror in order to destabilise actual nation-building, as we now see happening in Iraq. Here, it is often enough for the insurgents that the endangered state’s security forces *fail* to re-establish the government as the dominant political force – the insurgents do not need to take over the administration of the state themselves, and the government collapses.

If we look back at the development of the situation in Iraq, it was long uncertain if the different insurgent groups actually would be able to develop long-term plans to take over the country. Some groups were most preoccupied with getting the Americans out, something that was more in keeping with the ‘short-term ideology’ we typically find in many insurgent movements. But some of the active resistance groups nurtured more ambitious plans – often taking their inspiration from a mixture of ethnicity and religion. And as we know, even with an elected Iraqi Parliament and after the American fighting units officially left Iraq (2010), the insurgency is still ongoing, but the killing of civilians and security forces in Iraq has come down to a ‘bearable level’.

According to adherents of these visions of a future Islamist state, a new ‘state of God’, ‘righteous social order’ or ‘Caliphate on Earth’ will arise from the prevailing chaos, depending on the country or area studied. This ‘new order’ will then be led by the insurgents/terrorists or their ‘chosen ones’, the future role in which most Jihadist insurgent organisations probably see themselves.

4.6.2. What will the challenges be for those combating terror and insurgency?

Based on what we have seen after 2003 in Iraq and Afghanistan, have we been able to use Western forces effectively against the ongoing insurgent and terrorist activities? Today, the internal security in most Western states is still good. The problems are connected with the use of Western forces as part of international operations in the Second and Third Worlds – the areas with the most violent conflicts today. There is very little hope of success if the forces used are not well trained, and it is necessary to have knowledge of what characterises this form of lengthy conflict. And, it is very important to consider:

1. Why did the hostilities break out?
2. Who normally leads and recruits for the actual guerrilla or terrorist organisations?
3. What are the conflicts alleged to be about and, especially, are there other or previous conflicts that one could possibly learn something from?

If one assumes that one's soldiers (and possibly also police) may become involved in this type of conflict with or without NATO, the UN or the EU as a 'legitimising authority', it is important that one's own political and military leaders have at least some insight into what characterises this type of operation. Such deployments could, however, trigger violent reprisals at home, possibly of the same kind as the Madrid train bomb and the London tube bomb. Threatened nations need to be prepared and watch local activists and/or suspected terrorists at home. Both soldiers and other kinds of security forces should know something about what counterinsurgency is, and understand what will be required if one's own troops are to be deployed in a conflict that may often be far from home.

Seen in this light, both research and fresh military insight will be required if one is to be able to meet the new challenges. Research and the necessary adjustments to the existing forces so that they will be able to carry out military operations in other parts of the world, based on other operational art and tactics than they are used to at home, will also be necessary if one is to be able to deal with the violent and clearly anti-Western bias.

One must obviously also have insights into what characterises the modern forms of insurgency:

1. Changes in our present time, seen in comparison with what was experienced during the decolonisation conflicts of the 1950s and 1960s. (Can we use older theories, or do we need updated theories?)
2. Similarities and differences with regard to what the Americans learned from the attempts to 'stem the flow of Communism' from the mid-1960s to about 1975 (the first 'counterinsurgency era').
3. The possible consequences of the more diffuse and often religion-inspired insurgencies and terrorist schemes with their base in the Middle East that are, primarily, directed at the West and Western values in general and, secondly, at the local groups that want to modernise society in a Western way. We now see clear features of this nature in the ongoing insurgencies in places like Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine.
4. Conflicts must also be seen in relation to the integrated position that the country has in the global community (this applies to the Nordic countries as

well); the country's military exposure and the subsequent potential vulnerability that today's participation level could result in should be taken into account.

Kilcullen in his book *Counterinsurgency* (2010), which was primarily written for use by soldiers at the tactical level, is concerned with how a counterinsurgent force may be able to measure so-called 'progress'. He uses examples from Afghanistan, East Timor and Indonesia, and gives relatively detailed advice, based on experiences from the actual areas, on how to measure the development. He also goes through what he calls 'common core metrics', i.e. how to systematise the information/intelligence we have collected, in a useful and not too complicated system.⁶⁵⁹

4.7. Learning from the past for use in contemporary thinking

4.7.1. Introduction

Due to the very violent developments in Iraq during 2005, we saw increasingly frequent references to the Vietnam War in the press and in articles, drawing what are rather inexact historical parallels. The majority of contributions that I have seen to the ongoing debate, particularly in the media, but also in individual journal articles, have fallen short in their attempts to draw convincing parallels between the war in Indochina (and later in South Vietnam) and what is going on in Iraq.

The world has actually changed greatly in the intervening period, particularly now that the superpower confrontation between the Soviet Union and the U.S. is over, something that makes it almost impossible for insurgents to play on the clear political lines of confrontation from the 1960s. This confrontation was a situation that the Communist leadership in Vietnam in particular was able to exploit in a convincing manner in the 1960s and early 1970s. The lessons from Vietnam and, for example, Northern Ireland have in the intervening period left their mark on military experiences, contributing to increasing the differences between American and British attitudes to how one should deal with irregular warfare.

4.7.2. An evaluation

The different insurgent factions in Iraq were never able to develop a countrywide and consistently led insurgent movement. But certain forms of 'tactical cooperation' between militant factions were seen for the first time in April 2004. The different militias and other forms of insurgent groups actually only agreed on one objective – that the coalition troops should leave Iraq as soon as possible – and this was a rather limited

⁶⁵⁹ Kilcullen (2010), pp. 56–76.

basis on which to build strong collaboration. There is as yet (2011) no national agreement on a new political platform in Iraq, and because of this we still see some insurgent activities against the Iraqi security forces, and against religious/ethnic groupings.

In a situation like this, the possibility of a new civil war is still great. And even if the term civil war was rarely used about the internal fights in Iraq in 2005 and 2006, obviously there was a kind of civil war going on. More and more people were killed. And the fighting in Iraq could hardly be looked upon as a single conflict focused on getting rid of the Americans, but rather as an overlapping set of conflicts, fought on multiple battlegrounds and with different combatants. Increasingly, American and other coalition troops were caught between the competing Iraqi forces. In late 2006, the description below seemed to be the pattern:

1. In southern Iraq, the Shiites dominate. But they are divided, with rival militias fighting over oil and commerce. And in the north of the country, Arabs and Kurds battle for control.
2. In western Iraq's deserts, Sunni Arab insurgent groups, some homegrown and others dominated by foreign fighters, attack Iraqi government forces and the U.S. troops who back them up.
3. In Baghdad and surrounding provinces, Sunni and Shiite fighters attack each other and their rivals' civilians in a burgeoning civil war that U.S. troops have tried to quell.⁶⁶⁰

The U.S. military were forced to shift troops around to try to clamp down on one of these conflicts, only to see another escalate. Many American officials worried that with the proliferation of armed actors in Iraq's multiple conflicts, the original U.S. counterinsurgency mission had become something else: an operation aimed at quelling *civil war*, which was a more ambiguous and politically difficult objective. And if the insurgents got the upper hand in an area, it was difficult to dislodge them without casualties; see the description from 2006 below:

In August (2006), threats from insurgents led half of Fallouja's police force to stay home for days, a U.S. general said. And Fallouja at least has a police force. Other strategic cities, including Haditha, Hit and Ramadi, remain virtually lawless. (...)

"Al Qaeda has murdered, intimidated, co-opted or paid off all the local national insurgent groups," said Marine Lt. Col. Bryan Salas, a

⁶⁶⁰ Solomon Moore and Louise Roug, 'Deaths Across Iraq Show It Is a Nation of Many Wars, With U.S. in the Middle', *Los Angeles Times*, 7 October 2006.

military spokesman in Fallouja. "They run an organized criminal enterprise that has its tentacles in everything from black-market gasoline sales to extortion of police and government pay checks. Al Qaeda provides the leadership and organization for this loose association of organized criminals."

*In addition to the deaths of U.S. troops, the conflict has taken a toll on Al Anbar's residents, many of whom have fled. Those who stay are at constant risk.*⁶⁶¹

So what can we learn from the debacles in Iraq and Afghanistan and also from earlier conflicts? Knowledge, insight and experiences from previous insurgent wars should be studied afresh. There is every reason to believe that, over the next few years, the West will be faced with a number of terrorist movements with 'global' perspectives to their terrorist activity, in clear contrast to the patterns that have dominated since the Second World War, i.e. that a locally recruited and oriented guerrilla or terrorist organisation primarily attacks the local government's forces and symbols in a situation similar to civil war.

Insurgents often gain help from abroad, such as practical and moral support from groups (and possibly countries) outside the area in which the war is going on, but there is less danger of the conflict 'spreading' to other parts of the world. The local insurgents' cause has often too much of a local nature for people without a background from this given country/area to want to become involved in it. Some examples of this type of 'international, but nevertheless primarily local' struggle are Basque terrorism through the ETA in Spain, the IRA in Northern Ireland (and sporadic attacks elsewhere in Great Britain) and the 'Red Army Faction' in West Germany (in the 1970s).

Without studying previous insurgencies and the attempts at counterinsurgency that have been undertaken – as well as understanding that the historical conditions for the individual insurgencies will obviously be subject to change – it is difficult to know what one can possibly learn from previous attempts at combating insurgencies or controlling them. In particular:

- Which lessons from previous counterinsurgencies are of *relevance* for the current insurgency/insurgencies?
- Which operational and theoretical problems are topical for today's situation, e.g. in Iraq or the Middle East in general?
- It is also important to find an answer as to whether the same factors will have equal importance in, for example, Africa or Asia.

⁶⁶¹ Moore and Roug (2006).

The Americans in particular used great resources and undertook research efforts in Vietnam in order to better understand what was happening there during the Vietnam War. They developed various so-called 'counterinsurgency campaigns' but it proved to be difficult to implement them, particularly when both the South Vietnamese political leadership and sections of the American military and political administration were, in practice, more interested in more conventional military solutions. All in all, the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 became a symbol of something that the Americans did not, in the 'spirit of the age', want to have anything more to do with: large-scale American involvement in a Second or Third World country of *minor* importance.

But there was one area where the Americans continued to spend money – the intelligence sector. During the entire period, they attached great importance to the necessity and use of effective intelligence services. The U.S. also took note of developments in many Third World conflicts during the period, but if we ignore conflicts in the U.S.'s backyard of Latin America in particular, the Americans were, after 1975, rarely directly involved outside Korea and in Europe for at least as long as the Cold War went on.

Nor can one have any hope of 'winning' or achieving success in the many ongoing smaller conflicts without the well-developed collection of information and the analysis of intelligence. Another experience could possibly be that governments (presumably) in Spain and (definitely) in Northern Ireland also engaged in secret political dialogue with the actual terrorist organisations at the same time as they used military means.

As previously indicated, in our present time, we have seen a number of insurgencies directed at ruling regimes, mostly in the Third World. In addition, there have been various terrorist activities and the majority of the actual terrorist groups still have an internal focus. But the activity represented by the more internationally organised and recruited terrorist systems, of which al-Qaeda is the foremost engage in other 'forms of combat' and are more international than the more typical local (or, at most, regional) guerrilla and terrorist organisations. The latter normally operate within the territory of a country or, at most, in neighbouring countries, while al-Qaeda has 'taken responsibility for' fighting Western interests (particularly American ones) and 'unfaithful' Arab regimes where the opportunity presents itself. The latter activity requires a more advanced theoretical and technical superstructure than a local insurgency. Those groups 'belonging to' al-Qaeda have also demonstrated a great aptitude for long-term planning and a more conscious selection of both targets and victims than the more internal insurgent movements. The willingness to use violence is, however, the same: 'anybody' seen as an 'enemy of the insurgents' and what they stand for, is to be threatened and, if necessary, destroyed by means of the systematic use of violent methods.⁶⁶²

⁶⁶² The establishment of a common leadership (abbreviated to SOCOM) for consistent leadership of all Special Forces had/has the objective of building bridges between the conventional forces and unconventional missions. This force, about 30,000 in size, has in many ways trained exactly for direct collaboration with other countries' political and military institutions (called Foreign Irregular Threats Internal Defence activities). The United States has, therefore, to some extent, seen the need for

As mentioned earlier in this book, the United States Army and U.S. Marines developed a new counterinsurgency doctrine, published in December 2006.⁶⁶³ But both the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps had used an interim doctrine for some time, as there was an urgent need for it.⁶⁶⁴ The Americans had tried many different approaches in Iraq during the period from autumn 2003 until autumn 2006, with little progress. The 2006 doctrine combines the new lessons from Iraq and Afghanistan with historical experiences:

The doctrine warns against some of the practices used early in the war, when the military operated without an effective counterinsurgency playbook. It cautions against overly aggressive raids and mistreatment of detainees. Instead it emphasizes the importance of safeguarding civilians and restoring essential services, and the rapid development of local security forces. (...) The new doctrine is part of a broader effort to change the culture of a military that has long promoted the virtues of using firepower and battlefield maneuvers in swift, decisive operations against a conventional enemy. (...)

Instead of massing firepower to destroy Republican Guard troops and other enemy forces, as was required in the opening weeks of the invasion of Iraq, the draft manual emphasizes the importance of minimizing civilian casualties. "The more force used, the less effective it is," it notes. Stressing the need to build up local institutions and encourage economic development, the manual cautions against putting too much weight on purely military solutions. "Tactical success guarantees nothing," it says.⁶⁶⁵

But would fighting according to the new doctrine really work? Retired General Jack Keane (former acting U.S. Army Chief of Staff) seems to have hit the nail on the head when he commented on the doctrine in *The New York Times*:

The Army will use this manual to change its entire culture as it transitions to irregular warfare. But the Army does not have nearly enough resources, particularly in terms of people, to meet its global responsibilities while making such a significant commitment to irregular warfare.⁶⁶⁶

this, as discussed previously in this point, and has tried to do something about it.

663 FM 3-24.

664 U.S. Marine Corps, Tentative Manual for Countering Irregular Threats: An Updated Approach to Counterinsurgency Operations, Marine Corps Combat Development Command, June 2006. See also U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Counterinsurgency*, Field Manual FM 3-24, Fleet Marine Force Manual FMFM 3-24, June 2006 (Final Draft).

665 Michael R. Gordon, 'Military Hones a New Strategy on Insurgency', *The New York Times*, 5 October 2006.

666 Gordon (2006).

In the earlier mentioned interview with Octavian Manea, Kilcullen indirectly gives an answer to the problems General Keane brought up in 2006 – how to man a viable counterinsurgency force. The solution General Petraeus chose in 2007 is probably the only way to go – local recruitment, under control of the threatened regime. The answer Kilcullen gave is in many ways a ‘manifesto’ for modern (2011) American COIN thinking:

Which is the strategic rationale for creating local defense initiatives, local concerned citizens?

I wouldn't call it strategic rationale so much as strategic arithmetic. Let's imagine that we could have put 50,000 additional US troops into Iraq during the 2007 surge – we couldn't because we didn't have the capacity. But let's imagine that we could. By the time the 50,000 troops arrive in the country you will lose about 20,000 troops (about 40% of the troops will be focused on a non-combat role, headquarters, and logistics and so on). And if you put them in a rotational plan you will only have 10,000 people on the ground at any one time. The return of your investment, if you like, is only 10,000 people. You balance this investment with recruiting 50,000 Iraqis. If you recruit 50,000 Iraqis you don't have any logistic functions to worry about. You don't have a rotational plan because they already live in the environment; they are all out there at any one time. So you have all the 50,000 available at any one time. They have all the families out there so you can leverage a huge network, probably four or five times the size of the people that are working for you, reporting and letting you know what is happening. And most importantly those people that are actually working for you used to be in the recruiting base for the enemy. But now they are in your recruiting base. So at the end of the day you have taken people away from the enemy while putting them in your camp.

On one hand we deploy 50,000 western troops and we have a benefit of 10,000. We deploy the same number of local troops and you have a benefit of at least ten times. It is strategic arithmetic as much as a strategic rationale. If you want to have enough people on the ground to understand the environment, to make it secure, working with local people it is much more effective by magnitudes than working with foreign troops. But you need to do this with clear safeguards, because they could suck the oxygen away from the legitimate national government. What we found, both in Iraq and Afghanistan, you have to have really robust safeguards in place to make sure that you have a demobilization plan, a plan for linking them up under the authority of the local government. You have to have all these things in place. If you don't, it

can be potentially very dangerous. It's like taking a powerful medicine without the right precautions. ⁶⁶⁷

The former U.S. Marine Corps Commandant Charles C. Krulak, in his 'Vision of Future Warfighting' published in *Navy Times-Marine Corps Edition*, used the battle in the Teutoburger Forest in 9 AD, between Roman legions and German tribes, as a warning for the future. And the relevance of this historical event may be a reminder:

In 9 A.D., a Roman proconsul by the name of Quintus Varus led three Roman legions across the inner Germanic border. Their mission was to put down a rebellion that was taking place in a German tribe headed by a man name Armenius.

This was the second time Varus had done this. Three years prior, he crossed the same border, attacked the same tribe and decimated them – sending more than 20.000 men, women and children back to Rome as slaves. Here he was crossing again. He came in three columns and at the head of each column was the famous Roman eagle, signifying the power of Rome.

On a hot August morning, at a place called Teutoburger Forest, where the city of Menden is currently located, the Romans and the Germans came together. But as the sun was setting at the end of the day, Varus was fighting a desperate rear-guard action, having been torn to pieces. And as he was driving toward the border a day or so away he had his head down and he could be heard saying over and over again, Ne Cras! Ne Cras! Which stands for, Not Like Yesterday. ⁶⁶⁸

His point was that he was certain that the enemy of the U.S., whoever it may be, would employ a wide variety of actions to try to bring down the U.S. forces to their level. As the military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have confirmed, enemies will attempt to avoid facing the military strengths of the U.S./Western forces and attack their weaknesses instead, i.e. seeking battle on their own terms to limit the effects of Western technological overmatch. Success or failure in most land combat depends on the training standard of soldiers and leadership quality of junior officers and NCOs. But if the political aim of the planned campaign is not clearly formulated and understood, and the ground commanders understand the enemy and are able to 'see the battlefield', there is the possibility that they will end up like Varus. And as we have

⁶⁶⁷ Manca (2010), p. 5.

⁶⁶⁸ Charles C. Krulak, 'Not Like Yesterday'/In His Own Words, Commandant Describes His Vision of Future Warfighting', *Navy Times-Marine Corps Edition*, 19 January 1998.

seen in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the need for 'boots on the ground' is still very high in all forms of COIN operations lasting many years.

At this point, I will, by means of a few examples and a presentation of relevant thinking on counterinsurgency, attempt to describe some ideas that have been used in connection with earlier attempts at bringing insurgencies under control. There is much to suggest that the decisive factor in this kind of development is normally not new technology, but being able to set realistic targets and follow up these objectives over a long period of time. However, there is hardly any 'miracle method' that ensures that those making use of this method/these theories will win in the end.

4.7.3. Northern Ireland – an example of a lengthy conflict/LIC

Can we learn anything from this conflict? Many people have studied the developments in Northern Ireland. This long low-intensity conflict in Western Europe has cost more than 2,000 lives over the last 30 years. Without a doubt, this 'war' satisfies the requirements for being an LIC, as previously defined herein. There are undoubtedly differences in maturity from one regime to another, something that can obviously be seen when they are challenged. The manner in which the British have attempted to limit/control the conflict has also varied over time.

During its reign of terror in Northern Ireland, the IRA often *ignored* the element of the local population that remained passive to the terrorist activity. However, the terrorists focused broadly and ruthlessly on those they regarded as *disagreeing* with them, even if these parties remained passive. The Englishman Richard Clutterbuck has, in one of his books, stated that, after a little more than three years of 'warfare', the IRA had used four times as many explosives as *The Special Operations Executive* had used for sabotage attacks in France during the entire Second World War, but no details of the operations are presented in the book.⁶⁶⁹

The terror in Northern Ireland is rather unique for other reasons: the actual guerrilla warfare and the associated terror were conducted somewhat differently in urban areas than in rural areas. The conflict was also characterised by media campaigns carried out by both sides while secret political negotiations with the British and Irish Governments were ongoing. The breadth of non-violent activities demonstrated in the IRA's campaign provides an interesting contrast to all the conflicts in rural districts in the Third World of which we have gained experience. As a result of having lasted so many years, the conflict in Northern Ireland has gone through so many stages over such a long time that changes in technological and political maturity can clearly be seen and assessed. Entire *political careers* have actually run their course within the time frame of this conflict.

⁶⁶⁹ Richard Clutterbuck, *Protest and the Urban Guerrilla* (New York: Abelard-Schumann, 1974), p. 100.

The UK parliamentary election in May 2010 confirmed the polarisation of Northern Irish politics. The moderate parties lost out to the more hard-line politicians on either side. The winners were the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and the Sinn Féin (SF). Now the two former opponents share power in government and their representatives appear together at joint meetings.

The last few years have clearly paid off as former terrorists now enjoy media recognition as high-level politicians. The 'back channel' of secret negotiations between the Provisional IRA (PIRA) and the British government resulted in a gradual reduction of internal resistance in the PIRA to a ceasefire and a subsequent transfer of focus from the Armalite to the ballot box. The approach proves clearly that a degree of dialogue is vital if any settlement is to be reached. Nevertheless, the PIRA leadership will undoubtedly have been aware of the gradual penetration of their organisation by British intelligence. Even PIRA staff members very close to the current leadership have been proven to have acted for the intelligence services.

The continuing growth of the engagement with the political process appears, however, to have left an increasingly determined rump of activists behind. Currently labelled vaguely as 'dissident republicans' these activists are becoming better organised, better equipped and more determined to continue the armed struggle.

By way of contrast, Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin president, will in the spring of 2011 contest a seat in the Irish Parliament, whilst his colleague on the executive, Martin McGuinness, already shares power in Northern Ireland as Deputy First Minister, with the DUP. At the same time, intelligence sources suggest that dissidents are gaining strength in Derry, McGuinness' own powerbase, as well as in parts of Belfast.⁶⁷⁰ This growth had, apparently, neither been recognised nor detected by MI5 until very recently. The intelligence services are said to have been cutting back on resources and on their involvement at the very time when dissidents ramped up their activities.⁶⁷¹ Already during the spring of 2010, the Monitoring Commission reported that there was 'tactical ad hoc cooperation' between various groups of dissidents.⁶⁷² Albeit quite ad hoc, such cooperation may well be increasing, and with it the actual threat level. The report goes on to point out that there is already an 'increased level and range of covert terrorist activity'⁶⁷³ and at least one group is said to be 'training, recruiting and working to secure weapons'.⁶⁷⁴

670 'Terror alert as Sands date looms', article *Sunday Times*, 9 January 2011.

671 'Police are struggling to deal with dissidents, says report', *Belfast Telegraph*, 17 November 2010, <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/northern-ireland/police-are-struggling-to-deal-with-dissidents-says-report-15002137.html>.

672 *Twenty-Third Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission*. Presented to the Houses of Parliament by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in accordance with the Northern Ireland (Monitoring Commission etc.) Act 2003, Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on 26 May 2010, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, HC 17, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/docs/imc/imc260510.pdf>.

673 Op. Cit., p. 6

674 Op. Cit., p. 8

The reality may well be that there has not been a greater threat from republican terrorists for at least a decade and to call them ‘dissidents’ is increasingly becoming a misnomer. This is the real threat to peace in Northern Ireland – a threat that is becoming increasingly united. A new report (2010) confirms this sentiment.⁶⁷⁵ The main conclusions of this report, which was written by Dr Martyn Frampton, Queen Mary, University of London, are as follows:

- Growing influence of dissidents. Dissident groups appear to enjoy increasing prominence in certain ‘republican areas’ in Northern Ireland: south Fermanagh, Derry city (Bogside and Creggan), south Derry, north Armagh (Lurgan-Craigavon), east Tyrone, south Armagh and Belfast (north and west).
- Changing power structures in republican areas. The growth in dissident strength has been paralleled by the retraction and withering of the Provisional IRA in some areas, as well as other structures of social support for the broader Provisional movement (Sinn Féin offices, community groups etc.).
- Dissident capacities remain potent and lethal. Such groups do not have to go through the same ‘learning curve’ as many other start-up terrorist groups. There are a number of individuals within their ranks who were heavily involved in the IRA’s campaign before 1998 and who retain high levels of operational experience, including bomb-making.
- A weakened security structure. The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has struggled to respond to the challenge posed by dissident republicans. Some senior officers or former senior officers have admitted the existence of a skills-gap, following changes to the policing and security infrastructure since 1998, alongside budgetary cuts.
- Talking does not provide an easy answer. It has been suggested that the best way to deal with these groups is to talk to them, as happened with the IRA. However, their whole *raison d’être* is to oppose the political process, and to avoid the traps of negotiation which they believe the leadership of Sinn Féin fell into in the 1990s.⁶⁷⁶

At the same time, Gusty Spence, one of the founding members of the *Ulster Volunteer Force* (UVF), one of the most militant protestant groups, has called for the organisation to be disbanded. In the scheme of things, Spence’s initiative, although not confirmed as reflecting current UVF leadership views, shows maturity.

⁶⁷⁵ Martyn Frampton, ‘*The Return of the Militants: Violent Dissident Republicanism*’, A policy report published by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR), http://www.icsr.info/publications/papers/1289498383ICSR_TheReturnoftheMilitantsReport.pdf.

⁶⁷⁶ No author is named for the King’s College comment, ‘Report on violent dissidents threat published’ Posted on 12/11/2010, *King’s College London*, <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/newsevents/news/newsrecords/2010/nov/reportonviolentdissidentsthreatpublished.aspx>.

It is not via continued ‘tit for tat’ terrorism between the two sides that the peace in Northern Ireland is allowed to prosper. As a recent article in the local press argued, it is up to the current Sinn Fein leadership to tackle the dissidents on their side of the traditional divide.⁶⁷⁷ This is correct as far as it goes, but there is a clearly a need to fill the intelligence ‘black hole’ that opened after the transition from the old Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) to the new Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and it is assumed work by the MI5.

Civic powers continue to work with law enforcement agencies and intelligence resources even in stable, mature democracies. The situation in Northern Ireland, which is probably still on ‘block three’ of the so-called *Three Block War scenario*, is no different. Sectarian violence in Northern Ireland is not a closed case.

4.7.4. What is of importance for COIN operations?

Historically, it has proved to be the case that, if a political regime is not able to identify and systematically overcome the infrastructure that the insurgents have built up, the new and, initially, weak regime will simply not be able to survive. In conventional warfare one *cannot* win the war by fighting individual soldiers and small units. The overall aim of warfare is to overcome the enemy state’s *military* capacity and *will* to continue the war.

Two terms that have become increasingly common after 9/11 are anti-terrorism⁶⁷⁸ and counter-terrorism (CT) (see Chapter 3).⁶⁷⁹ The first term has been used to refer to the more passive or defensive measures implemented by the government forces and to the measures that individuals and companies can implement to reduce their own vulnerability or to protect private property against devastation. Counter-terrorism is a newer term that covers the more active, often *offensive* measures that are implemented to prevent, deter and/or foil terrorism.

Similarly, in modern counterinsurgency in the context of various forms of guerrilla warfare/low-intensity warfare, one’s own forces must attempt to overcome the insurgents’ *organisation* as an entity, and one cannot satisfy oneself with overcoming small armed groups or other peripheral elements if one is to have any hope of winning. Unless those who lead the combined military and civilian efforts of states are able to understand this important distinction, even a great power can have problems defeating

677 Ed Curran, ‘Nationalists hold the key to curtailing dissidents’ threats’, *Belfast Telegraph*, 9 November 2010.

678 U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Antiterrorism*, Joint Publication JP 3-07.2, 14 April 2006. Quote from FM 3-0: ‘2-62. *Antiterrorism* is defensive measures used to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and property to terrorist acts, to include limited response and containment by local military and civilian forces (JP 3-07.2). It is a protection task.’

679 Quote from FM 3-0, Point 2-61. ‘*Counterterrorism* is operations that include the offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, preempt, and respond to terrorism (JP 3-05). Counterterrorism actions include strikes and raids against terrorist organizations and facilities outside the United States and its territories. Although counterterrorism is a specified mission for selected special operations forces, conventional Army forces may also contribute. Commanders who employ conventional forces against terrorists are conducting offensive operations, not counterterrorism operations,’ p. 2–12.

a well-organised insurgent movement. Taking out the insurgent *leadership* is maybe more important in counterinsurgency than in ordinary warfare. This is because:

- An insurgent movement will, for security reasons, have as much information as possible stored centrally with its leadership. The troops will seldom be given access to imminent military plans and never access to the strategy for winning.
- An insurgent movement does not have the same ability to replace its leadership as regular forces (where you have a system of ranks, procedures for appointments, etc.).
- An insurgent leader needs to have special charisma and a cult of the individual is often built up around him. Without a leader, the actual organisation may collapse, as happened in Peru (PCP), Angola (UNITA) and Turkey (PKK).

In addition, the leadership of an insurgency rarely has any special physical protection. The leaders often live in a base area or concealed among the population. If one has good intelligence, there is a chance of taking out the persons in question.

In 1991, the Israeli historian and military theorist Martin van Creveld claimed in his book *Transformation of War* something similar to what the French theoretician Trinquier discussed in the 1960s.⁶⁸⁰ Creveld asserted that we would see a decline in traditional warfare between conventional state forces, and warfare would be dominated by insurgents, guerrilla forces, terrorism and other forms of undermining states. And based on his analysis, Creveld ‘prophesied’ that future wars will be waged by groups of terrorists, guerrillas and bandits motivated by fanatical, ideology-based loyalties. Conventional battles will be replaced by a mix of skirmishes, bombings and massacres. Today, this is a not uncommon point of view and many modern analysts have come to the same conclusion as Trinquier: they realise that, if one is to be able to deal with the actual problems in connection with warfare, one must be able to distinguish, on the one hand, between traditional conventional warfare and what works in this respect and, on the other hand, the political methods and objectives, tactics, combat techniques and, not least, norms that apply within guerrilla and insurgent movements.

In his time, Trinquier described developments as he saw them, after he had, by way of introduction, compared the relative resources between a state and an insurgent movement. He described the problem as this:

By studying this table (Note: the table titled ‘traditional army versus guerrilla band’ on p. 62 of his book), we can see that the guerrilla’s greatest advantages

⁶⁸⁰ van Creveld (1991).

*are his perfect knowledge of an area (which he himself has chosen) and its potential, and the support given him by the inhabitants.*⁶⁸¹

If one is to be successful in turning an imminent defeat into victory, according to Trinquier, those combating the insurgency must understand the following:

We have already seen how indispensable the support of the population is to the guerrilla. It is possible for him to exist only where the people give him their unqualified support. He cannot live among a populace he has not previously organized and subjected to his will, because it is from it that he must draw his sustenance and protection. (...)

*But this total dependence upon terrain and population is also the guerrilla's weak point. We should be able, with our more powerful potential, to make him submit or to destroy him by acting upon his terrain and upon his support – the population.*⁶⁸²

This French experience has later been reiterated by different authors who have studied insurgencies and guerrilla war. If a threatened regime is to be able to hope for lasting progress against a well-led and organised guerrilla movement, it must the entire time work actively and systematically to get the local population on its side, while at the same time maintaining the military, police and administrative pressure on the guerrilla's military forces and political cadres. In practice, this is an extremely complicated operation that in most cases may need to go on for many years. A lasting political solution can be arrived at only once the guerrilla movement realises that it cannot win militarily.

An insurgent movement that wants to negotiate will often *increase* its military activity before the negotiations. In so doing, they want to give the impression that they have grown in strength and are on the way to winning and thereby seek to ensure a better negotiating position; one example is the FMLN's 'final offensive' in 1989.⁶⁸³ The use of 'poker tactics' like these is not easy to see through if one does not have good intelligence. Obviously, the government forces could use the same tactics prior to the desired negotiations.

Similarly, the ruling regime must be prepared to undertake the necessary social, economic and political reforms to get the population on its side. There is always a reason why this type of insurgency breaks out and, if the government is not able to accommodate reasonable demands from the areas that have supported the insurgency,

681 Trinquier (1964), p. 62, new edition 2006, p. 52.

682 Ibid., pp. 62–64, new edition 2006), p. 53.

683 Joes, (1996), p. 143.

the insurgency will probably continue (or break out again, even if one has achieved a temporary negotiated solution).

As already previously demonstrated, several of the earlier theorists presented a historical lesson about counterinsurgency: these efforts will not work if one is content with passive measures like patrols driving around in built-up or rural areas. This type of activity is never sufficient to be able to monitor and eventually overcome a well-organised insurgent movement. As already previously indicated, it is necessary for the counterinsurgents to continuously take action to neutralise both the insurgents' open and secret organisations so that the insurgents will not succeed in forcing their will upon the local population. The ruling regime must fight the insurgents' *infrastructure* if it is to survive. In other words, the insurgents must be fought with the means that are available. Seen in this light, this is a feature of guerrilla warfare that bears several similarities to how traditional warfare is fought. No effective warfare is primarily based on 'hunting' individuals or small units. One assumes that the key factors are the state's total resources and particularly its willingness to continue the war. In 'the new wars' being fought it is probably vital to focus on the fact that one is attempting to overcome an organisation and not just be satisfied with combating its military power or other external symbols of power. Without being successful in combating the insurgency's central organisational ability/leadership, the insurgents will, even after having losses inflicted on them, always be able to reorganise and come back stronger. In the previously discussed book, Trinquier proposes three simple principles as to how one should think with regard to political and military efforts:

1. Make sure that a distinction is made between the guerrilla and the population that has initially supported the insurgency.⁶⁸⁴
2. Take (physical) control of the areas from which the guerrilla initially began the insurgency, make these areas dangerous for him to operate from and focus on turning the local population against the guerrilla movement.
3. Maintain long-lasting and well-coordinated campaigns in as big an area as one is able to. This will contribute to making it difficult for the guerrilla to regain control over important population centres that can provide real support for the guerrilla.⁶⁸⁵ (It should be noted in this respect that this is, to an extent, in contrast to the experiences the Americans had from their 'sweep' operations.)

The wording of the three 'maxims' summarised above is obviously rather general. The problems dealt with here run through today's debate on control structures and the size of modern ground forces. If, for example, small national armies are to participate

⁶⁸⁴ Probably he is thinking more about scaring the population from collaborating with the insurgents than what the British have called 'winning hearts and minds' campaigns.

⁶⁸⁵ Trinquier (1964), pp. 113–115.

in operations of this nature, it is necessary to look at the size of the ground forces that will be eventually required. Continuity of involvement requires so-called *staying power*, and staying power obviously requires a certain amount of forces, and this quantity necessitates sufficient units organised and trained for the purpose. A supply of modern equipment and techniques is not enough to be able to keep things going for a long time, e.g. this has been a major American problem in Iraq and Afghanistan after 2003. More than material factors, the relatively modest numbers of forces given the size of a given country and the size of its population govern how effectively the hostile population can be controlled and also determine the size of the forces required to control the population. Those who hold the political and military leadership in a given situation must themselves formulate the necessary concrete plans and procure the resources that the measures require. In reality, this is not an easy task, given the bureaucratic barriers that we have often seen when conventional forces attempt to organise and maintain these actual forms of pressure on an insurgent movement over a long period of time.

If one is to have any hope of being successful in implementing and carrying out operations based on the three recommended principles, one must also have developed a good intelligence capacity. It is not enough to have access to satellite pictures and technical intelligence. There is, at least in the initial phase of a counterinsurgency, a confrontation over who controls the population and has the initiative.

If one is to have success, one must have both access to the prevailing thoughts of the population and a deep understanding of the cultural factors that have led to there being popular support for the insurgency. As a legacy of the Cold War, Western intelligence has normally primarily concentrated on the technical gathering of information, but has little capacity for good cultural and language skills – the two most important factors if so-called ‘human intelligence’ (HUMINT) is to function as intended. Many of the sources that have written about American intelligence problems during the continuation war in Iraq point precisely to how weak these skills are within HUMINT.⁶⁸⁶

As previously mentioned, it was also Trinquier’s firm conviction that intelligence is one of the most important factors if one is to succeed in combating insurgents. Similar points of view have also been expressed by Sir Robert Thompson, Walter Laqueur, John S. Pustay and Douglas S. Blaufarb (see Chapter One and the bibliography).⁶⁸⁷

686 One commentator who was clearly well informed was Matt Kelley. See, for example, his article ‘U.S. Intelligence Effort Lacking in Specialists’, *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 22 November 2003, p. 1. (Otherwise, see the published extract from the Congress hearings on the Iraq war that are available on the Internet.)

687 Three ‘standard works’ on the war in Algeria are: Charles-Robert Ageron, *Modern Algeria: A History from 1830 to Present* (London: Hurst and Company, 1991), John Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins and Development of a Nation* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992), Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954–1962*, (London: Penguin Books, 1987, revised edition). For those wanting a more detailed read on the warfare itself, see Alf Andrew Heggoy, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Algeria* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1972). An interesting work written by one of the central participants is: André Beaufre, *La Guerre Révolutionnaire* [Revolutionary War] (Paris: Fayard, 1972).

But Trinquier points out that a successful insurgent movement will require 'safe areas' that the guerrilla can operate from as well as a local situation where the insurgents can 'gather in' resources that they have taken from the ruling regime and the local population. As previously demonstrated, 'safe areas' are today perhaps more of a myth, unless the rebels/insurgents may freely cross the border to and from a kindly disposed state.

When the Americans published the official military doctrine document FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* in December 2006, the author of the document obviously drew on some of the classical theoretical works written in the 1960s as important sources. It looks like the writing of the document was especially influenced by the works of David Galula and Sir Robert Thompson. In the earlier mentioned interview, done for the Romanian edition of *Foreign Policy* by Octavian Manea, David Kilcullen was asked about who had influenced the work. His answer was:

*Galula and Thompson are both what I would call classical counterinsurgency theorists of the '50s and '60s. They were highly influential about 5 years ago in the drafting of FM 3-24, the US Army and Marine Corps COIN Manual. The main ideas that came from them were ideas about population security (focusing on the population, building political alliances with the population, making people feel safe). I would say that today's counterinsurgency has actually moved a long way since 2006. What we actually are doing on the ground is probably a generation beyond FM 3-24. People have really absorbed and assimilated a lot of initial ideas and then moved on. A lot of what we are now doing is focused on issues like rule of law, counter-corruption and governance extension. The other really big departure has to do with local security forces. The biggest development since 2006 has been the Sons of Iraq (95,000 Sunnis that turned against AQ and joined our side). If you read Galula, FM 3-24 or Robert Thompson, there is nothing in there about that. It is not part of the concept of classical counterinsurgency – that you win over and make allies of former enemies. The experience of Anbar Awakening, in particular, and the experience we've had in issues like rule of law have taken us another generation beyond. Galula and Thompson remain extremely important as foundational pillars of classical COIN theory, but the practice in the field has moved on significantly in the last 5 years.*⁶⁸⁸

There may be another view on the continued theoretical development, but in my view Kilcullen here gives a realistic evaluation of the current winds of change in the COIN community.

⁶⁸⁸ Manea (2010), p. 2.

It is also critical for the insurgent movement to be able to keep the initiative and ensure that it controls its own information/propaganda so that it does not have an adverse impact on its own movement. Similarly, it will then be important for the ruling regime to be able to deny the insurgents 'free' access to the community's resources in the form of infrastructure, financial support and food items. It is also important to be able to operate proactive and wrench the initiative from the insurgents and their supporters and to ensure that one's own information and propaganda can deal with and dismiss the insurgents' corresponding psychological warfare and desire to discredit the ruling regime.

Ordinary citizens normally want predictability, good order and personal safety for everyone in their family. Safety in an insurgent-infested environment comes from knowing where you stand and knowing what you should and should not do. If you follow the rules, you will be relatively safe. It is always dangerous for locals to disobey insurgent organisations like al-Qaeda, Hezbollah or the Taliban – if the insurgents take control in an area, they may punish people accused of supporting the government side. If the counterinsurgents are to be able to counter the rebels'/insurgents' control over the population, those who are combating the insurgency must organise a kind of 'counter control'. In practice, it has often proved to be necessary to construct a directory/index system of what is going on in the population – from the bottom up. And for this purpose, it is necessary to have an efficient strategy for how to approach the political aims decided on.

In the early phase of an insurgency, the so-called *introductory phase*, almost all activities take place at a tactical level. To counter these (local) threats, there must be a willingness on the threatened regime's side to think differently. The political and judicial system must be adjusted. There will be a need for a more flexible approach compared to how the bureaucratic systems work in a traditional, peaceful situation. The first step may be creating a list of who lives in an area, identifying the natural leaders among them. Perhaps the administration has such information? Or perhaps the local police already have such lists?

But in many developing countries, the local or regional administrations often have minimal control over who is living in an area, as the entire rural system is based on other criteria, e.g. the individual is part of a tribe or a clan. In the literature, especially in the field of social anthropology, it is possible to study a number of different population survival strategies in insurgency or warlike environments. People living in a contested area are surrounded from all sides by threats, and they will be approached by people demanding their allegiance, and activists are often willing to hurt or even kill civilians if they can not get their allegiance. What most ordinary people are looking for is of course a consistent, predictable system that gives them order and allows them to feel safe. Most people, even during a time with an ongoing insurgency, are looking

for ‘a space within that system’ in which they believe that if they follow the rules set by the government supporters *or the insurgents*, they are going to be safe. It is clearly at this lowest level that much can go wrong in every COIN environment.

If counterinsurgents do not take into account the local conditions, they will probably quickly fall out with the local political leaders or economic elite. Consequently, a list of the local hierarchies, including the religious and secular leadership, should be obtained. This is particularly important if one is operating within a traditional farming community, but similar (informal) hierarchies normally also exist in cities, particularly in the Third World. It is important to quickly get an overview of which local leaders are favourable to the regime and then play on this. Similarly, one must establish a system that enables one to follow what *active* enemies of the regime and/or guerrilla sympathisers are doing. In practice, this type of measure requires one to maintain censuses and issue identity cards with photographs, while developing an intelligence system that can cover the entire country. This is where Mao Zedong’s description of separating the ‘fish from the water’ applies, where the ‘fish’ are the insurgents – the insurgents are then ‘visible’ and can be fought.

One of the books that came out in the aftermath of the Vietnam War is *Tactical and Military Innovations*, written by one of the generals in the U.S. Army at that time, Lieutenant General John H. Hay and published in 1974. In the book, we see how short a distance the Americans had come in their insight into the nature of revolutionary war and counterinsurgency, even if they then had, at least theoretically, gained about 10 years of direct military experience of continual warfare in South Vietnam. The general wrote here about the importance of technology and helicopters, etc., and claimed that ‘the widespread use of helicopter’ was ‘the most significant advance of the Vietnam War’. He also stated that: ‘It is difficult to exaggerate the capabilities of the airmobile team in Vietnam; the team represented the most revolutionary change in warfare since the blitzkrieg.’⁶⁸⁹ Since this opinion came from one of the highest-ranking generals and one of those who had been involved in the Vietnam War, it provides us with cause for reflection. The opinion can be seen as an argument as to why, as late as in 1974, the U.S. Army had little insight into insurgencies. Even though the first U.S. attempts to study revolutionary war had started about 20 years earlier, and U.S. Special Forces had more or less actively participated in this form of warfare since the early 1960s, by the end of the Vietnam War the U.S. Army had still not yet understood what *the core* of revolutionary warfare was.

They probably did not realise what Mao’s kind of ‘Revolution in Military Affairs’ actually was: revolutionary warfare based on the assumption that the revolutionary was materially the weaker party. In order to compensate for the logistical and technological

⁶⁸⁹ John H. Hay, Jr., *Vietnam Studies: Tactical and Material Innovations* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1974), p. 179.

shortcomings that the revolutionaries realised they had, they focused entirely on developing the *political* aspect of warfare. This new reality was not yet understood within large sections of the U.S. Army's officer corps and they were consequently not able to understand that, in this kind of war, it is not just first-class materials and modified tactics that mean something. What is important is to ultimately win (or at least *avoid losing*) the war, not necessarily winning all skirmishes and battles. The so-called *body count* is normally of no great importance for the termination of war or who is winning or losing. If the population's sympathies lie with the insurgents, they will probably win the war if the threatened government (with or without foreign support) is not able to turn the tide in popular support.

If one were to summarise the long story that ended in defeat for South Vietnam in May 1975, ironically as the result of a *conventional* military invasion by North Vietnam, it would have to be that, despite an endless series of technological and organisational improvements and developments, the U.S. had only one main solution to all the problems they had encountered during the attempt to stop the Communist insurgency, namely, a massive use of firepower. And it was precisely firepower that General William Westmoreland (1914–2005) had used as a reply, not a total rearrangement of the actual doctrine for counterinsurgency.⁶⁹⁰ What was lacking among the American officer corps was an acceptable level of *politico-military* insight and experience, something that, despite everything, the higher British officers had to a far greater extent demonstrated the benefits of in connection with their many colonial wars in Asia and Africa during the same era. The importance of such an insight is, if possible, even more important today, particularly as a result of the new and clearly more offensive media coverage that is a reality of the world today.

The trick today is also to undertake the necessary political and military measures without these being seen as clearly offensive by the majority of people. This is definitely no easy task and can only be carried out if one has the necessary local knowledge and combines it with the selective use of military force.

4.7.5. 'A mixture of the use of force and persuasion'

If we are to try to summarise what normally characterises the various forms of insurgency, we see that there are two features that almost always recur:

1. The insurgents will implement a series of measures aimed at those who live in the actual area, with a view to directly influencing the population's support for the insurgency.

⁶⁹⁰ If one reads the general's own memoirs, we see that he did not entirely understand, even in the aftermath, what he had been up against in the shape of the Communist war leaders in North Vietnam; see William Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1989), p. 275, pp. 280–283.

2. In addition, they will implement a series of measures against the enemy, i.e. against the ruling regime and the machinery of power the government represents.

The two circumstances mentioned above will always be connected and consequently those coming from outside often find it difficult to distinguish between them. If the insurgent movement is to have any success, its methods must be adapted within both areas and it should be able to adapt its own methods in such a way that they fit in with local circumstances.

Insurgent movements most commonly use a combination of pressure and persuasion aimed at the population, i.e. success will be a result of how they manage to achieve a successful mixture of the use of force and persuasion. Seen through the eyes of the *insurgents*, success will depend on achieving the 'correct mixture' of violence, political approaches, psychology and economic pressure – adapted to the situation, and especially to the strength of the central power. If the insurgents are to be successful in carrying out a coordinated programme like this, the insurgents' leaders must succeed in developing an adapted organisation. To this end, they may take control of an established party or largish organisation or, as is most common, develop a new organisation.

The ethnic Albanian organisation UCK, which was almost 'apolitical' during the Kosovo War in 1999, appointed a political representative from amongst its ranks. The so-called UCK-Macedonia insurgents did the same three years later. In the case of ethnically-based insurgent movements like these, it is not strictly necessary for them to seek political allies in this manner. This is because the insurgents will usually *nevertheless* receive support from their own ethnic group.

Those who are to participate in counterinsurgency should have realistic objectives from the very beginning. As previously indicated, there are many examples of less successful attempts that one could possibly study and try to learn something from. It is important that all key civilian and military leaders know something about this form of warfare. If not, they are hardly able to prioritise properly.

How should military organisations be *designed* in order to not only be able to meet the military objectives set, but to also accommodate the overriding political objectives? And, along the same lines, are the political objectives that have been set sufficiently precise for the military and the political taskmasters to design a *comprehensive* military, political, economic and social approach to conflict resolution in ongoing (or future) campaigns and operations? It is difficult to give an answer to the last question, but it is of vital importance for future war planning that one has an insight into the complexity of this issue and tries to see beyond the next battle. There are many historical examples of leaders who became involved in wars where they had no clear strategic

goals and realised a bit too late into the war that they did not really know why they were taking part. The Johnson administration, which had begun the escalation of direct military support to South Vietnam from March 1965, can perhaps be accused of having 'lost its direction' after the Communist Tet Offensive in the spring of 1968 – and eventually became unable to find adequate policies and military responses to the developments that the escalation of the war had led to.

If a regime and its supporters are to be able to resist a well-led insurgency, they must eventually succeed in securing victory in the battle for the support of the population. Then the methods one uses must eventually be adapted to the real situation for these efforts to achieve the desired effect. There is hardly any perfect 'recipe' for organising and leading counterinsurgency and, historically, it has proved necessary to organise oneself in extremely different ways. This also depends on the local geography, demography, climate and what form of society is threatened. Furthermore, it is particularly important to what extent the insurgents actually receive support from the local population – if any at all.

As previously indicated several times, both the government and insurgents must be able to combine political, economic and psychological measures with efforts to directly influence the population while, at the same time, carrying out armed attacks against the adversary if they are to have success. We also see that those who have personal experience of leading counterinsurgency efforts, and who have later written about this, all emphasise that several coordinated measures are required. Operations carried out by the state's security forces, including the military forces, are useful if they are implemented within the defensive concept that one assumes has been laid down in order to meet the new threat. If the importance of a holistic view such as this is not understood, military efforts will often contribute to consolidating negative developments.

The actual civilian leaders, officers, soldiers and other state bodies and officials participating in combating terrorism must have access to this type of knowledge and experience if they are to have success in counterinsurgency. But if the ruling regime is not able to adjust its policies in order to meet the new challenges, the efforts of the existing security forces are hardly likely to be enough to turn these negative developments around and the regime will fall sooner or later. The security forces must try to create a distinction between the terrorists/insurgents and the 'normal' civilian population that the insurgents recruit from. If the rebels/insurgents can recruit freely, it will be difficult to achieve lasting success in an ongoing counterinsurgency campaign. Consequently, civilian efforts, including the political element, are at least as important as purely military and police efforts when one is faced with a largish and eventually well-organised insurgency.

4.7.6. Military and civilian measures should be aligned

The lessons learned from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will probably be important, not only for potential insurgent movements and terrorist groups, but also for the Western countries and their allies in exposed areas. It is also important that the modern, more successful insurgent movements will probably draw the conclusion from the conflicts of the past 10 years that such insurgencies are winnable, even against a strong adversary, if one is able to keep the war going for a long period of time. The most important thing, seen through the eyes of the insurgents, will be to split the Western and/or other major actors that have strong militaries so that they are unable to establish effective collaboration and participation in operations in a conflict area.⁶⁹¹

At the same time, insurgents will probably always try to avoid a massive American presence, i.e. make things so expensive in terms of money and human life for the U.S. that the Americans give up attempting to *win* the local conflicts that are of less strategic significance to them. The ideal scenario might be to cause the Americans to withdraw from an area of conflict (or a general withdrawal of Western forces) as we saw in, for example, Somalia in late 1993. An insurgent movement may try to achieve this by, for instance, directing operations at 'soft targets', by influencing local support for 'the foreigners' and synchronising its activities, placing great emphasis on exploiting Western and regional pressure, i.e. by employing its own information operations (through the use of different types of media and direct contact with the targeted population). The 'rule of thumb' for propaganda today is clear: To focus on attacks on civilians in the *local* press. In the external/international press, it is the loss of intervention force soldiers that perhaps provides the greatest impact.

As previously indicated, these new conflicts will require extended cooperation between military and civilian authorities if one is to have any success against a competently led insurgent movement. In concrete terms, a form of 'integration' of *Civil Military Operations* (CMO) and 'pure' *Civil Affairs* (CA) is required, preferably so that they appear to be parallel activities but are nevertheless coordinated. In addition, there are obviously purely military and police stabilisation and security tasks that also require the national security forces to be able to operate side by side with foreign troops that have been sent to a conflict area.

There is much to suggest that psychological factors are always of major significance. When I have been involved in discussions about COIN with British officers, I have heard on several occasions that in Great Britain many believe, on the basis of their experience, that the effect of ongoing military operations diminishes dramatically after about 100 days. All the investments made during this relatively short period, e.g. by means of CMO and CA, will have a substantial positive effect but, if

⁶⁹¹ This division is in many ways a reality in the Europe of today; however, insurgents can only partly take credit for this. As during, for instance, the Vietnam War and the Nicaragua conflict, these divisions often follow traditional party lines.

these investments are made later, the effect will clearly diminish. If this observation is correct, this can only be due to psychological factors. The general expectation among the local population that the situation will improve as a result of the military intervention and clear military resolution is initially a particular advantage for the intervention force. When the anticipated improvements do not materialise, attitudes change to disappointment and gradually also to opposition and hostility towards the foreign forces from sections of the population. If those intervening do not 'strike the right chord' over the course of the first few weeks after launching a military intervention in a restless area, the *intervention force* itself risks being seen as the problem. This is not exactly 'fair' but can nevertheless happen, and one should consequently plan for this possibility. If one is to become involved in international operations, this is a danger that all military and civilian planners should keep in mind.

When participating in what is often an *ad hoc* coalition, particularly in the Third World, things can easily go wrong – and suddenly it is one's own forces that get the blame when things go wrong. We have seen this happen particularly in connection with several UN-led operations that were based on rather unclear political mandates. Although the intervention force may be initially seen as a liberator, it may eventually be regarded as the *main problem* – seen through the eyes of the insurgents, the intervention force turns into oppressors. If this is to be avoided, clear political mandates are necessary as well as access to knowledge about the area in question and the parties involved in the conflict. Furthermore, political support at home is required. One should always attempt to avoid a situation of the kind seen in Iraq, where insurgent activity has continued to mount since the summer of 2002.

4.8. Summing up

In his article 'Why the Strong Lose', published in the U.S. Army's periodical *Parameter* (2006), the American Jeffrey Record wrote:

*The continuing insurgency in Iraq underscores the capacity of the weak to impose considerable military and political pain on the strong. Whether that pain will compel the United States to abandon its agenda in Iraq remains to be seen. What is not in dispute is that all major failed US uses of force since 1945 – in Vietnam, Lebanon, and Somalia – have been against materially weaker enemies. In wars both hot and cold, the United States has fared consistently well against such powerful enemies as Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan, and the Soviet Union, but the record against lesser foes is decidedly mixed.*⁶⁹²

⁶⁹² Jeffrey Record, 'Why the Strong Lose', *Parameter*, Winter 2005–2006, p. 16.

As discussed earlier in this book, the United States fought a kind of counterinsurgency war in Vietnam from 1965 to 1972. Thirty years ago, Andrew Mack wrote a very interesting assessment, published a few months before the collapse of South Vietnam, according to which the factor that made the great difference was always the political will to fight and prevail in war. Successful rebellions after the Second World War against European colonial powers as well as in Vietnam against the United States all had one thing in common: 'the materially weaker insurgent was more politically determined to win because it had much more riding on the outcome of war than did the stronger external power, for whom the stakes were lower.'⁶⁹³ Jeffrey Record commented:

*Superior strength of commitment thus compensates for military inferiority. Because the outcome of the war can never be as important to the outside power as it is to those who have staked their very existence on victory, the weaker side fights harder, displaying a willingness to incur blood losses that would be unacceptable to the stronger side.*⁶⁹⁴

There is no agreement in the long-lasting debate about the Vietnam War, and analysts like Summers, Fall, Blaufarb, Nagl, Thompson, Record, Kilcullen et al. all give different perspectives on the developments. But Record has argued that the theory and practice of irregular warfare known under slogans such as 'protracted war' and 'revolutionary war', which Mao Zedong developed in the 1930s, made it possible for the Communists to win, first, in China and later in Vietnam. The theory has inspired later insurgents in many parts of the Third World, even non-Communist rebels.

It is likely that most of the American military and political leadership never really understood the *political nature* of this kind of warfare, nor the limits this imposed on the Americans' own conventional military power in the Vietnamese military and political setting. The American forces were unable to corner and really destroy an enemy with a superior will to win the war, facing a North Vietnamese leadership that had no political problem with taking heavy casualties:⁶⁹⁵

The stronger side's vulnerability to defeat in protracted conflicts against irregular foes is arguably heightened if it is a democracy. (...) For democracies, the strategy of "barbarism" against the weaker side's non-combatant social and political support base is neither morally acceptable nor, over time, political sustainable. Since 1945, wars against colonial or ex-colonial peoples have become increasingly unacceptable to most democratic states' political and moral

⁶⁹³ Record (2005–2006), p.17.

⁶⁹⁴ Record (2005–2006), p.17.

⁶⁹⁵ Record (2005–2006), p.20.

*sensibilities. (...) Democracies fail in small wars because, more specifically, they are unable to resolve three related dilemmas: "how to reconcile the humanitarian values of a portion of the educated class with the brutal requirements of counterinsurgency warfare, ... how to find a domestically acceptable trade-off between brutality and sacrifice, (and) how to preserve support for the war without undermining the democratic order".*⁶⁹⁶

Some of the critics of the American way of conducting the Vietnam War have taken issue with the Johnson administration's attempt at operating in a 'counterinsurgency mode', which they say almost guaranteed defeat. However, there is a problem here, as Harry G. Summers has shown in the introduction to his book, *On Strategy*:

*'You know you never defeated us on the battlefield', said the American colonel (Colonel Harry G. Summers). The North Vietnamese colonel pondered this remark (Colonel Tu, Chief, North Vietnamese [DRV] Delegation) a moment. 'That may be so', he replied, 'but it is also irrelevant'.*⁶⁹⁷

Summers also argues that it was not until after the Vietnam War had already been lost on the American *home front* that the U.S. Armed Forces put counterinsurgency into a proper perspective, namely, 'as a valuable adjunct to our military operations against North Vietnam'.⁶⁹⁸

Some have argued that the difficulty that the United States has had with counterinsurgency is a result of especially the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force not wanting to transform themselves in a way that would prioritise counterinsurgency. Instead, they have preferred conventional warfare based on technology and firepower superiority. This is an important and realistic claim. Some critics also argue that Washington's problem with counterinsurgency is a result of its unwillingness to be utterly ruthless. The last point is probably not a tenable explanation; neither Nazi Germany during the Second World War nor the Soviet Union can be accused of 'insufficient ruthlessness'. However, for example, the Yugoslav Partisan detachments wore down the German troops throughout their occupation, and the Afghan guerrillas did the same to the Soviet Army in the 1980s. Counterinsurgency is both strategically and tactically difficult, and as Summers wrote: 'tactical victory, strategic defeat' is always a possibility in this kind of war. The problem for a state and its political regime or for an occupying force like the United States and its Coalition partners in Iraq is that, unlike

696 Record (2005–2006), p. 21 (with reference to Merom (2003), p. 15. Merom wrote in his book: 'My argument is that democracies fail in small wars because they find it extremely difficult to escalate the level of violence and brutality to that which can secure victory.')

697 Summers (1982), see in Introduction, 'Conversations in Hanoi, 25th April 1975', p. 1 and 6.

698 Summers (1982), p. 156.

the insurgents who merely must not lose, the counterinsurgents must *try to win*. And because of asymmetric interests, *time* is probably rarely on the counterinsurgents' side. This point can be illustrated as follows: the single most important strategic error the Johnson administration made in Vietnam was in assuming that since they could not be defeated militarily, they might not win the war, but it was impossible that they could lose it.⁶⁹⁹

The Johnson administration failed to understand the principles of political and military asymmetry as an important part of revolutionary warfare, 'North Vietnamese style'. Unless the United States won the war in a reasonable time period, they risked problems: continuing to wage the war would have been politically *irrational*. Time is normally on the side of the insurgents if they have a sustainable force, and during the Vietnam war North Vietnam functioned as 'the secure base' for a *long war* the Communist leadership in Hanoi intended to win.

From history we know that lessons learned during a long war are applied most quickly at the tactical level. Squads, platoons and companies, which are most closely in contact with the insurgents and have the most immediate thing at stake – their lives – tend to learn and adapt very quickly. One measure of good morale is the speed at which soldiers who are in contact with the enemy learn and change their behaviour, and another measure is the extent to which these changes are incorporated into new command flexibility and military concepts/doctrines. In addition, a measure of *command effectiveness* is the speed at which the operational and military *strategic* lessons are learned and implemented in the military organisation. Historically, it also seems that normally it takes a longer time for Western generals/colonels to understand what is really going on *inside an insurgency* than it does for the junior ranks. Of course, there are exceptions, but this seems to be the most common tendency in a big bureaucratic organisation. And, naturally, in Western democratic structures, ultimately it is the political leadership who decides on the next step during a war. Changes to the political or military strategy will take time, and all changes entail a possible *loss of political credibility* for the ruling elite. This was what the American leadership had to deal with during the latter stages of the Vietnam War, and in 2006, before 'the surge', the Bush administration faced a similar situation three years into the war in Iraq. At any rate, parts of the American political establishment and sections of the American public had by 2006 already lost all hope of winning the war, and some groups were pressing hard for a military withdrawal. The insurgency war in Iraq had become a *political problem* for the Bush administration.

In the Iraq War in 2003, for instance, the Americans were surprised when their military worst-case scenario did not materialise: the Iraqi Army did *not* attempt to make a stand in Baghdad, forcing the U.S. military into urban (*attritional*) warfare.

⁶⁹⁹ Record (2005–2006), pp. 16–21.

And the Iraqi insurgents must also have been pleasantly surprised by the length of time it took the Americans and their Iraqi allies to realise that they were facing a flourishing insurgency/guerrilla war! The resulting slowness with which the U.S. military responded to the growing insurgency made it much easier to organise and develop the insurgency groups during 2003 and early 2004.

On the other hand, the Americans were astonished by the tenacity of the insurgency, both the guerrillas' ability to sustain heavy casualties and their loose command structure that provided autonomy to small units, yet, at the same time, enabled the guerrillas to launch attacks at politically sensitive points. Moreover, the insurgents must have been taken aback by the rapid *tactical* learning curve displayed by the American side, resulting in their guerrilla operations incurring increasingly heavy losses of fighters, as well as the political acumen that allowed the Americans and others to *contain* most of the insurgency to the Sunni regions.

But the situation became problematic for both the Americans and the new Iraqi regime, if seen from a COIN perspective. In January 2007, when President Bush announced his plans to reinforce American troops in Iraq, Shiite militias were seen as the main worry. Some analysts predicted that bloody clashes with Shiite militants in the Sadr City district in north-eastern Baghdad were all but inevitable, etc. Instead, during the early weeks of the operation, deadly bombings by Sunni Arab militants emerged as a greater danger. In particular, the threat posed by the Sunni group *Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia* was underscored when American troops seized a laptop computer from a senior operative in the group who was killed in late December 2006. The following text should speak for itself about the then still ongoing insurgency:

As outlined in the captured documents and other material that was seized, the group's initial strategy was to push Shiites out of western Baghdad. As part of the sectarian battle for the capital, the strategy also called for attacking Shiites in parts of nearby provinces, specifically southern Salahuddin, western Diyala and eastern Anbar, attacks that the group's leaders also calculated would put American and Iraqi troops on the defensive. (The documents, American officials say, also reflected a continued interest in obtaining chemical weapons.)

But Shiite militias, particularly Mahdi Army operatives, responded with their own offensive, forcing the Sunni militants to retreat. A Pentagon report to Congress noted in November that the main Shiite militia group, the Mahdi Army, had replaced Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia "as the most dangerous accelerant of potentially self-sustaining sectarian violence in Iraq." American forces, instead of withdrawing from the capital as the Sunni insurgents had hoped, prepared plans to reinforce their troops there.

According to captured memos portrayed in American intelligence reports, the group was frustrated with the Shiite militias' success, was unhappy with weapons shortages and was somewhat disorganized, according to an account by an American official who asked not to be identified because he was discussing intelligence matters. As a result, the organization adjusted its tactics. It began to rely more on the Sunni enclaves on the outskirts of Baghdad. Senior leaders rotated through the areas in order to direct operations while lower-level fighters operated in the capital.

Car-bomb components are also made in the surrounding Sunni areas and then smuggled into Baghdad, where they are assembled in the hope of killing Shiites and escalating sectarian violence. In a reflection of the group's tactical shift, car bombings have greatly increased this year, reaching a peak in Iraq in January and February, according to Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV, the top spokesman for the United States military. Of the 77 car bombings in Iraq in February, 44 were in Baghdad.

In addition to car bomb attacks, the group's basic tactics are to attack American and Shiite militia supply lines. When faced with American combat power, the Sunni militants tend to disperse, hoping to fight another day, American commanders say.⁷⁰⁰

This may be looked upon as an important lesson from the war in Iraq, but it also heralded new dangers for the coming years. By 2009, the American forces had started to withdraw from the country, and in the very complicated political power play in Baghdad between religious and ethnic factions, a full-blown civil war is still possible.

In a political/strategic sense, a *successful* insurgency must be able to face and find solutions to upcoming challenges. Depending on the local conditions, an insurgent movement may be unable to build a strong 'united front' against the enemy. In Iraq, there was never a coordinated insurgency – there were always competing insurgent groupings. For the Americans and their supporters in Iraq, this made it easier to muddle through. And without a strong united leadership and a coherent political platform, the competing insurgents could hardly *win* the war unless the U.S. 'home front' collapsed, as during the Vietnam War. But the insurgent movements may become the nucleus for a possible full-blown civil war. The way the situation in Iraq develops is now very dependent on the new Iraqi Armed Forces (including the different security

⁷⁰⁰ Michael R. Gordon, 'Sunni Militants Disrupt Plan to Calm Baghdad', *New York Times*, 18 March 2007.

forces), and if the 'feuding' political groups in Iraq can unite enough to handle what lies ahead.⁷⁰¹

At any rate, the following three points are common knowledge in this kind of war:

1. The insurgents must be able to attack the target-rich environment of administrative centres and enemy deployments, i.e. to execute unpredictable attacks, thereby increasing the losses sustained by the opponent. This creates a feeling of insecurity in the enemy camp, and indirectly also strikes at the enemy's morale.
2. Maintain (good) relations with a host population that allows regrouping, recruitment and re-supplying. While this population can be coerced, the primary problem is political, namely, the need to align the insurgency leadership with the interests of local leaders and other influential people.
3. It is important to deny intelligence to the enemy. This is done by using the general population to 'camouflage' or conceal operations. Thus, the enemy is forced to mount (traditional) military operations that *simultaneously* normally fail to destroy the insurgents, and also alienate the general populace. Alternatively, if the enemy refuses to attack the population, this must be used to improve the insurgents' security position.

The insurgents' purpose is to engender a sense of psychological helplessness in the conventionally trained and equipped enemy ('the state forces'), with the goal of forcing the ruling political elite to abandon the fight, or at least to engage in negotiations favourable to the insurgents, as a means of self-defence for the regime. This is very important for the anti-guerrilla/COIN forces to understand: the guerrillas/insurgents do not need to win *militarily*. As mentioned earlier, the insurgents' goal may be modest: it will probably be good enough *not* to lose!

The essence of irregular warfare is not merely the different means used to fight the war, but the different *interests* in waging the war. In Vietnam, the fundamental difference between the two sides was this: the North Vietnamese had a transcendent interest in the outcome of the war. Nothing mattered more to the Communist regime in Hanoi than winning the war. Whereas for the Americans, Vietnam was simply one interest among many and the war was not of overriding importance. Thus, the North Vietnamese could lose more forces, including sustaining heavy casualties, without losing their psychological balance. The Americans, faced with much lower losses after

⁷⁰¹ See descriptions of Iraqi developments in the following reports: 'The Challenge of Political Reintegration in Iraq', *Insurgency Research group*, Militias, Tribes and Insurgents <http://insurgencyresearchgroup.wordpress.com/2008/09/10/militias-tribes-and-insurgents-the-challenge-of-political-reintegration-in-iraq/>. Jeffrey A. Sinclair, Bud P. Cook, and Hamad Abdelnour, 'The Tribal Configuration Matrix', *SWJ Blog*, *Small Wars Journal*, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2010/03/the-tribal-configuration-matrix/>. Esquerre, Hugues, 'Deep Inside the Insurgent's Mind: Past the Motorcycle Diaries towards understanding Che Guevara', *Small Wars Journal*, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/deep-inside-the-insurgents-mind>.

the *militarily* successful U.S./South Vietnamese countering of the Communist Tet Offensive in 1968, felt a greater sense of helplessness and uncertainty, and sought to extricate themselves from a war that the North Vietnamese had neither the desire nor the means to exit.

All wars normally end either in the annihilation of the enemy forces, or in a negotiated settlement. The Second World War was a case of the former, but the outcomes of most other wars are negotiated. For the United States, Vietnam can be seen as a political and military defeat under cover of a political negotiation. This is normally the case when insurgencies are waged; by the time the ruling regime and its conventional forces begin to negotiate, it is maybe too late.

The still ongoing internal conflict in Iraq has been slightly different, and an interesting point needs to be made: in addition to the initial Coalition forces versus insurgent groupings, other (strong) parties are present, capable and motivated. I am, of course, talking about the Shia and Kurd factions in Iraq. This suggests an eventual negotiated settlement – but nobody yet knows when or how (2011). The key to the negotiations is probably the threat of a major civil war and the potential that the Shias, the main component of today's Iraqi security force, will eventually crush the minority Sunnis.

The very notion of this possibility forced a number of Sunni leaders to cooperate with the new regime in Baghdad in the efforts to quell the insurgency. But the volatility of relations between the ethnic and religious groups involved in the negotiations can transform the outcome, in this case for the United States and its allies, if the United States is willing to stay put in Iraq for many more years. Seen in hindsight, many of the problems in Iraq were the result of bad political and military planning in the Pentagon. Many articles and books have demonstrated this lack of long-sighted planning for the 'war after the war'. One of the better early descriptions was written by Rajiv Chandrasekaran (2006, *The Washington Post*), who was *bureau chief* in Baghdad 2003/2004. His article was very critical – especially of the U.S. civil administration during the occupation:

After the invasion, America was supposed to help Iraq become a model democracy. Instead, the arrogance of L. Paul Bremer and his team of naïve neo-cons only helped Iraq become the world's most dangerous nation. This is how it all went wrong – before it ever had a chance to go right. (...)

The relationship between soldiers and the civilians in charge of reconstruction had faltered in the aftermath of previous U.S. military operations in Haiti, Kosovo, and Somalia. Iraq, however, was supposed to be different. It was supposed to be a chance to get military-civilian cooperation right. But, from the start, policies concocted by the U.S. Coalition Provisional Author-

ity (CPA), headquartered inside Saddam's marble-walled Republican Palace, rarely played out on the ground as CPA leader Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III and his subordinates expected. Bremer's first official act upon arriving in Baghdad was to fire tens of thousands of Baathists from their government jobs. But what about the 15,000 teachers that included? What about the top managers at the Ministry of Health? Or the hundreds of old soldiers who had been made honorary senior members of the party after spending years in Iranian prisoner-of-war camps?

Those working for the CPA – many of whom were young civilians politically loyal to the Bush administration – didn't grasp these nuances, or the need for pragmatic exceptions to their neoconservative edicts. But many in the military did. In the northern city of Mosul, for instance, the commander of the 101st Airborne Division, Maj. Gen. David Petraeus, considered Bremer's de-Baathification policy to be dangerously out of touch with realities on the ground. So, instead of telling former Baathists to fend for themselves, Petraeus created job programs to employ them, reasoning that keeping them at work would dissuade them from becoming insurgents. Instead of following Bremer's rules, which required appeals of firings to be submitted to a review board run by the controversial former exile Ahmad Chalabi, Petraeus allowed local leaders to grant exemptions.

Petraeus knew he was breaking Bremer's rules, but playing by them would have endangered U.S. troops. "We needed the latitude to make exceptions," he said. "The policy, as it was conceived, wasn't flexible enough." In return, Bremer's staff regarded Petraeus as a maverick veering off the reservation. "We make policy and it's their job to implement it," one of Bremer's aides said of the military. "We're the ones in charge, not them".

The tension between the American military and American civilians during the 15-month occupation of Iraq is one of the principal reasons that the country remains unsafe today.⁷⁰²

2006 became an important year – we then saw the beginning of a different U.S. strategy for Iraq, based on 'new' COIN theories. But this is easier to see in hindsight. Is it possible to learn from earlier COIN campaigns? Historically it seems harder to learn from the past than many maybe think, and in counterinsurgencies today's Western forces 'always' seem to repeat mistakes. The lessons of complexity, uncertainty and risk assessment always turn out to be very difficult to handle. It also seems that the

702 Rajiv Chandrasekaran, 'Who Killed Iraq?' *Foreign Policy*, September/October 2006.

subject of COIN very often becomes problematic: planners frequently oversimplify the situation in the actual country, underestimate the risks involved and exaggerate the level of control they can achieve over the course (and ultimate strategic outcome) of the war/conflict. They try to deny to themselves the complexity of this kind of war, and thus the full range of issues that must be dealt with politically and militarily may become overwhelming.

As for the lessons of the Iraqi insurgency shortly discussed here, there is a need for *objectivity* in studying the actual problems in any country under threat from an active insurgency, and to accept the political and military complexity of counterinsurgency as a method. Denying the complexity of (most) COIN campaigns seems very common in the literature describing them. Many who write about irregular warfare/insurgency in general try to borrow ideas from past wars, and they talk about ‘lessons’, as if a few historical impressions from one conflict could be transferred easily to another. The end result is that, far too often, they end up ‘rediscovering’ the same old *failed* slogans and oversimplifications. In reality it is very difficult to ‘copy good lessons’ from old case histories – the world has changed since the 1960s. The old campaigns must be examined with the intent to find out how *valid* they are today.⁷⁰³ There is of course a great deal to be learned from past wars if the lessons are carefully chosen and adapted as potential insights into a new conflict rather than *transferable* paradigms. However, as time goes by it should be very clear to any student of war that, for example, the Iraq War is not the Afghan War. For example: Mao Zedong’s theory on revolutionary war was of course very important during the Vietnam War period, but how important have Mao’s theories been for the long Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or for the development in Northern Ireland? My personal view is that there is probably little to be gained from efforts to revive the same old technical/tactical solutions, without simultaneously remembering past *failures* from the same conflicts. Terms like ‘oil spots’, ‘Special Forces’, ‘hearts and minds’, ‘protection walls and barriers’ and ‘sensor nets’ are just a few examples of such efforts that were applied (often uncritically) during the Iraq War in the period from 2004 to 2009.

There is always a need for accurate military planning and risk assessment in warfare, especially in counterinsurgency. Much has been made in the internal American debate of the intelligence failures in assessing Iraqi WMDs. These failures pale into insignificance, however, in comparison with the failure of U.S. policy and military planners to accurately assess the overall situation in Iraq *before* engaging in war, and for misreading the risk of insurgency if the U.S. did not carry out an effective mix of

703 One example: For me, it is an interesting phenomenon that before 2001, I had no problem buying cheap second-hand books on insurgency and counterinsurgency written in the first ‘counterinsurgency era’ from the late 1950s to 1975. After 9/11 the prices rocketed, and today the ‘classics’ cost a lot of money. Some of them, like the books by Galula and Thompson, have now been reprinted because of the resurgence in interest after about 2004 in an ‘almost lost art’ – counterinsurgency.

nation-building and good political handicraft. Compounding the problem was that the early performance during 2003-2006 under the catchword 'stability operations' was problematic. This failure can hardly be looked upon as the responsibility of the American intelligence community. It was the responsibility of the United States political and military leadership. Even the former 'Viceroy' in Iraq, Paul Bremer, now seems to have understood a little better some of the problems he and his team created in Iraq:

Paul Bremer, who led the US civilian occupation authority in Iraq after the 2003 invasion, has admitted that the Americans 'didn't really see' the threat coming from insurgents in the country. He also criticised President George Bush and Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, saying they had not listened to his concerns about the quality of Iraq's army, and that ultimately the White House bore responsibility for decisions that had led to the current violence. (...)

In the TV interview Bremer admits the insurgency was a surprise. 'We really didn't see the insurgency coming,' he said, adding that he was worried about US plans, formulated in 2004, to begin reducing their troop numbers in favour of relying on Iraqis. He said he raised concerns with Bush and Rumsfeld, but they were ignored. 'There was a tendency by the Pentagon to exaggerate the capability of the Iraqi forces,' he said.

Bremer's critics say that he is trying to shift the blame away from himself for the violence in Iraq. Many experts have attacked his decision to disband the Iraqi army just after the invasion was complete as one of the main factors behind the insurgency. However, Bremer said the ultimate responsibility for the situation in Iraq lay at the door of the White House. 'I believe I did everything I could do. ... The President, in the end, is responsible for making decisions,' he said.⁷⁰⁴

The military leaders and their staffs had the responsibility of bringing together policy-makers, military planners, intelligence experts and area experts to provide as accurate a picture of Iraq and the consequences of an invasion as possible. The planners can be accused of failing to exercise that responsibility. The nation's leading policymakers chose to act on a limited and highly *ideological* view of Iraq, as they planned for one extremely optimistic definition of success, but not for risk or failure.

There was no real planning for so-called 'stability operations' after the Saddam regime was militarily defeated. Key policymakers did not want to engage in nation-

⁷⁰⁴ Paul Harris, 'US "missed signs of rebellion"', *The Observer*, 8 January 2006.

building and chose to believe that removing Saddam Hussein from power would leave the Iraqi Government functioning and intact. Plans were made on the basis that significant elements of the Iraqi armed forces would defect to the Coalition, remain passive or put up only token resistance. No real effort was made to ensure the continuity of Iraqi government or stability and security in Iraq's major cities and throughout the countryside. A well-known history of decades of serious sectarian and ethnic tension in Iraq was downplayed or *ignored*.⁷⁰⁵

Earlier actions by Saddam Hussein's regime that had crippled Iraq's economic development since the early years of the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s were ignored. Iraq was probably assumed to still be an oil-rich country whose economy could quickly recover if the oil fields were not burned, and would easily transform itself into a modern capitalist state structure in the process. The U.S.'s most senior military commanders compounded these problems by planning for the *conventional* defeat of the enemy and an early exit from Iraq by making a deliberate effort to avoid the so-called 'Phase IV' (including *Stabilisation Operations*). The fact that they did so to minimise the strain on the American force posture, and the 'waste' of U.S. troops on 'low priority' missions, probably played an important role in creating the conditions under which the Iraqi insurgency could develop and flourish.

The civilian and military area experts and the intelligence community may not have predicted the exact nature of the insurgency that followed. Intelligence analysis is never anything like 'prophecy'. They did, however, provide ample warning that there was a risk that Iraqi *exiles* were often failing to provide a balanced or accurate picture of the situation, and that so-called 'nation-building' would be both necessary and extremely difficult. The nation's top policymakers chose to both ignore and discourage such warnings as 'too negative' and 'exaggerated', and instead planned for a quick military success. They did so even after having seen the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, and the sectarian and ethnic problems of Afghanistan after the invasion in 2001.

The military situation did not improve until more than a year after the fall of Saddam's regime, and at least six months after it had become apparent for everyone who chose not to ignore it that a *serious* insurgency was developing. Major resources did not flow into the creation of effective *Iraqi* forces until the autumn of 2004. The U.S. aid effort operated for nearly a year and a half as if the insurgency truly consisted of a small group of 'Saddam diehards' or 'terrorists'. Even in late 2005, top U.S. civilian policymakers were splitting hairs over semantics to try to avoid even using the word 'insurgency'. They failed to perceive that many Sunni Arab Iraqis see such an insurgency as having legitimate causes, and during the first

⁷⁰⁵ Thomas E. Ricks (2006), pp. 203-290. Ricks describes on these pages what he called 'descent into abuse'. The U.S. Army lost its way in Iraq.

two years after the invasion chose largely to publicly ignore the risks of civil war, and the developing problems in Shiite forces and political structures.⁷⁰⁶

The failure to learn that there is a need for an accurate characterisation of the nation (and region) where some kind of counterinsurgency efforts are required or are already in progress seems to serve as a constant reminder of why nations choose to solve their problems by resorting to war.

The failure to make realistic plans that take into account both risk and success is equally significant. Use of ruthless objectivity is the cheapest solution to preventing and limiting insurgency (including terrorism), and planning and deploying for the full range of what today are called stability operations and/or nation-building are essential precautions wherever the stakes are high and the risk is significant.

In part of the literature described in this book, some of the authors divide irregular warfare and especially counterinsurgency into two main categories: *unconventional war*⁷⁰⁷ and *direct action* (DA):

1. Unconventional war (warfare), though it sounds sinister, actually represents the ‘soft’, humanitarian side of counterinsurgency: ideally (but rarely realistically), ‘how to win without firing a shot’. For example, it may include *relief* activities that create good will among indigenous/local populations, which in turn produces actionable intelligence.
2. Direct action represents more traditional military operations. The term ‘direct action missions’ refers to short duration strikes that are used when *Special Forces* want to seize, capture, recover or destroy enemy weapons and information, or recover designated personnel or material.

The term unconventional warfare seeks to instil a belief that peace and security are not possible without (political) compromise or concession. So-called ‘objectives’ in this kind of warfare include war weariness, curtailment of civilian standards of living and civil liberties associated with greater security demands, including economic hardship linked to the costs of war.⁷⁰⁸ The aim is maybe also to make the opponent *feel incapable* of defending against assaults, create fear and depression, and undermine morale. The

706 This was, of course, not the first time in history. Israel denied the risks and realities for their own long-term political interests when they struck deep into Lebanon in the early 1980s, seeking to create a Christian-dominated allied state. Russia denied the risks and realities of Chechnya in spite of all the brutal lessons resulting from its denial of the risks and realities of Afghanistan. The U.S. had earlier denied the risks and realities of the Vietnam War. European powers initially (after the Second World War) denied the political realities that forced them to end their colonial rule, etc.

707 Abbreviated to ‘UW’ in Special Operations lingo.

708 A limited number of forces is very often a constraint in COIN. In 2004, to mass enough troops to storm the city of Fal-lujah in Iraq, an insurgent stronghold, American commanders drew troops from Haditha, another town in western Iraq. Local insurgents took advantage of the Americans’ limited numbers to attack the police in Haditha. Iraqi policemen were executed, dealing a severe setback to efforts to build a strong local force.

following points will not give the readers a ‘complete view’, but I think that they may be looked upon as important in connection with what we today call counterinsurgency:

1. The ultimate goal in this type of warfare is to motivate the insurgents to stop attacking or resisting, even if they still have the *ability* to continue the conflict.
2. Many methods are used in this kind of limited warfare. One important capacity is the use of conventional warfare tactics that can be used *unconventionally* to demonstrate one’s own power, rather than to substantially reduce the enemy’s *ability* to fight.⁷⁰⁹ Also, the counterinsurgents may use tactics of destroying non-military infrastructure and blockading civilian supplies. Historically, these tactics have been used to weaken the morale of civilians, when applicable. This may put pressure on the soldiers in the field belonging to the insurgency forces, through concern for their families.

Connected to this kind of warfare, different kinds of Special Forces may perform the following kinds of operations:

- insertion behind an enemy’s area (unconventional operations),
 - spreading subversion and/or propaganda,
 - aiding local resistance fighters/insurgents supporting the regime against the insurgents, and
 - building ‘an environment of fear and confusion’ on the insurgent side, which may affect the support for the insurgents.
3. COIN doctrine, which ideally combines political and military efforts, is intended to guide and thus to help view the overall *government* campaign and its military element through the prism of core slogans like ‘find, fix and strike’, or similar formulas.⁷¹⁰ The roles of various agencies and the part they are to play should, according to existing U.S. doctrines, be clearly expressed in the overall campaign director’s so-called concept of operations (CONOPS).⁷¹¹
 4. The intelligence services, elements of the armed forces (including covert, overt and clandestine) and other government agencies are used to find and understand the insurgents by gathering available information on the political and military

709 In addition to the coercive use of traditional weapon systems, armaments that primarily target civilians have been used, i.e. urban incendiary devices, white phosphorus, napalm bombs, etc.

710 See JP 3-24 for details.

711 FM 5-0. According to the Foreword of FM 5-0: ‘To comprehend the doctrine contained in FM 5-0, readers must first understand the fundamentals of full spectrum operations described in FM 3-0. In addition, readers must be familiar with FM 3-90, (U. S. Department of the Army, *Tactics*, Field Manual FM 3-90, July 2001), FM 3-07 (U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Stability Operations*, Field Manual FM 3-07, October 2008), and JP 3-28 (U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Civil Support*, Joint Publication JP 3-28, 14 September 2007). They must understand how offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations complement each other. Readers must also understand the fundamentals of command and control addressed in FM 6-0 (U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Mission Command*, Field Manual FM 6-0, September 2011) and the fundamentals of leadership addressed in FM 6-22 (U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Army Leadership – Competent, Confident and Agile*, Field Manual FM 6-22 (FM-22-100), October 2006).

elements of the insurgent organisation. If this is in support of an existing regime as in, for example, Iraq and Afghanistan today, it is very important to have good knowledge about, for example, the local security situation, political power players supporting the regime, economic realities and the ethnic and religious situation in terms of how this support can be provided.

5. The threatened country's military services, the police and the major departments of government, combined with diplomatic efforts and an active 'hearts and minds' campaign, are supposed to 'fix' the insurgents.⁷¹² Locally raised/recruited forces can (but not always) help to 'fix the insurgents', and have been employed to good effect in numerous earlier counterinsurgency campaigns.

Uniformed military and police units, Special Forces, psychological operations (PSY-OPS) and not least the actual legal system may spearhead the government's campaign to 'strike' at the insurgency. The campaign may also be reinforced through *socioeconomic* activities/reforms, such as reorganising local/regional government, creating jobs and improving local social/medical services, etc.

There is a clear relationship between force applied in conventional war and force applied during a counterinsurgency campaign. Modern military doctrines based on so-called 'manoeuvre warfare theory' can be applied to both types of warfare, but with some modifications. In both situations, force has to be applied selectively and in a controlled and measured fashion. Physical destruction is a means and *not an end* in a counterinsurgency campaign. The modern COIN doctrines normally seek to help create the conditions for *political* success with less use of force, more quickly and with reduced costs.

The manoeuvre warfare/approach theory shares a 'common ancestry' with some of the most successful insurgent strategies, but the so-called 'manoeuvre theory' is not a synonym. The military planner who is fully acquainted with this theory and the modern doctrines is more likely to cope with the real and inherent complexities of a counterinsurgency campaign than those who remain unaware of the doctrine/theory. But within the application of *any* military doctrine, it is vital for a commander to know what law applies in a given set of circumstances, and what would trigger any amendments in the law to be applied. The answer to this type of question relates directly to the sort of *Rules of Engagement* (RoE) that would be issued by a government and/or commander in the field. In many countries, government ministers provide political direction and guidance to commanders by means of RoE that govern the application of force. It follows that such rules that are approved by ministers may only be changed by *ministerial authority*. Commanders will in turn wish to issue RoE to their

⁷¹² The NATO Glossary defines the acronym P INFO as 'Information which is released or published for the primary purpose of keeping the public fully informed, thereby gaining their understanding and support.'

subordinate commanders. These RoE will be devised within the discretion allowed by the rules approved by ministers.⁷¹³

In discussing so-called ‘success criteria’, counterinsurgents need to achieve success as early as possible to demonstrate the will, the means and the ability to defeat the insurgency. According to many of the ‘classical’ studies of earlier insurgencies, counterinsurgents normally avoid negotiations until they are in a position of strength. Potential supporters will flock to the insurgents’ side out of fear of *retaliation* if the movement considers them disloyal. The relationship between insurgents and the general population is always complex. Mao Zedong in his time claimed that guerrillas move among the people as ‘fish move through water’. But he also warned that ‘a revolution is not a dinner party’, and many insurgents, including the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam, effectively used terror – often selectively applied – against civilians to force segments of the population into at least *passive* support.⁷¹⁴

The vast majority of armed conflict today occurs inside states rather than between them. ‘For many countries in the world simmering internal war is a permanent condition.’⁷¹⁵ Martin van Creveld predicts that ‘[a]s war between states exits through one side of history’s revolving door, low-intensity conflicts among different organizations will enter through the other’.⁷¹⁶ In today’s climate of extended and difficult wars, in which political and military tasks intertwine and the objective is more often ‘nation-building’ than the destruction of an enemy army, the ability to learn quickly during operations, to create an organisational consensus on new ways of waging war (or of ‘waging peace’), and then to implement those changes may be of more importance for modern military institutions than before. It then requires military institutions to accept as an *integral* part of their (organisational) culture the need to function in the new *conflict environment* at all times – as ‘learning institutions’.

As mentioned earlier, there are today different ‘schools of thought’, but almost every leading work on counterinsurgency imparts the message that counterinsurgency is one of the most difficult types of warfare to wage. The more we study the subject, the better we will understand the historical challenge presented by insurgency. Two historical examples may illustrate that insurgency/rebellions have always been part of warfare. Julius Caesar complained that his legions had trouble subduing the roving Britons because his men ‘were little suited to this kind of enemy’. In the early 1800s, Carl von Clausewitz in *On War* wrote about ‘people’s wars’ in which ‘the element of resistance will exist everywhere and nowhere’.

713 RoE define the degree and manner in which force may be applied and are designed to ensure that such application of force is *carefully controlled*. RoE are not intended to be used to assign specific tasks or as a means of issuing *tactical* instructions.

In passing orders to subordinates, a commander at any level must always act within the RoE received but is *not* bound to use the full extent of the permission granted.

714 His perhaps best known and most studied book is Mao (1937/1961/1996/2005), see ‘What is Guerrilla Warfare’, Mao (1937/1996), pp. 69–76.

715 Steven Metz, ‘Insurgency after the Cold War’, *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Volume 5, Issue 1 1994, p. 63.

716 van Creveld (1991), p. 224.

As mentioned earlier, T.E. Lawrence, the British officer who led Arab fighters against the Turkish rulers in the Middle East during World War I, described the campaign in his classic counterinsurgency book written in 1926, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. Lawrence's is one of the relatively few books in the COIN literature written from the point of view of the *insurgent*.⁷¹⁷ From his experience of inciting the Arab revolt against the Turks, he concluded that insurgents needed only two per cent active support from the population, and 98 per cent passive support. In a near-hallucinatory state, suffering from dysentery and lying in a tent, Lawrence realised the key to defeating the Turkish Army: 'Armies were like plants, immobile, firm-rooted, nourished through long stems to the head,' he wrote. Lawrence's guerrillas, by contrast, 'might be a vapour'. For the Turks, he concluded, 'war upon rebellion was messy and slow, like eating soup with a knife'. This old description still applies to many of today's insurgencies. In particular, the cultural dimension associated with the different forms of insurgent wars deserves to be emphasised when studying insurgency and counter-insurgency.⁷¹⁸

Because of this, it is important for the government under threat to use a combination of tools: military forces, police, economic incentives, political reforms, diplomatic measures, i.e. every tool a government under threat can bring into play. It is this combination of different but coordinated political/military actions that hastens a permanent settlement in a counterinsurgency.

If we use the war in Afghanistan as one example: According to the earlier described leading theories about how to engage in COIN operations, the so-called *international community* (read: Western powers), which today is the driving force against the Taliban in Afghanistan, must tackle internal corruption, increase the effectiveness of the aid for Afghanistan, improve cooperation with the Afghan government, pursue a regional solution to the conflict (especially Pakistan) and commit to long-term reconstruction. But the problem is this: is the regime in Kabul willing to institute the necessary *internal* reforms?

Western political leaders may not like it, but local (and regional) Afghan 'power-brokers' ('warlords', etc.), may have a role to play in developing Afghanistan. But that role can only be fulfilled if the Afghan government is willing to stop the 'powerbrokers' from distorting the country's economy. Until today (2011) the Karzai government has been focused on local patronage (to maintain control) and ensuring internal security, including distributing different kinds of support to its political supporters. Another important factor has been the regime's work on foreign diplomacy, because Afghanistan needs continued aid. Consequently, the Afghan economic system is char-

717 Lawrence (1926/1935/1991), see Chapter 9. *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* was written as an autobiographical account by Lawrence. About the different published versions, see 'T. E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom', in *T. E. Lawrence Studies*, http://telawrence.net/telawrencenet/works/spw/publication_history.htm.

718 Lawrence (1926 /1935/1991), *ibid*.

acterised by widening inequality, which of course fuels grievances and greed. Simply put, Afghanistan is today 'addicted' to foreign assistance/aid and drug money.⁷¹⁹

My last reflection on this difficult subject is this: the underestimation of the complexity involved in the planning process for an upcoming war is nothing new in military history. Carl von Clausewitz called this 'friction', and there is little to suggest that military forces will ever be able to avoid these problems. Modern technology may be of some help here, but it is *human decisions* that are critical in war – especially in a guerrilla war.

⁷¹⁹ According to some UN statistics, Afghanistan is now the third most unequal society in the world, after Angola and Equatorial Guinea. Whether this is a correct evaluation or not, is very difficult to say.

5 STABILITY OPERATIONS

*Anders Kjølberg*⁷²⁰

5.1. Introduction

A dominant trend in international security policy in recent decades is that the world community is intervening to a greater extent in the domestic politics of some countries by military means, in combination with political and economic means. These types of operations, referred to as stability operations, have over the past few years become an ever more important task for the military establishments of many countries in the West. Stability operations are now the main form of warfare practised by Western military organisations. *Stability operations* differ from more traditional military operations in a number of important respects. First and foremost, military means are just one of several types of means used; political, economic and often also humanitarian means are central to such operations.

Officially, the aim of stability operations is to achieve results in a target area, and ideally the strategy for stability operations should be determined by this alone. However, this is too narrow a perspective if one is to study the stability operations of today. Although such operations currently play a central role in the security policy strategy of many countries, the actual success of the stability operations in the target area is not necessarily the most important factor in the strategies of most countries. Only in exceptional cases, such as for the USA in Afghanistan following 11 September 2001, stability in the target area is of vital importance for the security of participating countries. Other conditions also have to be covered in order to understand the strategy of a country in stability operations. Therefore, stability operation initiatives are viewed here in a wider political context in terms of both domestic and foreign policy, and to some extent economically as well. Here, stability operations differ significantly from traditional warfare, where the vital security interests of a state are under threat. In traditional wars, warfare takes absolute priority and consideration of other conditions has to take a back seat; this is generally not the case with stability operations. The strategy in traditional wars is determined only by a single 'game', and not – as in the

⁷²⁰ Anders Kjølberg is Principal Scientist at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, Kjeller.

case of stability operations – by its effect on other ‘games’ as well, such as the domestic political situation and relationship with the institution responsible for the operations, which may be of major significance for the country supplying forces. Therefore, strategies in stability operations are often not optimal in respect of the effect in the target area. It is from this perspective that stability operations will be assessed here.

In most cases, the purpose of stability operations is to protect a population and/or to support a regime and fight forces that are threatening that regime. Therefore, the term ‘stability and support operations’ is often used in the USA.⁷²¹ In some instances the purpose may also be to remove a regime that, for one reason or another, is seen as a threat to international peace and stability, as was the situation in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

Stability operations can be implemented on behalf of the ‘international community’ against a state that is either breaching or failing to live up to the norms or obligations a state is expected to observe. This kind of operation I will coin a counter-regime operation, or CORE operation. A stability operation can also aim to support a government against an insurgency. In this case it is called counter insurgency, or COIN operation. CORE operations can develop into COIN operations as we have seen in Iraq and Afghanistan. The operational challenges of CORE operations are not discussed here, because they are more or less the same as in conventional symmetrical warfare. Stability operations represent both continuity and a breach compared to earlier international practice. They can be viewed as a development of the UN’s ‘peace-keeping operations’, but as a breach in respect of the ‘non-intervention principle’ that was central to international policy until the 1990s. However, a number of countries, led by China, are concerned that the traditional non-intervention principle has been weakened.

While peacekeeping operations assumed cooperation with the states involved, this is not a prerequisite for implementation of stability operations.

First and foremost, stability operations aim to ensure stability *within* a state, not in relations between states. Previously, international military initiatives were mostly used in order to create or maintain peace *between* states, e.g. in relations between Israel and Lebanon and Egypt.

Stability operations are meant to *influence* the situation with certain means in the state in which intervention is taking place in order to achieve a specific objective. However, both the objective and the means can be problematic. Who is to determine what the objectives are to be and what they are to entail? Ideally, this should be non-controversial; stability operations must or should have a mandate from the UN Security Council, and the objectives should be in accord with the norms and principles laid down by the UN and in international law. However, the reality is rarely so clear

721 FM 3-07.

and unequivocal. Stability operations can be implemented without a UN mandate, as in Iraq in 2003, or with an at best highly ambiguous mandate, as in Kosovo in 1999. The implementation of the mandate concerning Libya has also been questioned. UN principles and international law are open to interpretation and may appear as idealistic requirements rather than clear guidelines for conduct. The means may also be controversial; for example, the use of military force is central to stability operations, particularly in situations where armed conflict is to be opposed. In this regard, stability operations are a continuation of traditional counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. What may be new is the greater relative emphasis on non-military means. Greater emphasis is being placed on influencing attitudes in the local population ('hearts and minds') and reinforcing the ability of a local government to resolve their various tasks, not just in respect of security but also as regards undertaking their primary responsibilities to their own population ('state' and 'nation building'). Far more emphasis than before has also been placed on avoiding the adverse consequences of the use of military force, by seeking – among other things – to reduce civilian casualties.

Stability operations may be implemented on an ad hoc basis by a group of states ('coalition of the willing') with a clear leader, often the USA. However, in most cases an institution holds responsibility for the operation. This may be the UN, which with its global membership has high legitimacy, or regional institutions. NATO and to an increasing degree also the EU and AU (African Union) have important roles to play in this regard. NATO and the EU have the advantage of extensive resources to draw upon as regards both planning and implementation of operations of this type. Both the UN and non-Western institutions such as the African Union have problems with providing adequate resources.⁷²²

5.2. What are stability operations?

There is no standard definition of the term 'stability operation'; some definitions emphasise the purpose of the operations, while others emphasise their nature. A Norwegian definition of stability operations can be found in the *joint-operational doctrine*, in which stability operations are defined on the basis of their objective: 'The purpose of a stability operation is to reduce the level of conflict between two or more parties in order to preserve or restore peace. An operation of this kind often involves ensuring that established agreements are observed and creating a secure basis for means other than military ones. It includes monitoring and policing tasks.'⁷²³

722 Bogland, Karin, Robert Egnell and Maria Lagerström, *The African Union – A Study Focusing on Conflict Management* (Stockholm, FOI, 2008).

723 *Forsvarets fellesoperative doctrine (Norwegian Defense Joint-Operational Doctrine)* (Oslo: Forsvarsstaben, 2007), p. 175.

Other definitions emphasise the more long-term political purpose of stability operations, e.g. laying the foundations for local authorities to (re)build a political and economic system that removes the root causes of the conflict that led to intervention in the first place.⁷²⁴

As can be seen from the last description, ‘stability’ is defined broadly. It is not merely a restoration of the status quo ante bellum as was often the case in the event of traditional peacekeeping operations, but ultimately an attempt to implement more or less far-reaching political and social changes in the country where intervention is taking place. The objective is to secure conditions that prevent new instability by removing the conditions that led to the conflicts.

‘Stability operations’ is a term included in what Wendela Moore⁷²⁵ calls the ‘hazy continuum’ of military operations that aim either to prevent conflict or to use military means to establish a peaceful situation following a local conflict, while at the same time covering the needs of the local population for security and basic human needs. Therefore, these operations have a military core but also require various political and economic means. The relative importance of these means will vary from situation to situation.

Stability operations can be viewed as the result of developments in three areas that were previously clearly separate, but which have now steadily merged. These are the UN’s – and to some extent, other institutions’ – peacekeeping operations, counterinsurgency efforts and traditional warfare.⁷²⁶

The UN’s ‘peacekeeping operations’ have gradually become ‘sharper’ in nature, in the sense that military force is playing an ever greater role in the operations implemented. Peace-enforcing initiatives, more so than peacekeeping efforts in cooperation with the parties involved, have become more important. Traditional warfare, on the other hand, has become ‘softer’ in nature, partly because concerns for the civilian population are playing a more important role, and partly because the military means are being used in conjunction with non-military. In addition, experiences from earlier counterinsurgency actions are being used deliberately in the stability operations currently taking place. David Galula⁷²⁷ and his experiences of the French war in Algeria is the most important example here, but earlier British experiences are also emphasised.

The essence of the type of conflicts we have seen over the past 10-20 years is that only to a limited extent are they traditional wars between states using conventional military forces. Both state and non-state players may be involved, and the forces may be both conventional and non-conventional. The battles often take place amongst and with regard to a civilian population, and the battle actions involve several organisational levels

724 FM3 (F100-20).

725 Wendela C. Moore, *Stability Operations: A Core Warfighting Capability* (National Defense University, National War College, 2003), p. 2.

726 U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Security and Stabilisation: The Military Contribution*. Joint Doctrine Publication JDP 3-40, November 2009.

727 Galula (1964).

and may take place simultaneously. This is actually nothing new as non-conventional warfare has always been part of the pattern of conflict. New is the fact that these types of conflicts have become the central aspect in modern warfare. In this regard, it may be stated that a paradigm shift has taken place in the view of warfare.⁷²⁸

A number of new terms have been coined in order to characterise these types of conflict, of which stability operations are an important part. The various terms underline different aspects of these types of conflict.

Mary Kaldor was one of the first researchers to discuss the general aspects of the 'new' form of warfare, and in this connection coined the term 'the new wars' in her 1999 book *New and Old Wars*.⁷²⁹ However, Martin van Creveld had discussed a number of the same issues earlier in his 1991 book *Transformation of War*.⁷³⁰ Terms such as 'asymmetric warfare', 'fourth generation warfare' and 'war amongst the people' appeared later. All of these theoreticians seek to define what is 'new' in this regard. The significance of non-state actors, a lack of defined battlegrounds and therefore the fact that war is played out amongst a population are all features that are being cited as new.

The last term in this series is 'hybrid war', suggested by Frank Hoffman⁷³¹ but used by other people in a variety of ways. The essence of his discussion is that hybrid war does not actually represent anything new, but is a combination of traditional warfare and other forms of conflict such as terrorism and insurgency, and that these take place simultaneously.

In a NATO context, the term 'crisis response operations' is now used with regard to all types of operation, apart from Article 5 operations and support following natural disasters. The actual term *stability operations* used in this chapter is not part of the NATO terminology, but different types of stability operation are deemed to be 'crisis response operations'.

Not all stability operations come under the terms specified, but a number of important stability operations currently come under the term hybrid wars; this is particularly true of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Therefore, this term can prove fruitful in the study of stability operations.

Stability operations can be viewed as a form of war in the sense that force is used in order to impose one's own will on another party. However, this aspect of a stability operation is a means for the operations, and not an objective. Stabilisation, not forcing one's own will on others, is the objective of the operation.

In the 1990s, interventions by the world community on humanitarian grounds were accepted as more important than the earlier generally accepted non-intervention principle. This was used – among other things – to lend legitimacy to the interven-

728 Øyvind Østerud, *Hva er krig* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2009), p. 46.

729 Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge Polity Press, 1999).

730 van Creveld (1991).

731 F. Hoffman (2007).

tion in the conflicts in the Balkans in the 1990s. Previously an intervention could be accepted only in emergencies; the essential consequence of the principle now is more to be regarded as an obligation. The humanitarian aspect of stability operations was contained in the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P) principle in 2001.⁷³² This principle is far less controversial here, even though it may be stated that this principle is misused in order to promote the interests of the West, for example, as in Sudan.

A conflict can in principle be concluded by the parties themselves, and in this kind of context a stability operation has the function of supporting the solution at which the parties have arrived, to ensure peace and order in connection with the holding of elections or a transition to independence. These are traditional peacekeeping operations that in the majority of cases are neither particularly challenging nor resource-intensive for the participating states. The efforts in Timor Leste (East Timor) may be an example of an operation of this kind. Nor do these operations have an important impact on the social and political situation in the country in which intervention is taking place, even though the action may have local economic, and perhaps also social, peripheral effects.

5.2.1. Objectives and means in stability operations

As previously stated, stabilisation is a process that has been defined in various ways. Stabilisation has also been defined in a more normative manner by Carl Rohr, for example: 'Stabilization is the effort to create a secure and stable environment and to provide for the basic rule of law. The measures of effectiveness for a stable situation are (1) the establishment of the rule of law through a competent police, corrections and judicial system; (2) the employment of an efficient civil service and professional bureaucracy; and (3) the establishment of a professional and disciplined security force accountable to a legitimate civilian authority.'⁷³³

Robert Ayson, on the other hand, has a more sociological starting point and argues that stability 'can be viewed as a consistent pattern of behaviour which converges around some sort of reliable norms'.⁷³⁴ Establishment or reestablishment of norms and rules of behaviour promoting non-violent development are therefore a very important aspect of stability operations.

These two starting points have very different implications as regards what the world will and ought to seek to achieve by a stability operation. The first starting point indi-

⁷³² *The Responsibility to Protect: Report of the International Committee on Intervention and State Sovereignty* (Ottawa: The International Development Research Centre, 2001).

⁷³³ Carl C. Rohr, *Progressive Reconstruction. A Methodology for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California 2006 in *Small Wars Journal*, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/rohrnpsthe-sis.pdf>.

⁷³⁴ Robert Ayson, *When is it Safe to Leave? – Finding Stability in Stability Operations*, paper in International Studies Association Annual Convention, Chicago, March 2007.

cates that the world should seek to change the political system towards what is applicable in the West, while the other is more neutral and paves the way for the possibility of stability potentially being based on norms and values other than Western ones. Problems arise when Western norms, which we perceive as general and universal, are not in line with the norms for behaviour that exist in the society in which the outside world is trying to apply its own norms.

In practice, the purpose of a stability operation will be to weaken an insurgency movement so much that it no longer poses a serious threat to the regime that a stabilisation force is to support.

Military means have been – and still are – the central element in counterinsurgency actions and stability operations. The military dimension of stability operations consists of the fighting of an adversary, often insurgency of one kind or another (COIN, counterinsurgency actions), protection of a civilian population and strengthening of the ability of a local actor, usually a government, to manage these tasks. It is difficult to distinguish these three tasks from one another, and success in one field is important for success in the other two, and vice versa.

Fighting insurgents provides protection to the civilian population, while protection gives the civilian population more opportunity to resist threats and other forms of pressure from an insurgency movement.

Protection of the civilian population has been gradually given higher priority in the counterinsurgency in Afghanistan. However, this is a very challenging strategy, as limited resources will by necessity demand priority as regards the coverage of protection available to different areas. The emphasis of a stability operation will also affect the insurgents in the sense that they can change their strategy to target the civilian population to counter the protection efforts. Therefore, the civilian population may become more vulnerable if the stabilisation forces do not have adequate resources to implement this kind of strategy successfully.

Security for the population is an entirely necessary prerequisite for a society to begin to function ‘normally’ following a conflict. In most cases, this type of security has to be created by means of military forces, although the police have an important part to play as well. However, the big question is what ambitions the rest of the world should have when it comes to influencing the society in which intervention is taking place in order to alter the society and its political system. The Brahimi report puts it like this: ‘force alone cannot create peace; it can only create the space in which peace may be built.’⁷³⁵

The economic dimension of stability operations consists of a short-term element that involves rectifying an urgent need in the population, and a long-term element

⁷³⁵ United Nations, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, 21 August 2001, p. vii.

that involves rebuilding the economy of an area following a conflict. The underlying purpose of both the short-term and the long-term aid is to gain the support of the local population. There is disagreement on how effective these means are. For example, Andrew Wilder questions the effectiveness of economic aid in respect of stabilisation.⁷³⁶ As far as more short-term humanitarian aid is concerned, this can also be regarded more as a humanitarian obligation than as a political tool, and whether such aid should be a military task is questionable.

In the first instance, the political dimension of stability operations involves strengthening the position and legitimacy of a local actor so that it can implement the primary tasks of a state more effectively and thereby reinforce its position relative to its challengers. State building and/or nation building are important ambitions in this regard. In addition, there may also be an ideological dimension that may be more or less clearly expressed, and which is based on the promotion of certain political values intended to facilitate greater stability based on Western values.

The military, economic and political dimensions of a stability operation are never implemented by a single means alone. All these means may be relevant in all dimensions in different ways, but to a varying degree. Individual means may have a positive effect in one area, such as pure counterinsurgency actions, but an adverse effect in other areas, such as in relations with the local population. Everything is interlinked in one way or another, thereby necessitating a consistent approach, as will be discussed later.

5.2.2. Challenges in stability operations

A stability operation has three different forms of Centres of Gravity (CoG). And both intervening parties and insurgents will influence the possible CoGs:

1. the CoGs are the violent insurgency itself,
2. the local population in the country in question and
3. the public opinion in the participating countries, and
4. these are interlinked and affect one another mutually.

Violent insurgencies must be fought by military means, but support and legitimacy must also be undermined in the local population. The support and loyalty of the local population are entirely necessary in order to ensure stable development, but this support is dependent on the population being protected from threats and other forms of pressure from insurgents. Popular support at home is necessary for a stability operation to be sustainable, but this support can quickly crumble if the operation fails or is

⁷³⁶ Andrew Wilder, 'A "weapons system" based on wishful thinking', *Boston Globe*, 16 September 2009.

subject to major losses. This support is also dependent on the operation being seen to promote values that are viewed as positive in the country in question. This is necessary for the operations to be legitimate, and hence supported.

Military means alone are not sufficient to influence all three centres of gravity decisively. Therefore, as well as having a heavy military component, stability operations must have important economic and political dimensions. This requires cooperation and coordination between the military and various civilian institutions, both state and non-state.

The challenges are also linked to cultural differences between the intervening party and the society in which intervention is taking place. These cultural differences can make it difficult to win support for the values and norms that the intervening party represents and may be seeking to introduce in the country subject to intervention, and this again can lead to opposition, which insurgents can use to their advantage. This can be said to be stability strategy in a nutshell.⁷³⁷

Therefore, stability operations also require an extensive insight into the state, society and culture in which intervention is taking place, because a stability operation is not only – and perhaps not even, in the first instance – about fighting an opponent, but about protecting a population and building their trust. The latter requires an insight into the local culture of the society being stabilised.

As regards safeguarding a regime or population from violent threats – the central element in most stability operations – the most important means is fighting armed resistance, traditionally defined as counterinsurgency actions (counterinsurgency – COIN), either alone or together with local allies. A purely ‘enemy-oriented’ strategy is only rarely sufficient. This has to be combined with a ‘population-oriented’ strategy because fighting armed resistance is not the sole purpose of a stability operation. Fighting insurgents is just one means among many, although often the most important. The purpose is to create a stable society. Security against violence is a central aspect of this, but safeguarding primary needs and an economic foundation, and the creation or recreation of a legitimate representation are also prerequisites for stability. Therefore, the building of nations or states is also regarded as perhaps every bit as important a part of a stability operation as pure counterinsurgency actions. However, stability can also be based on a local power balance whereby the outside world maintains an influence by means of its military forces, and also by actively seeking solutions through negotiations with the parties involved. This is a third main strategy that the intervening party often attempts to implement. These strategies are used only rarely in a pure form; in most situations, these strategies are used in combination.

737 Anders Kjølborg, ‘Ambisjoner og illusjoner i stabiliseringsoperasjoner’, in Tore Nyhamar (red.), *Utfordringer og strategi i freds- og stabiliseringsoperasjoner* (Oslo: Abstrakt forlag, 2010), pp. 56–78.

Both of the first two main strategies may require major resources, depending on the specific situation in which intervention is taking place. While the first strategy first and foremost requires military resources and therefore may be controversial according to popular opinion at home, the second requires economic measures that in most cases will be far cheaper than military intervention, and at the same time less controversial. On the other hand, major military intervention will also be needed in most instances in which building a nation/state is the main strategy. Emphasis on local forces and negotiations may be problematic if the initiative is based on legitimacy with idealistic objectives, and may also provide uncertain and perhaps only short-term results.

5.2.3. Intervention and values

The West has a long tradition of presenting its own political and social values such as democracy, individual human rights and partly also market economy as universal, and trying to pass these on to other parts of the world, also in countries that are going to be 'stabilised'.⁷³⁸ There are two arguments for doing this: (1) because the root causes of conflicts have to be eliminated and (2) because there are certain general ideals present as a basis when the world intervenes. These are given legitimacy by the fact that these values are also contained in the UN's principles and declaration of human rights.

Democratisation, modernisation and market economy are values that have been successful in the Western world. However, this does not necessarily mean that they have as much impact everywhere in the world. Experiences from transferring these values to other cultures are mixed at best. This is true of Russia, Africa, the Muslim world and parts of Asia.

Non-Western and traditional societies based on other values and institutions may also be stable if these values and institutions have extensive internal legitimacy. It is the perception of the legitimacy of values and institutions, and not their content, that determines whether a society can achieve a stability that is not based on compulsion and oppression. The former British colony of Somaliland, which in practice has broken away from the otherwise very unstable Somalia, is one example of an area with a stable situation that has been created through extensive use of traditional political structures.

⁷³⁸ Beate Jahn, 'The Tragedy of Liberal Diplomacy: Democratization, Intervention, Statebuilding' (Part II and II), *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, Volume 1, Issue 1 (I) and Issue 2 (II), 2007, pp. 87–106 (I) and pp. 211–229 (II).

5.3. Strategy and planning

Strategy is the link between objectives and means.⁷³⁹ Strategy implies a rational assessment that takes into account the objectives of a player through a specific action, the resources or means that are available, and the various costs and gains to be expected in the event of different actions. These are costs and gains relating to foreign and domestic policy, as well as economic costs and costs in the form of loss of human life.

Intervening countries often have a dual agenda: to bring a conflict to an end and to create a stability based on the social and political ideals that the intervening party represents. In addition, a stability operation can also promote the security policy interests of the participating states, either because the target country is important in terms of its security or economy, or because the participation itself is politically important for the participating states.

This combination of different objectives, which may be formulated explicitly or can be deduced from the policy in question, makes it difficult to formulate a consistent strategy for players taking part in stability operations.

However, both the objectives and the means also have to take into account the attitudes in the countries taking part in the operations. A strategy that is not compliant with the dominant values and attitudes in the participating countries may result in major costs in terms of domestic policy, particularly if this strategy does not appear to lead to success. On the other hand, a strategy that is not consistent with values and attitudes in the country in which intervention is taking place could weaken the legitimacy of the strategy, and hence its chances of creating stability. This sets limits on both objectives and means, and can also lead to a mismatch between explicitly stated objectives and the policy that is implicit in the implementation of operations.

Both the institution implementing an operation and the individual countries participating must – or in any case should – have a strategy for their actions. This kind of strategy should take into account all relevant operational factors of military, economic and other natures, the restrictions placed on the use of different means and the challenges that an operation will face in the target area. These challenges are due not only to adversaries that must be subdued by military and other means, but also to the problems that may arise in connection with cooperation with other actors who are involved in the area, actors whose interests rarely match exactly those of the forces operating in the area.⁷⁴⁰

Individual participating countries will have very different influences on the formulation of the overall strategy in a target area. The frameworks for national strategies will also be determined from the overall strategy. If the participating countries

⁷³⁹ Tore Nyhamar, 'Stabiliseringsoperasjoner: Utfordringer og realiteter', pp. 12-13, in Tore Nyhamar (red.), *Utfordringer og strategi i freds- og stabiliseringsoperasjoner* (Oslo: Abstrakt forlag, 2010).

⁷⁴⁰ Kjøllberg (2010).

have very different strategies in an area, this could have a very adverse impact on the chances of success. Different strategies may also result in individual countries having limitations or caveats on how their forces can be used in a given situation, so that the leaders of the operation are unable to deploy these forces freely on the basis of the challenges faced by the operation at any one time. Such caveats are due mainly to domestic political conditions in the country sending the forces.⁷⁴¹ A number of states that currently have troops in Afghanistan have imposed such restrictions on the use of their forces. Such restrictions may be explicit, such as the restrictions imposed by Germany, while others may be implicit in that the country does not wish to send soldiers to the most vulnerable areas in Southern Afghanistan. Such caveats not only have adverse consequences on the chances of success, but they are also a potential source of conflict between participating countries, as some must then take on a greater burden of responsibility than others, which leads to friction.

As regards the use of available means, the strategy and planning for and implementation of stability operations must include not only the use of military means, but also political and economic means. At the same time, extensive political, economic and cultural insight into conditions in the relevant area is required to be able to assess the consequences of using various means. This kind of combination of 'hard' and 'soft' means is often referred to as 'smart power'.⁷⁴² This combination is also referred to as a new strategic triad that has replaced the old strategic triad dating back to the time of the Cold War.⁷⁴³ In addition, the individual countries taking part in these kinds of operations must take into account both the resource-related and the political situation at home and the requirements and expectations of the world community.

As non-military means assume an ever more important position in stability operations, civilian-military cooperation is regarded nowadays as entirely necessary for success in challenging operations. This kind of cooperation is also entirely crucial in order to bring about a comprehensive approach in these kinds of operations. This kind of cooperation covers a number of levels and areas in both the planning and the implementation of stability operations.⁷⁴⁴

This makes it necessary to involve not only non-military resources, but also non-military actors in the planning and implementation of stability operations.

The relationship that should exist between civilian and military institutions has been the subject of much dispute. In military theory, two main views have emerged:

741 David P. Auerswald & Stephen Saideman, *Caveat Emptor: Multilateralism at War in Afghanistan*, paper delivered at the International Studies Association Convention, New Orleans, 2009, in website 'Stephen Saideman' [http://profs-polisci.mcgill.ca/saideman/Caveat and Afghanistan, isa 2009.pdf](http://profs-polisci.mcgill.ca/saideman/Caveat%20and%20Afghanistan_isa%202009.pdf).

742 Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye (editors), *CSIS Commission on Smart Power. A smarter and more secure America* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2007).

743 *Chronic Failures in the War on Terror – From Afghanistan to Somalia* (London: The SENLIS Council, 2008), p. 7.

744 Karsten Friis, *International Relations of the (post) War Theatre. The Politics of a Comprehensive Approach* (Paper delivered at the International Studies Association Convention, New Orleans, 2009).

‘institution theory’ and ‘convergence theory’. Institution theory, which is based on the concepts of Samuel Huntington, emphasises the *differences* in attitudes and values between civilian and military institutions and the significance of these differences in making the military institution an effective instrument for the state’s exertion of power. The convergence theory of Morris Janowitz accepts that these differences exist, but views them as a threat to society and democracy. Therefore, the norms of society must influence a country’s military culture and be accepted by the military. While the first theory has traditionally characterised American military thinking in particular, the other has left its mark on European states to a greater extent and is also more in line with the conceptual basis for the stability operations of today.⁷⁴⁵

Cooperation can mean different things: from joint planning and execution of an operation (integration), via coordination of actions at various levels, to an exchange of information and experience or just acceptance of the presence of the other party.

Many civilian bodies are involved in stability operations, both state (particularly political) and non-state ones and humanitarian organisations as well as private economic enterprises.

Even when most parties agree upon the objective of cooperation and coordination, they do not always reach agreement on the practical implementation and the overall guidelines. In many cases, established principles collide with pragmatic solutions that, viewed in isolation, can provide better results for the local population in the target countries as well.

Civilians and the military are essentially dependent upon each other for success on an operational level. Civilian institutions – both state and non-state – are dependent on a certain degree of security and protection in a situation with a high conflict level, while association with institutions that provide benefits for the civilian population increases the chances of the military to gain support and sympathy.⁷⁴⁶ However, the different actors have different interests, particularly as regards what gives legitimacy. While association with civilians promotes the legitimacy of the military, this does not work both ways; quite the opposite, in fact. Civilian-military cooperation could also make aid workers and other civilians more vulnerable to attack as such attacks can easily become the insurgents’ response to a comprehensive approach. This is a problem that significantly impedes cooperation.

Particularly difficult in this regard is the relationship with international non-state organisations (INGOs) that are humanitarian in nature.⁷⁴⁷ Humanity, impartiality,

⁷⁴⁵ A discussion of the two models can be found in Per M. Norheim-Martinsen, *Beyond Intergovernmentalism: An Analysis of the European Union as a Strategic Actor*, PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge December, 2009), pp. 97–101.

⁷⁴⁶ Taylor B. Seybolt, *Humanitarian Military Intervention – The Conditions for Success and Failure* (SIPRI, Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 135–176.

⁷⁴⁷ Jonas Gahr Støre, *In the new types of conflict we face, how to define and defend the humanitarian space?* Paper at The Norwegian Atlantic Committee’s 40th annual Conference, 31 January 2005.

neutrality and independence have traditionally been central principles in what they do. These have not caused significant problems as long as they have worked in cooperation with international forces providing peacekeeping, an activity that initially should be based on the same principles. However, the differences have become more pronounced due to the change in the nature of international operations. When the purpose of an operation is 'to enforce peace', and it is thus also 'sharp' in nature – that is, force is to be used not only for self defence, but also to bring about a political solution and/or put down insurgency – the differences will most likely become more pronounced.

From the perspective of humanitarian organisations, it is important to maintain a humanitarian space in which they can do their impartial work without being associated with military forces.⁷⁴⁸ Therefore, they want as clear a delineation of work as possible between humanitarian organisations and the military. However, the military may also view humanitarian efforts as a human obligation, not just as a way of influencing a population. Different countries have various ways of tackling these differences in their policies. While the Americans have strong links between civilian and military institutions and means based on efficiency considerations, many European countries have focused on clear separation of the two where feasible.

Private military companies represent another type of challenge in respect of planning and strategy. Such private entities are an old phenomenon, and they had a central part to play in warfare in early modern times, such as during the Thirty Years War (1618-1648).⁷⁴⁹ Nowadays such companies are most vital to logistics and other support functions, but they also have a certain part to play in consultancy operations as well, and as participants in combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, among others.⁷⁵⁰

Such companies operate in a grey zone in more than one area. They are not under military command, nor are they subject to the same legal rules and obligations as military forces; this makes it difficult to make them accept liability. The Blackwater incident from Iraq is the most widely discussed issue in this regard.⁷⁵¹ Private companies are a controversial but essential part of modern international operations, particularly American ones.

Local ownership is another important problem area in connection with stability operations. The purpose of such operations is to place the local government in a position to carry out its duties independently and thereby create stability within

748 Karen Guttieri, 'Humanitarian Space in Insecure Environments: A Shifting Paradigm', *Strategic Insights*, Vol. 4, no. 11, November 2005.

749 Peter W. Singer, *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004).

750 Jahn Arvid Svendsen, 'Forsvaret og private militære firmaer – En ny utfordring i internasjonale operasjoner', *Oslo Files on Defence and Security*, 05/2009.

751 David Johnston & John M. Broder, 'The F.B.I. Says Guards Killed 14 Iraqis without Cause', *The New York Times*, 14 November 2007.

the borders of the country, even after the stabilisation forces have left the country. Strengthening the capacity and legitimacy of the local government is therefore entirely crucial to the chances of success for such an operation. However, this purpose may end up on a collision course with the participating country's desire to promote values that are prioritised in its home country, such as human rights, democracy and the rights of women. The participating country may also wish to control the use of resources, either in order to prevent corruption or because it prefers to see them used in areas where it has 'responsibility'. The latter is designed both to legitimise the action at home and also to garner sympathy in the stabilisation area. This may result in a situation in which many involvements from the outside are not subject to overall prioritisation by the UN or by the government in the recipient country, and hence their overall impact might be less than optimal.

Strengthening the military capacity of the country will, in the majority of situations, be entirely essential for the success of a stability operation. However, there are situations in which the military forces in the country in question are part of the problem, rather than part of the solution. In the opinions of many people, this is the case in the Congo, where the government forces have been blamed for extensive harassment of the civilian population. This emphasises the fact that the recruitment and quality of local forces are often a problem, and that these represent an element of uncertainty in a planning situation. Therefore, instructors are becoming an ever more important element in counterinsurgency actions, such as in the OMLT (Operational Mentor and Liaison Team) in Afghanistan.⁷⁵² Many of the same problems arise within the police force and the rest of the legal system, and in this regard there are often problems with corruption and nepotism as well.

The target countries often have a great shortage of trained bureaucrats, so training in this field is also important with regard to stabilisation. Even if qualified bureaucrats are acquired, it is also necessary to have a remuneration system that makes it possible or attractive to accept positions outside the capital. This may result in a high number of unhappy trained people who instead seek jobs abroad or who may be recruited by the insurgents and thus help to strengthen them.

The buzzwords 'shape', 'clear', 'hold' and 'build' have been central in U.S. thinking relating to strategy in stability operations,⁷⁵³ while the British have adopted a different approach with the buzzwords 'shape', 'secure', 'hold' and 'develop'. The main difference is the emphasis placed by the British on the word 'shape', i.e. creating the best possible conditions by gathering information and exerting an influence before

752 *NATO's Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLTs)*, Fact Sheet: Public Diplomacy Division, Press and Media Section, Media Operational Centre, NATO HQ Brussels, January 2010.

753 For further assessments see: Anthony H. Cordesman, 'Shape, Clear, Hold, and Build: The Uncertain Lessons of the Afghan & Iraq Wars', *CSIS Center for Strategic & International Studies*, 23 September 2009, <http://csis.org/publication/shape-clear-hold-and-build-commentary>.

an action is implemented.⁷⁵⁴ However, the operation itself must begin by ‘clearing’ an area of insurgents, then forces must be deployed to secure areas against attack and thereafter economic building can begin. This may seem like a logical structure, but major resources and close links between civilian and military resources are required if a strategy of this kind is to succeed. Actions that are not followed up by a more permanent military presence can create major problems for those parts of the civilian population who had cooperated with the government and stabilisation forces. If support is to be fostered, it is likely also entirely necessary to commence operations that the population views as beneficial. The problem here is that this in turn assumes close links between the military and civilians, but this could be viewed as unfortunate by some civilian institutions due to the reasons already outlined. Therefore, resources and cooperation are entirely crucial to the success of stability operations.

5.4. Framework

Interventions aim at safeguarding a local regime and/or a local population from what the rest of the world would define as illegitimate threats or attacks, or ensuring that the basic needs of a local population are met (humanitarian intervention). Although these are essential factors as to why a stability operation is implemented in the first place, this is not enough of a reason for an operation of this kind to be implemented by an institution or for individual countries to make available military and other resources. There are many areas characterised by unrest and humanitarian challenges where operations are not being implemented. Therefore, it is necessary to differentiate between sufficient and necessary criteria for implementation. The necessary criteria may be humanitarian or idealistic in nature, such as a desire to prevent conflict in a specific region. The latter has traditionally provided legitimacy for UN operations. The latter type of intervention would initially be relatively non-controversial, but in many instances questions could be raised – justifiably or not – about whether this motive simply conceals other motives that may be political in nature and represent necessary criteria for national initiatives.

In some operations, national interests that are political and economic in nature have an important part to play when it comes to both initiating and participating in operations. Political interests may involve influencing the domestic or foreign policy of a country. However, equally important for many countries, particularly in NATO, is the fact that participation in operations may provide goodwill within the institution on which they have based their own security; this is something that may increase the likelihood of they themselves being able to expect help in a crisis. Economic

⁷⁵⁴ JDP 3-40, pp. 11-2

interests may be linked to the country in which intervention is taking place, e.g. by trying to control or preventing others from taking control of important resources of varying kinds, but individual countries may also see economic advantages in simply participating. This may be why so many poor countries provide forces for various UN operations.

The 'game' surrounding stability operations is therefore played out in three different arenas, and can be analysed as three different 'sub games' that influence each other. According to the terminology of George Tsebelis, these are then 'nested games'.⁷⁵⁵ When games are nested in this way, actions that may be perceived as not very rational in one game may seem rational in another, which may perhaps have higher priority for the player in question. For example, the strategy of a country in Afghanistan may seem not to be particularly rational in relation to the official mission, but it may seem to be rational when viewed in the context of the political situation at home or the situation within NATO. For small countries in particular, whose ability to influence the situation in Afghanistan is highly limited, policies could be influenced by the situation in the two other areas to a far greater extent.

However, regardless of which country is involved, it is necessary to generate political support at home when military forces are sent to another country. The importance of domestic support increases in proportion to the level of risk and resource requirements of the operation. This is particularly important if the link between important national interests and the efforts in the operation area are indirect. The action has to be seen as *legitimate* – that is to say, 'appropriate' – in relation to interests and also to *values*. As vital national interests are rarely at stake in such operations, the discussion about participation could easily become part of the overall political game, not 'high politics', as central elements of security policy have traditionally been viewed.

The institutions that implement the operations also have their own interests to preserve, while at the same time they have to take their resource limits and values into account. NATO and the UN are in very different situations when it comes to stability operations. The UN has high legitimacy but not much in the way of resources, and at the same time it has had a strained relationship with the use of power.⁷⁵⁶ NATO, on the other hand, is an organisation with plenty of resources in which military forces form a central component. Individual countries place resources at the disposal of the UN, partly for idealistic reasons and partly to exert an influence within the organisation. Many poor countries make soldiers available to the UN for financial reasons, while Western countries in particular give NATO priority over the UN for reasons of *realpolitik*. As a result, the UN forces are often poorly equipped and lack an infrastructure and relevant training.

⁷⁵⁵ George Tsebelis, *Nested Games: Rational Choice in Comparative Politics* (University of California Press, 1990).

⁷⁵⁶ Stian Kjeksrud, 'FNs strategiske dilemma: Bruk av makt for fred', in Tore Nyhamar (red.), *Utfordringer og strategi i freds- og stabiliseringsoperasjoner* (Oslo: Abstrakt forlag, 2010), pp. 154–176.

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has been an organisation in pursuit of relevant tasks. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, its slogan became ‘Out of area or out of business’,⁷⁵⁷ a reference that underlined the importance of finding new roles so as not to appear to be an organisation with no ability to resolve relevant international challenges in respect of security policy.

However, the significance and role of NATO are largely based on the fact that the USA regards the institution as useful in its security policy and hence uses it as an arena and as a means. A NATO that the USA does not regard as relevant will quickly lose its importance. As long as stability operations are important to American security policy, it will thus be essential for countries wanting a strong NATO to ensure that NATO plays a central role in these operations. Therefore, they may feel that providing forces and possibly other resources as well is in their interest. They do this not only to reinforce NATO and gain an influence within NATO, but also to increase their chances of getting help themselves in the event of a conflict. NATO operations in Afghanistan and in the Balkans previously also attracted participation from countries other than NATO members. These players wanted to appear to be an ‘external resource’⁷⁵⁸ and hence gain goodwill, and possibly also prepare the ground for future NATO membership. Therefore, stability operations have an important part to play in the ‘NATO game’.

The consideration for the political ‘game’ at home and within NATO (and in practice, within the UN and EU as well) means that the strategy in stability operations is not necessarily optimal when it comes to implementation in the target country.⁷⁵⁹ Therefore, when strategies are assessed, it is necessary to take into account the dominant interests and the values in the countries that provide forces, the interests and attitudes in the institutions that implement the operations and the specific challenges in the target country.

5.5. Implementation – what has an impact?

Stability operations are intended to create ‘stability’ in a given area, but as discussed above there is no agreement on what ‘stability’ means. Nor is there any agreement on what leads to ‘stability’. Of course, at the outset it is difficult to come up with general conclusions in this regard since the conflicts leading to intervention differ so widely, but there are also fundamental – not to mention ideological – differences in the view

⁷⁵⁷ This concept was launched by Ronald Asmus in connection with the discussion on potential NATO engagement in the Balkans in the early 1990s.

⁷⁵⁸ Bjørn Olav Knutsen *et al.*, *Europeisk sikkerhet i en foranderlig tid: En analyse av Norges utenriks- og sikkerhetspolitisk handlingsrom* (Kjeller: FFI/RAPPORT-2000/00046), pp. 118–119.

⁷⁵⁹ Kjølberg (2010).

of the most appropriate means as regards stability. The empirical foundation for different stabilisation strategies is not always that strong, and the political attitudes in the countries responsible for the action apparently play as important a part as the specific situation in the target country with regard to the choice of strategy. But as we have seen in both Iraq⁷⁶⁰ and Afghanistan,⁷⁶¹ strategies sometimes have to be changed following a brutal encounter with reality. The ambitions that form the basis of an operation can quickly turn out to be based upon illusions, or – more accurately – on an understanding of a situation that is interpreted by Western minds and which perhaps does not take into account the complexity of the problem at hand.

The objective is always to ensure that intervention is no longer needed by (re) creating *stability*. This can take place by means of a strategy based mainly on military means, as was the case in the traditional counterinsurgency actions in colonial areas, or a strategy with a greater emphasis on economic and political means. The latter focuses more on the local population and government than on insurgents. The relative priority of these strategies should initially be dependent on the specific challenge in each individual situation, but this is not necessarily always the case. In Western political thinking, there has been an expectation that economic development and political liberalism can at least remove the causes of instability (if not fully create stability) and that political and economic means are therefore effective as regards stabilisation.

To some extent, the two main strategies have a realpolitical and an idealistic political starting point, but both realpolitik and idealistic politics can be promoted through all three of the main means: military, economic and political. A realpolitical approach will emphasise stabilisation based on military and political power relations. Armed forces, economic means of buying support and negotiations are all of relevance. The strategy that was eventually applied in Iraq by General David Petraeus is an example of a strategy of this kind, and at the time of writing it is also being used in Afghanistan, in an adjusted form. The problem with this kind of approach is that the stability achieved may be fragile and that new conflicts can easily arise, as the underlying conflicts may remain unresolved.

An idealistic approach will concentrate more on resolution of the basic problems that led to the conflict, and on the social and political changes necessary in order to resolve these. The problem with this approach is that the values to be introduced may be characterised by Western ideals, which do not necessarily have as much acceptance in the target country, and the link between means and objective might be uncertain

760 Tore Nyhamar, 'Opprørsbekjempelse: USAs Irakstrategi 2007', in Tore Nyhamar (ed.). *Utfordringer og strategi i freds- og stabiliseringsoperasjoner*, pp. 224–251.

761 Anthony Cordesman, Shape, Clear, Hold, and Build: 'The Uncertain Lessons of the Afghan & Iraq Wars', *CSIS Center for Strategic & International Studies*, 23 September 2009, <http://csis.org/publication/shape-clear-hold-and-build-uncertain-lessons-afghan-iraq-wars>.

and indirect. Also, the effect may be apparent only after a long time, while a stability operation is difficult to maintain over any length of time because of the resources required and uncertain support from public opinion at home.

A realpolitical strategy centred on military means will initially be concerned with combating any insurgency movement or any other form of violent opposition by military means. Building military capacity is then essential. Such capacities can be strengthened partly by increasing the external deployment, and partly by reinforcing or linking it with local forces with the same objective. These forces primarily comprise the local government's military forces and police, but they may also include local forces beyond the control of the government. The latter may be traditional groups such as tribes and clans, but may also include warlords and criminal groups.

Other means are also relevant insofar as they increase the chances of reaching this goal. Gaining the support of the population ('hearts and minds') or preventing their support to insurgents or their being forced to support them are central in this regard.⁷⁶² Therefore, it is important both to ensure that the combat actions do not adversely impact the civilian population through inaccurate bombing or the like, and to ensure that the best possible protection is given so that the local population is not vulnerable to threats from insurgents. Economic means also have their part to play here, both in order to gain the sympathy of the local population and to buy the support of central political and military players.

Negotiations with insurgents can also create stability. Such negotiations must arrive at compromises if they are to succeed. However, compromises will often be controversial as results are achieved by renouncing interests and/or values, which may arouse adverse reactions in both the participating countries and in the target country.⁷⁶³

More idealistic strategies that seek to alter values and power relations in the target country to align them more closely with values that the intervening players view as universal and which are generally also supported by 'modern' elements in the society in question are also controversial. The outer world then takes part in a battle of values in the society in which intervention is taking place. This may have high legitimacy in popular opinion at home, but be controversial with regard to the value system of the target country.

The other problem in regarding this is how effective idealistic means such as economic aid and liberal values are in respect of stabilisation. Aid projects have an important part to play in American strategy, as was underlined in the manual entitled *Commander's Guide to Money as a Weapons System*.⁷⁶⁴ However, studies undertaken by

⁷⁶² The origin of this slogan was discussed by Elizabeth Dickinson in 'A Bright Shining Slogan', *Foreign Policy*, September/October 2009.

⁷⁶³ Compromises with organisations have been characterised as 'a pact with the Devil', according to Jahn Otto Johansen in Norwegian newspaper article 'En pakt med djevelen. Er forslagene om å trekke Taliban inn i en fredsprosess en pakt med djevelen?' *ABC Nyheter*, 6.2.2010, <http://www.abcnyheter.no/verden/100205/en-pakt-med-djevelen>.

⁷⁶⁴ U. S. Combined Arms Center (CAC), Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL), *Commander's Guide to Money as a Weapon*.

Andrew Wilder indicate that there is no positive effect in the form of less violence and instability in Afghanistan as a result of various aid programmes. According to Wilder the effectiveness of this weapon is highly uncertain.⁷⁶⁵ Economic aid can be viewed as a benefit in itself and can promote humanitarian and economic objectives, but according to Wilder it is not effective as a 'weapon system'. However, his work applies only to Afghanistan, and his results cannot be applied across the board. Reports from Iraq indicate that money has been a more effective 'weapon' there.⁷⁶⁶ Societies may react in different ways to economic incentives as regards stabilisation. There are also problems with the possibility and desirability of coordinating military and civilian resources in a consistent strategy if prioritising takes place at an operational level.

As regards the link between liberal political and economic values and stabilisation, this is every bit as uncertain and controversial. Most peace and stability operations have been led by Western countries, and the values of these countries have largely defined the aims of the operations. This starting point is now being regarded more critically than was previously the case. Various reasons are stated for this⁷⁶⁷, including the emphasis on the state and its institutions rather than society, the fact that the means used have limited legitimacy and lead to ongoing uncertainty and violent opposition, the fact that 'the war on terror' has given liberalism an aggressive face that undermines values such as human rights, and the fact that individualism and democracy are viewed with scepticism in many more collectively oriented societies. In particular, the link between counterinsurgency actions and state building is important and difficult as these two factors are so dependent on one another. The concept of 'nation building' is closely linked with the liberal tradition of the state as a supplier of services, including security, to the people. The stronger the state, the more stability can be achieved by military, economic and political means. It is also important to give the local regime legitimacy as the forces from other parts of the world will leave the country sooner or later, and the local government then has to be in a position to take over responsibility.

Stability operations for which the objective is state or nation building – an issue often put forward as an objective for the operation in Afghanistan – seek to change both the political institutions and the political and social culture in the target country. They carry out what is known as 'social engineering', which also implies 'cultural engineering'.. Problems occur when the objectives for 'social engineering' do not fall within the boundaries of the culture in the local society.⁷⁶⁸

ons System, Tactics, Techniques and Procedures, U.S. Army Handbook 09-27, April 2009.

765 Andrew Wilder, 'A "weapons system" based on wishful thinking', *Boston Globe*, 16 September 2009. See also Andrew Wilder & Stuart Gordon, 'Money Can't Buy America Love', *Foreign Policy*, December 2009.

766 Dana Hedgpeth & Sarah Cohen, 'Money as a Weapon', *The Washington Post*, 11 August 2008,

767 Kristoffer Lidén et al., 'Introduction: Beyond Northern Epistemologies of Peace: Peacebuilding Reconstructed?' *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 16, No. 5, November 2009, pp. 587–588.

768 Marc Tyrrell, 'What To Know Before You Go: 10 Questions To Ask Before, and During, a Mission', in Greg Kaufmann (ed.), *Stability Operations and State-building: Continuities and Contingencies*, Colloquium Report, October 2008, Strategic

The view of the state as an asset does not necessarily have general acceptance in all non-Western countries, in which the state may be perceived as an oppressor and extortionist, and where insurgency often takes the form of insurgency against the state. Therefore, supporting a state-building concept in areas in which the state is associated with something negative can cause problems for a stability operation. This is also true in situations in which the state is in reality part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

According to Max Weber's classic definition of a state, the state is the institution that has a monopoly on legitimate use of power within a given territory.⁷⁶⁹ Therefore, the insurgents are not the only parties that undermine the legitimacy of a state – so do the foreign forces deployed there. Hence it is doubly important to ensure that the local state is able to do the job itself; otherwise insurgents may gain legitimacy because they can appear to be defending national interests.⁷⁷⁰

5.6. Experiences

A large number of counterinsurgency actions, stability operations and similar military operations have taken place. No two are alike, and the challenges differ in each and every situation. However, the interesting aspect in this regard is whether patterns emerge that can tell us anything about the link between what the rest of the world aims to achieve with its action, the forces deployed, the challenges encountered and the results achieved. Likewise, it is important to identify the mechanisms at work in insurgency situations and be able to influence these in a way that will increase the chances of success. Finally, it is also important to discuss the links that apply between the ambitions of the participating countries and the results of the operations in order to assess what significance this has with respect to the chances of success in these kinds of operations.

Not all kinds of stability operations are equally challenging for the participating states. Examples of less challenging operations may include monitoring elections or ensuring security in a country making the transition to independence. In practice, this is a kind of police role, and the actual presence is the main task. Examples of these kinds of operations include the UN action in Namibia in 1989-90 and Cambodia in 1992-93. The presence of one to four soldiers per 1000 inhabitants in a country is considered as sufficient in these kinds of operations.⁷⁷¹ The Americans had a relatively

Studies Institute (SSI), United States Army War College, <http://www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB879.pdf>.

769 Øyvind Østerud, *Statsvitenskap – Innføring i politisk analyse* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2nd edition, 1996), p. 50.

770 Seth G. Jones, *Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan*, RAND Counterinsurgency Studies, Volume 4, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), p. 7.

771 James T. Quinlivan, 'Force Requirements in Stability Operations', *Parameters*, Winter 1995, pp. 59–69.

similar presence (two soldiers per 1000 inhabitants) in their occupation zone in Germany after the Second World War.

Preservation of peace, i.e. separating parties that have been in conflict and ensuring stability, is rather more challenging. The parties have at that point mutually entered into an agreement and approved the presence of the forces, meaning no actors are to be fought. Nevertheless, the forces still have to be capable of defending themselves if they come under attack. The actual conflict must be resolved by the parties themselves; all the participating countries have to do is improve the situation by their presence. From four to ten soldiers per 1000 inhabitants has been a common requirement for these kinds of operations, historically speaking.⁷⁷²

Humanitarian interventions may cover a broad spectrum of challenges, but these are probably at their most challenging if the intervention is due to the civilian population being affected by fighting, as was the case in Kosovo, Darfur and the Congo. The fact that these challenges vary so widely makes it impossible to put a figure on the potential need for troops.

It is also difficult to put a figure on the resources needed in connection with regime changes as challenges may arise once the desired regime change has taken place; Iraq and Afghanistan are examples of this. Other countries may then face resource-intensive counterinsurgency actions instead.

Counterinsurgency actions are the most demanding form of stability operation as regards the resources required. Not only do insurgents have to be fought, but the civilian population also has to be protected. Experience shows that counterinsurgency actions have required something in the order of 20 soldiers and police officers per 1000 inhabitants in the country, as was the case in Kosovo, Bosnia, Malaya and Northern Ireland.⁷⁷³ However, there is no inherent link between the total population in a country to which stabilisation forces are sent and the number of forces required because insurgency does not necessarily cover the entire country, and the domestic conditions in the target country may vary widely.⁷⁷⁴ Regardless of whether or not the requirement can be defined, it is clear that this kind of initiative is both highly resource-intensive and risky for the countries deploying forces.

In addition, these kinds of operations typically last a long time, perhaps a decade or more. If forces rotate after perhaps six months of service and the British starting point is used – which states that there should be two years between deployments of a unit – this translates into a pool of forces that is five times as large as the number of soldiers deployed at any one time (the ‘rule of five’).⁷⁷⁵

⁷⁷² Quinlivan (1995).

⁷⁷³ James T. Quinlivan, ‘Burden of Victory. The Painful Arithmetic of Stability Operations’, *RAND Review*, Vol. 27, No. 2, Summer 2003, http://www.rand.org/pubs/corporate_pubs/2007/RAND_CP22-2003-08.pdf.

⁷⁷⁴ Consequently, these numbers are highly controversial.

⁷⁷⁵ Quinlivan (2003).

Long-term counterinsurgency efforts in areas with large populations may therefore require massive resources, and thus there will be a great need to supplement the forces deployed there from abroad with local forces.⁷⁷⁶ This problem, which is not discussed much in the traditional literature on counterinsurgency operations, was and is an urgent matter in large countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

In the first phase of the war in Afghanistan, the Northern Alliance forces played a crucial part in the struggle against the Taliban regime, and Muslim militias were important for turning developments in Iraq to the advantage of the Americans. However, dependency on local forces makes it more difficult to maintain more idealistic normative ambitions as regards political development in the country in question. Dependency on local forces means that idealism may have to give way to realism.

Stability operations are resource-intensive on an economic level as well. In addition to the large sums of money that military engagements cost, there is also financial support in the form of aid in or for the country in which intervention is taking place. Aid of USD 100 per year per inhabitant is cited as a minimum for successful stability operations, but the figures from the operations in Kosovo and Bosnia were much higher (USD 500–700 in 2000 values per inhabitant per year).⁷⁷⁷ Regardless, these figures are much lower than the cost of the military operations.

Here, you have to take into account major economic differences and needs in different areas, as well as corruption. Funds can also be used to buy allies, either by paying individual militiamen or central individuals such as clan leaders, warlords, criminal bosses, mullahs, etc., but these may be short-term solutions. However, in some instances short-term solutions may be better than no solutions at all.

Andrew Wilder calls economic means ‘a “weapons system” based on wishful thinking’, on the basis of his investigations in Afghanistan.⁷⁷⁸ He feels that this is not surprising as instability and uncertainty in Afghanistan, according to his investigations, are due to the corrupt and unjust government, not its lack of ability to cover economic needs (Wilder and Gordon 2009).⁷⁷⁹ He also feels that economic aid is generally not suitable for creating goodwill in Afghanistan, partly because of a zero sum mentality whereby aid leads to dissatisfaction and opposition from the people who receive nothing, and partly because economic aid mainly generates corruption. Therefore, money does not win ‘hearts and minds’ in Afghanistan; rather, the opposite is true, according to Wilder.

⁷⁷⁶ Jones (2008), p. 9.

⁷⁷⁷ John Godges, ‘Afghanistan on the Edge. A World of Winning the Urban Battle, Losing the Rural War, Abandoning the Regional Solution’, *RAND Review*, Vol 31, No. 2, Summer 2007, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/corporate_pubs/2007/RAND_CP22-2007-08.pdf.

⁷⁷⁸ Wilder (2009).

⁷⁷⁹ Wilder & Gordon (2009).

However, there is reason to be cautious when it comes to drawing general conclusions based on experiences from Afghanistan because experiences from Iraq⁷⁸⁰ and other places are interpreted as being more positive.

As previously indicated, the time aspect is important in this regard. The population has to see positive results before too much time passes. Promises of improvements in the future will not do. The first two years are mentioned as being crucial. However, this time frame should perhaps be even shorter. This is a challenge in two ways in the context of stabilisation. Firstly, economic programmes take time to implement, and they cannot be coordinated easily with military operations, which have to react to strategic opportunities that arise. Secondly, it requires close coordination not only between civilian and military resources, but also between civilian and military players. As mentioned previously, this kind of close coordination encounters serious problems as important interests and norms are challenged.

However, use of economic means as the operation unfolds is looked upon as important for many countries that deploy forces for stability operations. This is particularly true of the countries that hold responsibility for PRTs in Afghanistan. There are two considerations in this regard. The first is the expectation that economic aid will create goodwill for the military forces and therefore expose them to less danger while at the same time promoting stability in the area. The other is that the area for which a country is 'responsible' should be a showcase for the country in question. The problem with this kind of economic aid is that it is only a small part of the overall national economic plan, so its economic effects may be limited. This has prompted the UN in particular to call for a more coordinated strategy for economic support to Afghanistan.

Use of economic means can also be controversial in the countries that apply them. Economic aid that promotes development and improves the standard of living is not controversial, but 'buying' allies, paying bribes, etc. will arouse negative reactions at home even if the results are apparently good, in the form of at least short-term stability.

For countries that provide resources for stability operations, it is important that the objectives of the initiative and the funds used do not contravene the norms and values applicable in the homeland. Any other development would undermine the legitimacy – and hence support – of the operations. Again, the problem here is that these are norms that may conflict with applicable norms and values in the target country. The same may be true of the institutions that the intervening parties are seeking to introduce or reinforce in the country in question. What is referred to as state building or nation building may consequently be controversial and result in political conflicts that can increase opposition to the stabilisation forces.

780 Hedgpeth & Cohen (2008).

Up to now, it has been generally acceptable to assert that the various peace operations aim to build sustainable peace based on political, social and economic liberalism.⁷⁸¹ Western ideals would be the blueprint for lasting peace. However, doubts concerning the validity of this perspective are increasing. This is due to a number of conditions. First and foremost, the effectiveness and legitimacy of this kind of starting point is in question, with its emphasis on state institutions at the expense of local society and the social contract that exists within it.⁷⁸² The same is true of the emphasis on human rights regimes and similar – these ideals are met with scepticism locally and may also be in conflict with local customs, and are even viewed in part as empty rhetoric.

Tyrrell underlines the fact that successful social engineering requires one of the following four conditions:⁷⁸³

1. Gradual social engineering is necessary in order to influence cultural engineering
2. The desired objective for social engineering falls within the bounds of what is culturally accepted, but not in its present form
3. A consistent charismatic vision and effect that at least partly falls within the bounds of what is culturally accepted
4. Systematic destruction of a culture and its replacement with a new one.

The last two options *are not* relevant for stability operations. The first two, according to Tyrrell,⁷⁸⁴ require a firm understanding of the local culture. If the desired objective falls outside the bounds of the local culture, 15-20 years or more may be required until it is integrated. If the objective lies within the bounds, as was the situation in Germany after World War II, this may go considerably faster. Therefore, it is far easier to bring about these kinds of changes in Western countries such as the Balkans than it is to implement them in Asia and Africa. Institutions that are introduced in the latter areas may either fail completely or be recreated and take on a form that is more consistent with the local culture. Traditional political structures often have broad legitimacy, which is something Western-inspired political structures often do not have. Western resources that are deployed in order to bring about a change in political structures and institutions can be reformulated and exploited by the local elite to reinforce their own position, thereby undermining more or less well-meant attempts at change.⁷⁸⁵

The experiences discussed thus far are general in nature and only to a limited extent take into account the local context of insurgency and counterinsurgency actions, in other words, the mechanisms that cause prevailing conditions to lead to insurgency.

781 Lidén et al. (2008).

782 Ibid.

783 Tyrrell (2008), pp. 124–125.

784 Tyrrell (2008), p. 125.

785 Pierre Englebert & Denis M. Tull, 'Postconflict Reconstruction in Africa: Flawed Ideas about Failed States', *International Security*, Vol. 32, No. 4, Spring 2008, pp. 140–170.

Nicholas Sambanis has touched on the significance of these intermediate causes.⁷⁸⁶ He emphasises that situations such as coups, riots, civil war, insurgency, terrorism, chaos situations ('failed states'), separatism, etc., which stability operations aim to counter or oppose, vary widely and develop in different ways. They have different escalation mechanisms and the ways in which the violence is organised are different. In his view, this organisation is the result of four different factors, which interact to a degree: a desire to rob, yearning for political change, the opportunity to organise ethnic or criminal groups, and the reasons or legitimate basis for mobilisation.⁷⁸⁷

Other intermediate variables that, in his opinion, influence the chances of insurgency and counterinsurgency actions are dispersal from other areas, external involvement and how conflicts escalate. Different forms of external influence can make it harder to counter insurgency.⁷⁸⁸ This is due to different forms of support, opportunities for safe havens and ideological identity and influence.

How insurgency is fought – that is to say, which strategy is used – is also of significance to the chances of success. One way to categorise strategies is to differentiate between what are known as 'enemy-centred' and 'population-centred' strategies. Of course, in reality it is not possible to maintain a completely watertight separation between these categories as the majority of practical strategies will combine both types and strategies can also change over time. With this in mind, Andrew Enterline and Joseph Magagnoli⁷⁸⁹ have carried out a study into the effectiveness of these two types of strategy, based on historical studies. These studies show that enemy-centred strategies have been successful in fewer than half of the conflicts since 1945, while population-centred strategies have succeeded in two-thirds of conflicts over the same period. The two authors also look at the importance of potentially changing strategy from an enemy-centred strategy to a population-centred one. Experiences in this field indicate that a long time is required in such situations in order to build up enough confidence in the population to succeed – on average, nine years. No stability operation that has undergone this change in strategy has so far succeeded. This underlines the difficulties in this field, but because all operations are different it is not possible to draw fixed conclusions from the general evidence to work out specifics.

786 Nicholas Sambanis, 'Using Case Studies to Expand Economic Models of Civil War', *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 2, No.2, June 2004, pp. 261–279.

787 Sambanis (2004), p. 269.

788 Sambanis (2004), pp. 270–71.

789 Andrew Enterline & Joseph Magagnoli, 'Is the Chance of Success in Afghanistan Better than a Coin Toss?' *Foreign Policy*, 27 August 2009.

5.7. Conclusion

Not all forms of peace and stability operations are equally challenging, but the most complex forms of these kinds of operations, namely terrorist and counterinsurgency actions, have attracted wide attention over the past decade due to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. In reality, this is the main form of warfare conducted by the military systems of the West at present.

Stability operations differ from traditional military operations in two important respects. The first is that the countries providing military forces are themselves not directly threatened by the combat actions, and the second is that consideration for and the reaction of the population in the target countries are crucial if success is to be achieved (so-called 'hearts and minds'). These two aspects have major consequences for how the fighting takes place, and for the role played by military forces and other resources in the overall strategy.

The British stabilisation doctrine emphasises that 'for real, long-term success, you must address the root causes of the instability'.⁷⁹⁰ This is in principle a commendable ambition, but demanding stability operations bring with them great challenges, such as the limitations that apply both politically and in terms of resources. As a result, such ambitions may be unrealistic and thus impede the more realistic objectives of creating as stable a situation as possible given the realities in the target country. Therefore, the ideal may be the enemy of good.

The fact that central national values and interests are not at stake means that the engagement of a country into stability operations is not 'securitised' in the same way as if the country itself had been subject to attack. Consequently, the discussion about a country's strategy – that is to say, the objectives and resources for the operations – becomes part of ordinary politics and does not rank above it. Therefore, it will be a result of political compromises. The other consequence is that the engagement may be viewed as a foreign policy and security policy means with which the participating country is attempting to gain advantage in other areas, particularly within the institution on behalf of which the operation is taking place. At present, this is NATO first and foremost, although the EU and UN do have a certain part to play. The strategy in the target country might therefore be determined just as much by the framework conditions of domestic policy and by the desire to look after one's interests within the institution in question, making it only partly optimal in relation to the operation itself. The decision makers then have to proceed on the basis of three different 'games': the domestic policy game, the institutional game and the operation itself, and it is not always obvious which 'game' would be the most important for the various countries.

⁷⁹⁰ JDP 3-40, p. xv.

Decisions have to be assessed on the basis of nested games, where actions that may appear to be suboptimal in relation to one game may be optimal in relation to another.

The domestic policy game influences both what is given priority and what restrictions are placed on the operation. Liberal Western values and state building therefore become central, while at the same time the risk of one's own losses must be reduced as much as possible. NATO's expectations of participation and actions may lead to adverse reactions if a country does not 'deliver', while at the same time actions over and above what is expected may lead to goodwill and greater influence, as well as an expectation of 'security draw rights' if their own country becomes subject to pressure or attacks. Therefore, the 'NATO game' is particularly important for countries that feel vulnerable or want to have an influence. The Baltic states are examples of the former, while the United Kingdom and Denmark are examples of the latter.

Emphasis on liberal Western values is important in order to legitimise the action both at home and abroad. Idealistic objectives initially generate support, but it is not self-evident that they will lead to stability in the target country, at least not in the short term. Emphasis on state and nation building may be important in order to better enable the local government to create stability on its own, but the condition is that this government must be viewed as a positive thing in the area that is to be stabilised. If this is not the case – if the government is associated with oppression and corruption, for example – this can easily become a double-edged sword. Nor do institutions function in the same way in areas with a political culture that differs from our Western one, and empirical data shows that such cultural changes take a long time even in a best-case scenario.

Another liberal principle is that poverty and economic differences are the causes of conflict, and that conflicts can therefore be prevented and resolved by means of economic aid. This is also questionable, according to the experiences referred to previously. This may be correct in some locations, while aid in other places can create new opposition or have little effect. Experiences from Iraq may indicate that the direct purchase of support is the most effective method as regards stabilisation, but such use of support falls outside the liberal agenda. Therefore, the degree to which liberalism creates stability is uncertain.

Nor are military means as effective in all contexts. Challenging counterinsurgency actions, as already pointed out, often require military forces in the order of 20 soldiers or more per 1000 inhabitants in the target country over a long period (five to ten years, sometimes even longer). This means that counterinsurgency actions in large countries will require extensive resources and at the same time assume continuous popular support at home over a long period. From experience, this will be difficult in situations in which vital interests are not under threat. Consideration for one's own losses and for the population in the target country may also limit military ef-

fectiveness when it comes to fighting insurgents. This can easily result in insufficient resources and undermining of support at home.

Liberal Western values, external military intervention and civilian casualties can also undermine the legitimacy of the regime to be supported and promote traditional opposition and nationalism in the target country; this is something that insurgents can use to their advantage.

Belief in liberal values can lead to unrealistic objectives, and combined with insufficient resources this can result in a lack of success, which again weakens support at home. Therefore, neither a desire to remove the general causes of a conflict or the belief that military forces alone can create stability is a good recipe for success.

A change from an enemy-based strategy to a population-based strategy appears to be an attractive solution, but as stated above a solution of this kind is not an obvious winner. Security has to be created and confidence built up, and that can take a long time.

The problem here is how to proceed if objectives are not fully met. There are a number of options here:

- Change the objectives so that the level of ambition is lowered
- More resources, both military and economic, can be deployed
- Change the means, such as by focusing more on local solutions and negotiations.

There is no contradiction between these changes. Experiences from both Iraq and Afghanistan show that they are combined, provisionally with good results in Iraq but with far more uncertain results in Afghanistan. Specific changes may involve foregoing attempts to create democracies in our image, instead favouring solutions based on local power by cooperating with various holders of power irrespective of what they represent both ideologically and politically. Additional military resources may be deployed, as in Afghanistan, but then local efforts are likely to be more important than external efforts. The means can be altered both in the direction of a population-centred strategy and negotiation solutions with moderate force, as is also being implemented in Afghanistan.

Solutions that deviate from liberal values are often forced through by necessity, by the ideal meeting head-on with brutal reality, and these will raise objections. Attempts to include the Taliban in the peace process in Afghanistan have been characterised as a 'pact with the Devil'⁷⁹¹ given the attitudes of the Taliban towards women, among other things. But occasionally, a pact with the Devil may be preferable to no pact at all. It is important to remember that the other party may also view such a move as a

⁷⁹¹ Jahn Otto Johansen (2010).

‘pact with the Devil’. As with all negotiations, the issue is that *both* parties have to feel they are better off with a negotiated solution than with a solution without negotiations. Anyone who expects to win without negotiations does not need a negotiated solution. Therefore, the dilemma of the West in the case of stability operations is the dependency on the ‘game’ at home, which means that long-term operations with relatively major losses are difficult to maintain.

According to Lidén et al., the best realistic result is a pragmatic ‘hybrid peace’ with more military force, combined with the use of traditional institutions. Any influence exerted is of a pragmatic, non-ideological nature and compromises are necessary.⁷⁹² Politics is ‘the art of the possible’, and solutions must be sought within the scope of what is possible given the resources available and the challenges faced. Fewer illusions, greater realism and more focus on the existing institutions and culture are probably the way forward in order to avoid setbacks that affect everyone.

⁷⁹² Lidén et al. (2008).

*‘There are probably few areas in the social science literature in which so much is written on the basis of so little research. Perhaps as much as 80 percent of the literature is not research-based in any rigorous sense; instead, it is too often narrative, condemnatory, and prescriptive.’*⁷⁹³

— Alex Schmid & Albert Jongman

‘Terrorism is a weapon the revolutionary can never relinquish.’

— Carlos Marighella, *‘The Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla’*⁷⁹⁴

6 WHAT IS TERRORISM?

Brynjar Lia, D.Phil.⁷⁹⁵

6.1. Definition

The word *terrorism* is problematic. There is much disagreement about how terrorism should be defined.⁷⁹⁶ However, the events of 9/11 appear to have resulted in slightly more widespread agreement on what terrorism is and a broader acceptance of ‘terrorism’ as a global security challenge.⁷⁹⁷ One of the most commonly used definitions is that applied by the U.S. Department of State, which is worded as follows: ‘premedi-

⁷⁹³ See Alex P. Schmid and Albert J. Jongman *et al.*, *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories and Literature* (Amsterdam: SWIDOC, 1988), p. 179.

⁷⁹⁴ See Carlos Marighella, ‘Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla by Carlos Marighella’, *Marxists Internet Archive*, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marighella-carlos/1969/06/minimanual-urban-guerrilla/index.htm>.

⁷⁹⁵ Brynjar Lia, D.Phil., research professor at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI), Kjeller, Norway.

⁷⁹⁶ In his book *Inside Terrorism*, Bruce Hoffman provides a good discussion about the problems of definition. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), pp. 1–41. The sociological critique of the term ‘terrorism’ is that it does not identify ‘causally coherent and distinct social phenomena but strategies that recur across a wide variety of actors and political situations’. See Charles Tilly, ‘Terror, Terrorism, Terrorists’, *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 22, No. 1, March 2004, pp. 5–13.

⁷⁹⁷ The period following 11 September 2001 has been characterised by a massive increase in the use of the terms ‘terrorism’/‘terror’, leading many to hold the opinion that the terms have become overused and that the rhetoric relating to ‘the War on Terror’ is essentially a battle defined by hegemony and dominance. See, for example, Daniel Heradstveit and David C. Pugh, *The Rhetoric of Hegemony: How the extended definition of terrorism redefines international relations*, NUPI Working Papers No. 649, Norsk Utenrikspolitisk Institut NUPI, 2003, available at European Security and Defence Policy Online Course, <http://www.esdp-course.ethz.ch/content/pubkms/detail.cfm?lng=en&cid=27299>.

tated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.⁷⁹⁸ However, there are many other context-dependent definitions such as those used in academic research, political action plans or descriptions of specific illegal actions.

The aim of terrorism is to create fear in a target group. Terrorist violence is often described as a form of political communication because the action is intended as 'propaganda through deeds'.⁷⁹⁹ Terrorism is often characterised by the fact that the victims and the target group are different; the violence may strike anyone, but the target group for terrorist plots is nearly always a government and its political authorities. Therefore, campaigns of terrorist violence have to be 'customised' in order to garner as much media coverage as possible, for example, by attacking famous people or landmarks, repeatedly attacking places frequented by the public or by being particularly shocking. Furthermore, acts of terrorism have to have clear links with the terrorists' political cause so that the very act of violence 'speaks'. Therefore, symbolic targets such as embassies and foreign representations are very popular targets for international terrorists, while politicians and others who represent the state, such as the police and military, are frequent targets for domestic terrorist groups.

Terrorism is not warfare in the traditional sense, although it is a tactic used by a large number of armed groups of insurgents.⁸⁰⁰ Most groups designated as 'terrorist organisations' are involved in many other forms of violence such as irregular militia warfare targeting the military, rioting, dispensing brutal punishment for defectors and disobedient members, kidnapping for ransom, extortion, smuggling, fraud, thefts and other forms of economic crime used to finance their activities.

A widespread misperception of terrorism is that it is the blind use of violence against civilians, a 'cowardly strategy' that only affects innocent people, while guerrilla wars and armed insurgency are seen as more legitimate forms of political violence. However, this dichotomous understanding of terrorism versus guerrilla warfare is misleading. The vast majority of insurgent groups use terrorist methods to a greater or lesser extent as part of their violent actions and are often described and condemned as terrorists by political authorities. Whether armed groups resort to guerrilla warfare or conduct a series of acts of terrorism is partly determined by geographical location – is the terrain suitable for guerrilla war? The choice of insurgent tactic is also a result of

798 In one of the latest reports from the National Counterterrorism Center, the final clause – on influencing an audience – has been omitted. See National Counterterrorism Center, *2008 Report on Terrorism*, 30 April 2009, http://www.nctc.gov/witsbanner/docs/2008_report_on_terrorism.pdf, p.1.

799 Alex P. Schmid and Janny de Graaf, *Violence as Communication: Insurgent Terrorism and the Western News Media* (London: Sage, 1982). The term 'propaganda by the deed' is mostly associated with the anarchy movements of the 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as the new urban guerilla movements that developed in the 1960s and 1970s. See Marie Fleming, 'Propaganda by the deed: Terrorism and anarchist theory in late nineteenth-century Europe', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Volume 4, Issue 1, 1980, pp. 1–23.

800 For a discussion of terrorism as insurgency, see Ariel Merari, 'Terrorism as a Strategy of Insurgency', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol.5, No. 4, Winter 1993, pp. 213–251.

sociopolitical and economic conditions, such as the degree of poverty – how expensive is it to recruit and pay for a guerrilla army? – and the capacity of the government to oppose guerrilla movements.⁸⁰¹

Incidents of terrorism are sometimes described as ‘peacetime equivalents to war crimes’.⁸⁰² Terrorist groups violate the rules of war by attacking non-combatants, operating without uniforms, etc., and in war this type of behaviour is regarded as a war crime. Terrorism is also a unilateral form of violence; violent clashes between armed groups are normally not defined as terrorism.⁸⁰³

6.2. Terrorism in recent times: a brief summary

Although there are a number of examples of terrorism in pre-modern times, political terrorism is a relatively modern phenomenon. Its proliferation is closely linked with the development of new mass media: first the printed press in the 19th century and then the electronic TV media in the 1960s. Both of these media revolutions have affected the nature of terrorism. The growing spread of and dependency on the Internet is about to do the same.⁸⁰⁴

While anarchism was a driving ideological force behind many of the political attacks that shocked Europe and the USA in the late 19th century up until the First World War, nationalism and the search for independence have been the most important motivating factors for terrorism in the 20th century.⁸⁰⁵ Probably the most famous example of terrorism motivated by extreme nationalism is the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Habsburg throne, on 28 June 1914, an act of violence that triggered the First World War and led eventually to the fall of the Habsburg Empire.

Terrorism became a widespread tactic in the European colonies, particularly after the end of the Second World War. A large number of insurgent groups emerged, which, to varying degrees, used terrorism in their armed conflicts, such as the National Liberation Front (Front de Libération Nationale, FLN) in Algeria from 1954–62, the National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Ago-

801 Brynjar Lia with Katja Skjølberg, ‘Causes of Terrorism: An Expanded and Updated Review of the Literature’, FFI Research Report No.2004/04307, 2005, Forsvarets forskningsinstitutt FFI, <http://rapporter.ffi.no/rapporter/2004/04307.pdf>, pp. 25–33, 25–33.

802 See Boaz Ganor, ‘Defining Terrorism - Is One Man’s Terrorist Another Man’s Freedom Fighter?’ *International Institute for Counterterrorism*, IDC Herzliya, www.ict.org.il/ResearchPublications/tabid/64/Articleid/432/currentpage/1/Default.aspx.

803 For attempts at a sociological explanation of the concept of terrorism, see Roberta Senechal de la Roche, ‘Towards a Scientific Theory of Terrorism’, *Sociological Theory* Vol. 22, No. 1, March 2004, pp. 1–4; Roberta Senechal de la Roche, ‘Collective Violence as Social Control’, *Sociological Forum* Vol 11, No1, March 1996, pp. 97–128; and Donald Black, ‘The Geometry of Terrorism’, *Sociological Theory* 22 (1) (March 2004), pp. 14–25.

804 See Brynjar Lia, *Globalisation and the Future of Terrorism: Patterns and Predictions* (London: Routledge, 2005).

805 See David Rapoport, ‘The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism’, in David Rapoport (ed.) *Terrorism: Critical Concepts in Political Science*. (Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2006), pp. 3–30.

niston, EOKA) from 1954–58, Việt-Minh in French Indochina from 1945–54, the Communist MRLA guerrilla in Malaya from 1948–60 and the Mau-Mau rebels in Kenya in the 1950s. Unresolved conflicts rooted in colonialism have become a central source of modern-day terrorism, be it in Kashmir, Palestine, Northern Ireland or Kurdistan. In Europe, a number of ethno-nationalistic terrorist groups emerged as a result of unresolved minority and border conflicts. Some of these became the starting point for the most long-lived terrorist groups in Europe, such as Basque Homeland and Freedom, better known as ETA (Euskadi ta Askatasuna), the Fronte di Liberazione Nazionale Corsu (FLNC, the National Liberation Front of Corsica) and the Irish Republican Army (IRA).⁸⁰⁶

Until about 1970, terrorism was mainly a domestic phenomenon in the sense that terrorist organisations took action against targets in other countries only to a small degree. In many ways, the hijacking of an Israeli El Al airliner in Rome in July 1968 marked the start of modern international terrorism.⁸⁰⁷ The hijackers were part of the Palestinian Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), one of the Marxist factions of the PLO. The background to the internationalisation of terrorism was the failure of armed conflict to rid Israel from the occupied areas and neighbouring Arab countries. Therefore, the PFLP regarded international terrorist campaigns as a type of ‘qualitative operation’ that attacked the enemy at its weakest points. Even more important was the enormous amount of media attention created by these campaigns once live TV coverage had begun in earnest. This led a series of other groups of militants to start to imitate the PFLP and its modus operandi. However, for the leadership of the PLO, acts of terrorism by its radical factions gradually became a significant burden as they impeded attempts to gain international legitimacy as a partner at the negotiating table, discussing the future of Palestine.⁸⁰⁸

The internationalisation of terrorism after 1970 took on another new dimension as contacts and cooperation were established between revolutionary groups in all parts of the world, assisted by the Soviet Union and its allies. The Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and other Arab states also had an important part to play as training arenas and points of contact. A number of Arab regimes such as Libya, Syria, Algeria, Yemen and Iraq did the same, actively supporting and sheltering foreign groups of militants.⁸⁰⁹ In Western Europe, terrorism became a serious security problem in the

806 For a good study of the patterns and underlying reasons for terrorism in Western Europe in the post-War period, see Jan Oskar Engene, *Terrorism in Western Europe: Explaining the trends since 1950* (Cheltenham UK/Northampton MA, USA: Edward Elgar, 2004).

807 B. Hoffman (2006).

808 The best study of the history of the PLO is by Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for a State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949–1993* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

809 For information on the cooperation between Palestinian and European radical leftist terror groups, see – for example – Ely Karmon, *Coalitions Between Terrorist Organizations: Revolutionaries, Nationalists And Islamists* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 2005).

1970s with the emergence of a series of radical leftist terrorist groups: Direct Action (*Action Directe*) in France, Communist Combatant Cells (*Cellules Combattantes Communistes*) in Belgium, the Red Brigades (*Brigate Rosse*) in Italy, GRAPO (*Grupos de Resistencia Antifascista Primero de Octubre*) in Spain and the November 17th Revolutionary Organisation (*Epanastatike Organose 17 Noemvri*) in Greece. Although all of these were strongly coloured by their domestic arena, they emerged from the radical student movements and protest campaigns against the USA's warfare in Vietnam.⁸¹⁰

The most renowned of these European groups was probably the German Red Army Faction (RAF, *Rote Armee Fraktion*), also known as the Baader-Meinhof Gang. This group emerged in 1968 and carried out its first action against two shopping centres in Frankfurt the same year. Gradually RAF operations shifted their focus onto higher profile targets such as German community leaders, German ambassadors abroad and American bases in Europe. The group undertook training in camps in the Middle East and carried out campaigns in cooperation with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Action Directe. The RAF's ideological objective was to prepare the foundation for a worldwide Marxist revolution by means of a revolutionary campaign in the imperialist metropolises in Europe. Germany's Nazi history played an important role in the RAF's ideology. The group's overall strategy was to unleash a violent confrontation with the German state to provoke the authorities into an over-reaction. This, in turn, would force the German government to reveal its true 'Fascist face'. Student protests and demonstrations had played their part, they asserted, but only acts of violence against the state would be effective.⁸¹¹

Despite the enormous media attention garnered by the RAF and other Western European terrorists, the group's use of violence was relatively limited. RAF campaigns in the 1970s killed 31 people and illustrate the nature of terrorism in those days, namely strong, self-imposed limitations when it came to using violence. Renowned terrorism expert Brian Jenkins described this as follows: 'Terrorists want a lot of people watching, not a lot of people dead.'⁸¹² In the 1990s this thesis was no longer applicable. The previous decade, people had borne witness to a series of very deadly terrorist campaigns, where bombs on timers had exploded passenger jets to smithereens in midair (such as the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie on 21 December 1988) and large truck bombs killed more than one hundred people (such as Mujahedin-e Khalq's car bomb attacks in Tehran in 1981-82).⁸¹³ However, mass casualty attacks were relatively rare.

⁸¹⁰ See, for example, Michael Y. Dartnell, *Action Directe: ultra-left terrorism in France, 1979-1987* (London: Frank Cass, 1995); Stefan Aust and Anthea Bell, *Baader-Meinhof: The Inside Story of the R.A.F.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); and Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press, 2004).

⁸¹¹ Aust and Bell (2009).

⁸¹² Quoted in Brian Jenkins, 'Will Terrorists Go Nuclear?' *Orbis*, Vol. 29, No 3, Autumn 1985, p. 511.

⁸¹³ Quillen C., 'Mass Casualty Bombings Chronology', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Volume 25, Issue 5, September-October 2002, pp.293-302.

The 1990s saw the launch of the term 'the new terrorism'. The main thesis was that new types of terrorist groups had emerged with even more deadly campaigns, more religious motivations and more network-based, state-independent and transnational characters than earlier groups.⁸¹⁴ Three terrorist campaigns contributed significantly to the foundation of this thesis: the failed attempt to topple the World Trade Center in New York in 1993, the Aum Shinrikyo sarin gas attack on the Tokyo Underground in 1995 and the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City in the USA, also in 1995.⁸¹⁵ All these attacks combined the ambition of mass murder with fanatical religious beliefs. The Aum gas attack introduced in earnest the concept of terrorism with weapons of mass destruction to the list of new threats.⁸¹⁶ Although religious terrorism has a foothold in all major religions of the world, the Islamist groups have made their presence felt the most in the international arena.⁸¹⁷

Following the Iranian Revolution in 1979, a number of Islamist terrorist groups emerged, funded by Iran and acting against international targets in both Europe and the Middle East. The most important of these was the Shia Muslim Hezbollah movement ('God's Party') in Lebanon. This group drew particular attention to itself by taking Western citizens hostage during the Lebanese civil war and launching a number of campaigns against Israeli and Jewish targets outside the Middle East, including in Argentina in 1992 and 1994.⁸¹⁸ Hezbollah carried out very deadly suicide operations: their single most lethal attack killed 243 American Marines in Beirut in 1983, which caused the U.S. to withdraw its military peacekeeping forces from Lebanon. The organisation has very close links with Iran, which provides it with considerable support in terms of weapons, training and funding. For these reasons, the USA has long regarded Hezbollah as one of the most dangerous terrorist organisations in the world, despite the fact that the group has never carried out campaigns inside the U.S.⁸¹⁹

814 See, for example, Walter Laqueur, *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) and Ian Lesser, *Countering the New Terrorism* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1999). For a critique of the concept of 'new terrorism', see David Tucker, 'What's New About the New Terrorism and How Dangerous Is It?' *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Volume 13, Number 3, Fall 2001, pp. 1–14.

815 For a detailed description of the WTC campaign and the people behind it, see Simon Reeve, *The New Jackals: Ramzi Yousef, Osama Bin Laden, and the Future Of Terrorism* (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd, 1999). For a good study of Aum, see Robert Jay Lifton, *Destroying the World to Save It: Aum Shinrikyo, Apocalyptic Violence, and the New Terrorism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt & Company Inc., 2000).

816 For more information on this subject, see Brynjar Lia, *et al.*, 'Atommaterial, gass og mikrober som terrorvapen? [Nuclear material, gas, and microbes as terrorist weapons?]', *FFI Research Report* No. 2001/02930. Source: FFI, 2003, <http://rapporter.ffi.no/rapporter/2001/02930.pdf>; and Anne Stenersen, *Al-Qaeda's Quest for Weapons of Mass Destruction: The History behind the Hype* (Saarbrücken: VMD Verlag, 2008).

817 For a good analysis of the religious dimension among the new terror groups, see Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).

818 For a brief description of Hezbollah, see Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

819 American Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage went so far in 2003 as to state that Hezbollah was more dangerous than al-Qaeda: 'Hezbollah may be the "A-Team of Terrorists" and maybe al-Qaeda is actually the "B" team. And they're on the list and their time will come.' Quoted on 18 April 2003 from 'Hezbollah: "A-Team Of Terrorists": Ed Bradley Reports On Islamic Militant Group', *CBS News – 60 Minutes website*, 18 April 2003, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/04/18/60minutes/main550000.shtml>.

However, from the late 1990s, Sunni Muslim groups with links to the war in Afghanistan and the al-Qaeda network have dominated international terrorism. Al-Qaeda ('the Foundation') emerged in 1988 when the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan, originally as a network of mainly Arab war veterans who had links with local Islamist group in their homelands. The Gulf War and the gradually permanent stationing of American forces in Saudi Arabia helped to radicalise Saudi multimillionaire Osama bin Laden, who was al-Qaeda's top leader until his death in May 2011. In 1996, bin Laden declared war on the USA, and in August 1998 the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were attacked in two coordinated suicide attacks that claimed more than 220 lives. In October 2000, two suicide campaigners in a small boat filled with explosives attempted to sink the American warship U.S.S. Cole at anchor off Yemen. 19 people died in the attack. On 11 September 2001, four American airliners were hijacked. Three of them were crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington D.C. Nearly 3,000 people were killed in the worst terrorist attack in modern history.

6.3. What is al-Qaeda?

Al-Qaeda's precise nature has been the object of much debate following the events of 9/11.⁸²⁰ There is a lot of disagreement about whether al-Qaeda is first and foremost a well-structured organisation with clear lines of command, or whether it is a fairly loose ideological movement made up of likeminded people.⁸²¹ Some of this confusion came about because al-Qaeda's leaders did not operate under the name al-Qaeda until after the attacks in the USA, instead signing their communiqués using other organisational names. Al-Qaeda has also changed significantly since it came into being in the late 1980s.

Today, al-Qaeda can be described in brief as comprising three relatively separate levels. The first is the remaining leadership, consisting of a few hundred people working under enormous pressure due to American drone attacks and Pakistani military offensives against their places of refuge. Al-Qaeda's senior leadership is believed to be hiding in Pakistani cities, such as Abbottabad, where Osama bin Laden was located and killed on 2 May 2011, or in the tribal areas between Pakistan and Afghanistan, where

⁸²⁰ Key works on al-Qaeda include Peter Bergen, *The Longest War: The Enduring Conflict Between America and Al-Qaeda* (New York, Free Press, 2011); Peter Bergen, *The Osama Bin Laden I Know: An Oral History of Al Qaeda's Leader* (New York, Free Press, 2006); Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Towers* (New York: Knopf, 2006); Michael Scheuer, *Osama bin Laden* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2011) and Scheuer, Michael (first edition anonymously), *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama Bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America* (Dulles, Virginia: Brassey's Inc., 2002).

⁸²¹ The debate between Marc Sageman and Bruce Hoffman and leaderless versus leader-led jihad is one example of two schools of thought on al-Qaeda. See Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), and Bruce Hoffman and Fernando Reinares (eds.) *Leader-Led Jihad* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

a number of senior al-Qaeda operatives have been killed in American drone attacks over the past few years.⁸²² The second level consists of the al-Qaeda's regional departments. The most important of these operate in Iraq, the Gulf area and North Africa. There are also a number of regional and national terrorist groups with varying degrees of links to al-Qaeda.⁸²³ The third level is a broader ideological movement referred to as the 'global jihadist movement'. It includes a series of organisations and groups with looser links to al-Qaeda, as well as sympathisers and supporters with no fixed organisational links.⁸²⁴ An important part of the third level is the support networks in Europe, the USA and the Middle East. They consist of high-profile extremists as well as secretive networks of sympathisers. They support al-Qaeda's goals by running illegal fund-raising and recruitment campaigns as well as propaganda activities in order to support al-Qaeda-affiliated groups of insurgents in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Algeria, etc. These networks are often loosely organised around charismatic leaders with experience of war from Afghanistan or other central fronts on the al-Qaeda battleground. These leaders have often acquired enough theological schooling to be able to preach the al-Qaeda ideology in a credible manner.⁸²⁵

6.3.1. What does al-Qaeda want?

According to al-Qaeda's worldview, the Islamic world (*umma*) is occupied, either directly via the presence of foreign military forces, or indirectly via dictators who are dependent on support from outside. This alliance of 'foreign infidel forces' ('the crusaders') and 'local apostate rulers' cannot be broken other than through armed resistance. According to al-Qaeda, jihad, understood here to mean resistance by violent means, is the only effective way to free the Islamic nation and establish an Islamic order, in line with the aims of al-Qaeda. Unlike earlier militant groups, al-Qaeda believes that the war on the 'crusaders' should not be limited by geographical distance or territorial boundaries. The main target in the conflict is the USA, as this superpower is the 'head of the snake'.⁸²⁶

822 See Brynjar Lia and Thomas Hegghammer, 'Truer verden med terror [Threatens the world with terror]', article in *Dagsavisen*, 15 August 2009, Thomas Hegghammers pages http://hegghammer.com/_files/Dagsavisen_150809.pdf, pp. 38–39.

823 Groups that have adopted the name al-Qaeda include *Qaidat al-Jihad in the Land of the Two Rivers* (Iraq), *Qaidat al-Jihad in the Arab Peninsula* (Saudi Arabia), *Qaidat al-Jihad in Yemen/Southern Arab Peninsula* (the latter has merged with the Saudi al-Qaeda branch), *Qaidat al-Jihad in Islamic Maghreb* (formerly GSPC, in Algeria), a small faction in the *Libyan Islamic Fighting Group*, and a splinter group (led by al-Hukaymah) of the Egyptian *al-Gama'a al-Islamiya*.

824 Groups with looser links to al-Qaeda include the *Moroccan Islamic Fighting Group*, *Fatah al-Islam* in Lebanon, several minor groups in Gaza such as *Jaysh al-Islam*, *Jund Ansar Allah* et al., the *Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan* and *Islamic Jihad Union* in Central Asia and Pakistan, the *Tehrik e-Taliban* movement in Pakistan, *Jemaah Islamiyya* in South-East Asia and *Harakat al-Shabab al-Mujahidin* in Somalia.

825 See, for example, Petter Nesser, 'Jihad in Europe; recruitment for terrorist cells in Europe' in Laila Bokhari, Thomas Hegghammer, Brynjar Lia, Petter Nesser, and Truls H. Tønnessen, *Paths To Global Jihad: Radicalisation And Recruitment To Terror Networks*, Proceedings from a FFI seminar, Oslo, 15 March 2006, FFI/rapport-2006/00935, Forsvarets Forskningsinstitutt 2006, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/testimony/41.pdf>.

826 For a discussion of al-Qaeda's hierarchy of enemies, see Brynjar Lia, 'Does al-Qaeda Articulate a Consistent Strategy? A Study of al-Qaeda Leadership Statements, 2001–2008', paper presented at the Annual International Studies Association Convention (ISA) in New York, 14–18 February 2009, *Human Security Gateway, Human Security Report Project*, <http://>

For al-Qaeda, the duty of jihad and the practising of jihad are the overriding themes. Martyrdom and cultivation of a martyr culture, both externally and internally within the organisation, is another cornerstone of the al-Qaeda ideology.⁸²⁷

6.3.2. History of al-Qaeda since 1988

The history of al-Qaeda since 1988 can be split into five phases: (i) The establishment phase, 1988-1996; (ii) Afghanistan, 1996-2001; (iii) after the fall of the Taliban, 2001-2003; (iv) the Iraq period, 2004 to 2007; and (v) the Afghanistan-Pakistan (AfPak) period.⁸²⁸

In the early phase, from 1988 to 1996, the organisation was based first in Peshawar, which was also the capital city for the Afghan-Arab movement from which al-Qaeda developed, and then in Sudan, until May 1996. Over this period, al-Qaeda was almost synonymous with the circle of people surrounding Osama bin Laden. Combating the USA was not the top priority during this period; instead, its priority was to fight against the pro-Soviet regime of Mohammed Najibullah in Kabul until its fall in 1992, and the Communists in South Yemen. Towards the end of this period, the organisation gradually turned its focus to the USA's continued military presence in the Arabian Gulf and East Africa.⁸²⁹

The Afghanistan period, from 1996 to 2001, was in many regards a golden era for al-Qaeda as the organisation grew to become a global terrorist threat. In two statements made in 1996 and 1998, the USA was declared its primary enemy and Americans, civilians and the military alike, anywhere on Earth were cited as legitimate targets for attacks.⁸³⁰ Compared with the situation in Sudan, al-Qaeda had much greater freedom to act in Afghanistan, and the operations of the organisation were greatly extended. The three metaphors 'investment company', 'training institution' and 'vanguard' provide a good description of how al-Qaeda operated over this period. Financial, military and other support to local militant Islamic groups turned al-Qaeda into a kind of investment company that acted as a 'midwife' and donor to local groups of veterans from Afghanistan. These emerged as the most effective and ideologically most extreme

humansecuritygateway.com/documents/NDRE_DoesAlQaidaArticulateConsistentStrategy.pdf.

827 Assaf Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom: Al Qaeda, Salafi Jihad, and the Diffusion of Suicide Attacks* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008) and David Cook and Olivia Allison, *Understanding and Addressing Suicide Attacks: The Faith and Politics of Martyrdom Operations* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Security International, 2007).

828 For an alternative, and more detailed, categorisation of al-Qaeda's history see Jean-Pierre Filiu, *Les neuf vies d'Al-Qaïda* (Paris: Fayard, 2009).

829 For two good studies on al-Qaeda over this period, see Vahid Brown, 'Cracks in the Foundation: Leadership Schisms in Al-Qa'ida from 1989-2006', *Combating Terrorism Center*, 2007, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/cracks-in-the-foundation-leadership-schisms-in-al-qaida-from-1989-2006> and Clint Watts, Jacob Shapiro and Vahid Brown, 'Al-Qaeda's (Mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa', *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, 2007, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/al-qaidas-misadventures-in-the-horn-of-africa>.

830 For a summary of al-Qaeda communiqués over this period, see Thomas Hegghammer, *Dokumentasjon om al-Qaeda: intervjuer, kommunikér og andre primærkilder, 1990–2002*, FFI/rapport-2002/01393, 2003, Forsvarets Forskningsinstitutt (FFI), <http://www.ffi.no/no/Rapporter/02-01393.pdf>.

Islamist groups in South-East Asia, North Africa and the Middle East. By assisting in the establishment of a series of training camps mainly in Afghanistan, but also in the Philippines, Yemen and elsewhere, al-Qaeda gradually became the most central training institution for militant Islamists in the world, attracting recruits from across the globe. The significance of these training camps can hardly be overestimated.⁸³¹

Al-Qaeda's role as a 'vanguard' is most obvious in its early terrorist attacks. Al-Qaeda carried out surprisingly few operations before 9/11, but worked hard to make its attacks as ambitious and spectacular as possible. The simultaneous suicide truck bomb attacks on the American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in August 1998, the maritime suicide operation targeting the USS Cole in Yemen in October 2000 and the 9/11 attacks were all, in their ways, innovations in the forms of terrorist campaigns. These operations required several years of planning and were intended to shock the enemy, inspire supporters and sympathisers, and demonstrate that the USA was not invincible and all-powerful, but could be attacked and humiliated anywhere in the world; even its main military and financial districts could be reduced to rubble.

The period after the fall of the Taliban regime in the late autumn of 2001 until 2003 saw the start of a new period for al-Qaeda, characterised by a significant degradation of the organisation and its resources in the form of sanctuaries, training camps, leaders, etc. Many key al-Qaeda operative leaders were either killed or captured, and its operational environment throughout most parts of the world became far less hospitable due to the USA-led War on Terror. Al-Qaeda's appeal, on the other hand, appeared to have increased dramatically in the immediate post 9/11 period. The enormous media attention surrounding the group, and the fact that the USA declared war on al-Qaeda and hence emphasised the group as a worthy opponent in a global duel, turned al-Qaeda into a brand name and gave it star status that no other terrorist groups could challenge.⁸³²

The post-9/11 period also witnessed al-Qaeda's growing ability and willingness to use modern information technology to reach its supporters. The organisation's media and propaganda agencies became more effective and placed al-Qaeda in a better position to set its agenda and promote its narrative and ideological understanding of the USA's War on Terror. Al-Qaeda's list of enemies increased after 9/11. In response to the large number of countries supporting the USA in the war against al-Qaeda and sending military forces to Afghanistan, a number of U.S. allies, particularly in Europe, were specifically threatened with terrorist attacks.⁸³³

831 See Thomas Hegghammer, 'Al-Qaedas rekruttskoler: Hva gjorde Afghanistan-veteranene så farlige [Al-Qaeda's boot camps: What made the Afghanistan veterans so dangerous]?' *Norsk Militært Tidsskrift* 2/2008.

832 See Brynjar Lia, 'Al-Qaeda's Appeal: Understanding its Unique Selling Points', *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Volume II, Issue 8 (2008), <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/44/91>, pp. 23–28.

833 For an analysis of al-Qaeda's perceptions of various European countries and their willingness to stand shoulder to shoulder with the USA, see Brynjar Lia and Thomas Hegghammer, 'Jihadi Strategic Studies: The Alleged Al Qaeda Policy Study Preceding the Madrid Bombings', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 27, Issue 4, September–October 2007, pp. 355–375.

The Iraq period from 2004 to 2007 was characterised by the after-effects of the controversial U.S.-led invasion in March 2003. The subsequent occupation provided a breeding ground for an enormous upturn in anti-Americanism, deep discord in the West and increasing mistrust of the West in the Muslim world. The war in Iraq also paved the way for the establishment of a completely new front for al-Qaeda and the formation of a very effective Iraqi resistance movement from which al-Qaeda could draw support. Between 2004 and 2006, Iraq has indisputably been the most discussed front in al-Qaeda's propaganda and on websites sympathetic to al-Qaeda.⁸³⁴ In the autumn of 2004, al-Qaeda's senior leadership decided to establish its first formally designated regional branch by concluding an alliance with a Salafi-jihadi insurgent group in Iraq, which had operated in Iraq since 2002 with support networks throughout the Middle East and Europe under the leadership of the Jordanian extremist Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi. This new organisation, al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), succeeded in attracting a large number of recruits, mainly from the Arab world, for suicide campaigns in Iraq.⁸³⁵ AQI also became such a dominant force in the Iraqi resistance that serious internal conflicts broke out between AQI and the more nationally oriented Sunni Muslim insurgents.⁸³⁶ Outside Iraq, al-Qaeda's terrorism strategy was to a significant extent tailored to support the insurgency in Iraq. In Europe, Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh was killed in an attack in 2004. The same year, ten bombs were set off on trains during rush hour in central Madrid. The year after, in July 2005, four suicide bombers detonated their charges on the London Underground and on a bus in the city. More than 240 people died. All these attacks were justified, either completely or partly, by the fact that the host countries had military forces in Iraq.⁸³⁷ Shortly after the outbreak of the Iraq war, al-Qaeda also began a protracted campaign of terrorism inside Saudi Arabia under the leadership of another effective regional branch, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).⁸³⁸

During the last phase, the Afghanistan-Pakistan (AfPak) period from 2007 to the present day, the situation has been characterised by the fact that the epicentre of al-Qaeda is now firmly back in the AfPak region, while its regional affiliates in North

834 See Thomas Hegghammer, 'Global Jihadism after the Iraq War', *The Middle East Journal*, Volume 60, Number 1, January 2006, pp. 11–32; and 'Irak-konflikten i radikal islamistisk ideologi [The Iraq conflict in radical Islamist ideology]', *Internasjonal Politikk*, 63 Årgang, Nr 4, 2005, pp. 351–370.

835 See, for example, Thomas Hegghammer, *Saudi militants in Iraq – backgrounds and recruitment patterns*, FFI Research Report No. 2006/03875, <http://rapporter.ffi.no/rapporter/2006/03875.pdf>.

836 See, for example, Truls Hallberg Tønnessen, 'Which Jihad in Iraq?' Paper presented at The Annual International Studies Association Convention (ISA) in New York, 14–18 February 2009, http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/3/1/2/5/2/p312524_index.html.

837 Petter Nesser, 'Jihadism in Western Europe After the Invasion of Iraq: Tracing Motivational Influences from the Iraq War on Jihadist Terrorism in Western Europe', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Volume 29, Issue 4, June 2006, pp. 323–342.

838 For the background to this campaign, see Thomas Hegghammer, *Jihad in Saudi Arabia: Violence and Pan-Islamism since 1979* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Also, the majority of the perpetrators, at least in the London Underground bombs, were so-called 'clean skins'. They were born and bred in Britain, thereby introducing an entirely new dimension to the terror; namely the young radical and all the challenges associated with detecting and surveillance of such conversion processes.

Africa, Somalia and Yemen are attracting more attention at the expense of the Iraqi branch. After al-Qaeda's escape from Tora Bora in Afghanistan in 2001-2002, it devoted relatively little attention to this theatre of war compared with Iraq and Saudi Arabia after 2003.⁸³⁹ The change came about in 2005, when four prominent al-Qaeda militants managed to escape from the prison at the American base in Bagram. At the same time, Taliban guerrilla forces began to make a name for themselves as a significant military challenge to the coalition forces. While al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) was largely decimated as a result of internal rivalry within the Iraqi resistance, Afghanistan emerged as a priority front for al-Qaeda. In May 2007, the leader of al-Qaeda in the Land of Khurasan [Afghanistan] (AQA) was appointed. Unlike its sister department in Iraq, which had pursued the ambition of bringing the entire resistance movement under its umbrella, AQA has a far more humble attitude towards its host organisation, the Taliban. Al-Qaeda has supported the Taliban with advisors and military experts. It has assisted the Taliban with their propaganda and media apparatus, and presumably, al-Qaeda has also provided some financial support to the Taliban. However, al-Qaeda has few forces of its own in Afghanistan and has limited operational influence in the country, although its effective propaganda machine does help the Taliban in promoting their agenda to outside constituencies. There is a lot to indicate that al-Qaeda's relationship with the Taliban has been characterised by antagonism and conflicts, and that the alliance is less stable than first impressions would convey.⁸⁴⁰ Despite this, NATO, the USA and the Afghan government have so far failed to split the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

6.3.3. Status of al-Qaeda today

Clandestine movements such as al-Qaeda are a difficult subject for academic study and evaluation. With the wisdom of hindsight every assessment of the current situation regarding al-Qaeda could easily be put to shame. Nevertheless, it is possible to make an informed opinion about the future of al-Qaeda by analysing its successes and setbacks over the past few years.⁸⁴¹

Since the London Underground bombs in July 2005, al-Qaeda has failed in its attempts to carry out a single large-scale terrorist attacks in the West. There have probably been between over 80 such attempts by radical Jihadist groups in Europe since 2000. The number of terrorist plots in Europe increased significantly following the

839 For al-Qaeda's participation in the war in Afghanistan, see Anne Stenersen, 'Al-Qaedas fotsoldater i Afghanistan [Al-Qaeda's foot soldiers in Afghanistan]', *Norsk Militært Tidsskrift*, no. 4/2009.

840 See Anne Stenersen, 'Blood Brothers or a Marriage of Convenience? The Ideological Relationship between al-Qaeda and the Taliban', paper presented at the Annual International Studies Association Convention (ISA) in New York, 14–18 February 2009.

841 Brynjar Lia, 'Al-Qaida og terrortrusselen åtte år etter 11. september', Opening Statement, FFI-Forum, Oslo Militære Samfund, 29 September 2009.

U.S.-led interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, in which many European states participated. Since 2005, the trend has shifted and the number of plots has decreased.⁸⁴²

Over the past few years, al-Qaeda has also suffered a significant decrease in public support in a number of Muslim countries, if we are to believe a number of opinion polls.⁸⁴³ However, sympathy is still surprisingly high: in 2009, in countries such as Jordan, Pakistan, Egypt and Indonesia, between 18 and 28 per cent of respondents replied that they have 'a lot of' or 'some' confidence in bin Laden and that he is 'doing the right things in world affairs'.⁸⁴⁴

One reason behind the weakening of al-Qaeda is that leading militant ideologists who were previously close to al-Qaeda have now written well-formulated theological documents that tear the al-Qaeda ideology to pieces. The most important of these are perhaps the writings of Sayyid Imam al-Sharif in Egypt, also known as Dr Fadl; but a number of other militant theologians in Libya and Saudi Arabia have also produced corresponding revisionist publications.⁸⁴⁵

The Arab Spring, which began in Tunisia in late 2010 and has engulfed the entire region with large-scale popular demonstrations against authoritarianism, is also expected to weaken the resonance of al-Qaeda's ideological message. The uprising has largely been the work of young secular pro-Western democracy activists, not Salafi extremists or al-Qaeda sympathisers, and it has rendered al-Qaeda somewhat irrelevant. However, in the short term, al-Qaeda will probably enjoy greater operational freedom as a result of the unrest, partly due to the termination of Western antiterrorism cooperation with key Arab regimes, and partly due to the deterioration or collapse of law and order in affected countries such as Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen.⁸⁴⁶

Another important factor that is weakening al-Qaeda's ability to recruit is the disappearance of permanent sanctuaries and professional training facilities. There are good reasons to believe that al-Qaeda has less capacity nowadays for training and educating professional terrorists than was the case a year or so ago, when the tribal

842 See Petter Nesser, 'Chronology of Jihadism in Western Europe 1994–2007: Planned, Prepared, and Executed Terrorist Attacks', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Volume 31, Issue 10, October 2008, 924–946. Petter Nesser, 'Chronology of Jihadism in Western Europe Update 2008–2010', FFI Working Paper, 20 December 2010, *Forsvarets Forskningsinstitutt (FFI)*, [http://www.ffi.no/no/Projekter/Terra/Publikasjoner/Documents/Petter Nesser -Chronology of Jihadism in Western Europe Update 2008-2010 for FFI web.pdf](http://www.ffi.no/no/Projekter/Terra/Publikasjoner/Documents/Petter%20Nesser%20-%20Chronology%20of%20Jihadism%20in%20Western%20Europe%20Update%202008-2010%20for%20FFI%20web.pdf). See also statistics in *EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report TE-SAT 2011*, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/te-sat2011.pdf>.

843 The director of the British intelligence agency MI6 broke with tradition for 'C' to remain silent when he, at the end of October 2010, delivered a speech to a group of British newspaper editors. He stressed that every day he had to read scores of briefings on ongoing operations against 'live' terror plots affecting the UK. The threat of a successful attack is very much alive.

844 See 'Confidence in Osama bin Laden, How much confidence do you have in Osama bin Laden?' Key Indicators Database, *Pew Global Attitudes Project*, Pew Research Center, <http://pewglobal.org/database/?indicator=20>.

845 For brief reports on these, see 'Archive for the 'Retractions' Category', *Jihadica, Documenting the Global Jihad*, <http://www.jihadica.com/category/retractions/>.

846 For discussions of how al-Qaeda might benefit from the revolutions, see Michael Scheuer, 'Why the Mideast revolts will help al-Qaeda', *Washington Post*, 4 March 2011, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/03/04/AR2011030402322.html>, and Daniel Byman, 'Terrorism After the Revolutions How Secular Uprisings Could Help (or Hurt) Jihadists', *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2011, pp. 48–54.

areas in Pakistan were rather more secure and Iraq was still a promising jihad front in which al-Qaeda enjoyed some degree of territorial control in the Anbar province. Although Iraq still suffers from major terrorist campaigns, it is clear that al-Qaeda in Iraq's strength nowadays cannot be compared with the time when al-Zarqawi was AQI's leader from 2004 to 2006.

One of the most important adverse factors in the conflict with al-Qaeda is the organisation's very professional and sophisticated media and propaganda apparatus. Al-Qaeda has proven very adept at exploiting the new opportunities offered by the Internet.⁸⁴⁷ This may perhaps go some way towards explaining al-Qaeda's ability to instigate violence and inspire other militant groups to support al-Qaeda and, if necessary, bear its standard ever onwards. In this regard, one important factor is al-Qaeda's ability to maintain a relationship with the Afghan Taliban guerrilla, and foster a close relationship with various Pakistani Taliban groups. This marriage of convenience has endured despite the fact that these organisations are very different in terms of theology, political ideology and ethnic background.

A critical development in favour of al-Qaeda is the emergence of local al-Qaeda departments and/or sympathetic groups in regions in which the organisation had only a minimal presence previously, such as North Africa, Somalia, Palestine and Lebanon.⁸⁴⁸ Since 2009, several of the most significant incidents of international terrorism have originated from local al-Qaeda branches and affiliated groups such as al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, the Somali Shabab movement and Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). These include the failed car bomb attack on Times Square in New York in May 2010, the 'underwear bomb' plot targeting the North Western Airlines flight to Detroit on Christmas Day in 2009 and the attempted attack on Danish caricaturist Kurt Westergaard in January 2010.⁸⁴⁹ Al-Qaeda's potential for future strength and expansion also lies in the fact that it has managed to attract supporters from a number of ethnicities and nationalities, who were virtually absent in the organisation ten years ago. Although al-Qaeda has been dominated by people of Arab origin, it has succeeded in recruiting a surprisingly large constituency from outside this core group.

The most important objective for any terrorist group under pressure is to survive. Until 2 May 2011, the al-Qaeda leadership managed to achieve this despite being the subject of the world's most intensive search campaign. The killing of Osama bin

847 See, for example, Brynjar Lia, 'Al-Qaeda online: understanding jihadist internet infrastructure', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, January 2006.

848 For two recent studies of al-Qaeda's franchises, see Barak Mendelsohn, 'Al Qaeda's Franchising Strategy', *Survival*, Vol. 53, No. 3, May–June 2011, pp. 29–50, and Leah Farrall, 'How Al Qaeda Works: What the Organization's Subsidiaries Say About Its Strength', *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2011, pp. 128–138.

849 See 'Officials: NYC bomb suspect claims Taliban support', Associated Press, *New York Post*, 21 May 2010, http://www.nypost.com/p/news/local/officials_nyc_bomb_suspect_got_taliban_A0W/WCfkkdXmTKJzychW7QN, 'Detroit terror attack: how the "bomber" tried to blow Flight 253 from of the sky', *The Telegraph*, 26 December 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/6891345/Detroit-terror-attack-how-the-bomber-tried-to-blow-Flight-253-from-of-the-sky.html>, and 'Somali charged over attack on Danish cartoonist', *BBC News*, 2 January 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8437652.stm>.

Laden will probably hurt al-Qaeda's organisation, lead to the arrest or killing of key operative leaders and cause the disruption of lines of communication and important fund-raising networks. However, over the past two decades, al-Qaeda has demonstrated a remarkable resilience, and it will most likely survive the death of bin Laden.⁸⁵⁰ Its numerous regional semi-autonomous branches and ideological affiliates are less affected by the death of bin Laden than the senior leadership structure. Furthermore, al-Qaeda's ideological movement still has a critical mass of supporters. This will probably enable al-Qaeda to remain a significant threat in years to come.

⁸⁵⁰ See Brynjar Lia, 'Al Qaeda Without Bin Laden: How Terrorists Cope With their Leader's Death', *Foreign Affairs.com*, 11 May 2011, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67846/brynjar-lia/al-qaeda-without-bin-laden>.

7 CONCLUSION

Nils Marius Rekkedal

7.1. Introduction

If we briefly examine the international conflict patterns during the period after the end of the Vietnam War (1975), we can note that one of the important changes is the ‘disappearance’ of the many Communist-led *revolutionary wars* that had dominated in the Third World during the period from the late 1940s and into the early 1990s. After the end of the Cold War, we have seen only a few Maoist-inspired insurgencies. We may describe the development with a slogan like ‘the end of revolutionary war’. But the developments after 1991 do not mark the end of conflicts, local insurgencies or civil wars. According to the earlier-mentioned *Human Security Report published in December 2010, the numbers of civil wars are still relatively high:*

Civil wars are important because they constitute by far the greatest number of conflicts being fought around the world today.

Overall conflict numbers, the overwhelming majority of which have been conflicts within states in recent years, started to decline in 1992, dropping by some 40 percent by 2003. Since then conflict numbers have risen again with almost all the increase being in minor intrastate conflicts. High-intensity conflicts – those with 1,000 or more battle deaths a year – have declined steadily since the ending of the Cold War – in 2008 there were some 78 percent fewer than in 1988. As is the case with international conflicts, the decline has been driven by political and economic changes.⁸⁵¹

Nancy Montgomery has written the following in the U.S. blog *Small Wars Journal* and in the periodical *Stars and Stripes* about a Rand Corporation study:

⁸⁵¹ ‘Canadian Study Reports New Threats to Global Security but Reveals Encouraging Long-Term Trends’, *Human Security Report Project*, http://www.hsrgroup.org/press-room/latest-news/latest-news-view/10-12-02/Canadian_Study_Reports_New_Threats_to_Global_Security_but_Reveals_Encouraging_Long-Term_Trends.aspx, p. 3.

*A Rand study of 30 insurgencies worldwide between 1978 and 2008 concluded that there are 15 good practices and 12 bad practices in all counterinsurgencies, and if you want to win, you have to do more good than bad (...) Sizing up Afghanistan, and deciding which good and bad factors were present, was done earlier this year by some 13 emailing experts – military officers with recent deployments, authors of recent books or reports on Afghanistan and editors of Small Wars Journal.*⁸⁵²

However, the great interest in counterinsurgency we have seen in the U.S. and the NATO-countries after the year 2001 is now probably coming to its (political) end. We have already seen a rise in the number writings arguing in favour of giving up COIN. See, for example, the text below, written by an anonymous American insider who calls himself *Neapotolemus*:

*All institutionalized Irregular Warfare, counterinsurgency and Stability Operations activities, including human terrain teams, centers of excellence, etc are to be immediately shuttered. As the Anglo-American strategist Colin Gray has observed, we are not very good at this form of conflict and we have bigger problems to address.*⁸⁵³

Another American critic has been Colonel Gian Gentile. He has written and spoken extensively about the need to revise the U.S. Army's counterinsurgency doctrine (i.e. FM 3–24). He states, among other things, that 'population-centric COIN doctrine needs fundamental revision. U.S. Army's current fixation on COIN is a straightjacket that prevents thinking about alternative models of irregular conflict and, more importantly, encourages the atrophy of combined arms warfare skills.'⁸⁵⁴ Obviously, the military debate about the future of irregular warfare, and especially COIN, has started.

852 Nancy Montgomery, 'Counterinsurgency Scorecard Says Afghan War Could Go Either Way', *Stars and Stripes*, August 12, 2011, <http://www.stripes.com/news/counterinsurgency-scorecard-says-afghan-war-could-go-either-way-1.151955>. See also the study written by Christopher Paul, *Counterinsurgency Scorecard Afghanistan in Early 2011 Relative to the Insurgencies of the Past 30 Years* (St. Monica, CA, Rand Corporation, 2011).

853 Neoptolemus [Gian Gentile], 'Defense in an Age of Austerity: 2022. This fictionalized speech is delivered by a future Secretary of Defense in 2022', *Small Wars Journal*, April 2011, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/defense-in-an-age-of-austerity-2022>.

854 Associate professor of military history at the United States Military Academy, West Point, '25 August COIN Center Webcast', SWJ Blog Post, August 18, 2011, *Small Wars Journal*, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/25-august-coin-center-webcast>.

7.2. The debate about irregular warfare and other terms used today

The ‘winds of change’ in conflict patterns is always an important topic. I will here discuss some of the experiences and views presented earlier in this book. This will also include a short look at some of the experiences gained in the different conflicts discussed here.

The term ‘irregular warfare’ is complicated. (See Chapter 3.) The term exerts some influence on the way that policy makers and their military leaders plan for and conduct military operations. As described earlier, military and political analysts often fail to learn lessons from *irregular operations* and they historically have often failed to apply relevant lessons from the broader historical knowledge base about military operations. I think that the terms we use to describe issues are of some importance. The language we use influences the way that we evaluate options and frame potential solutions. How we use verbal metaphors may be of importance for how we behave – military theory and the words we develop and use here may be important for military users. The choice to describe some non-traditional tactics and operations as ‘irregular’ will probably influence the ability to prepare for, and learn from, these military experiences. The term irregular warfare implies that this is a different kind of warfare from regular warfare, i.e. framing irregular warfare ‘in opposition to’ regular warfare. Existing U.S. doctrines even ‘pool’ words like *conventional*, *regular* and *traditional* warfare as ‘essentially synonymous’.⁸⁵⁵ This way of thinking clearly positions the term ‘irregular’ as something different and distinct from traditional military operations, and this way of arguing is also very ‘non-Clausewitzian’ in its form. In *On War*, Clausewitz defined war as ‘an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will’.⁸⁵⁶ In the general theory chapters in *On War*, Clausewitz did not discuss tactics and he *did not* specify (or argue) that ‘real warfare’ involves only ‘state-owned’ uniformed combatants. War was war, and he saw no need for a distinction between ‘regular’ and ‘irregular’ war/warfare.

It may probably be useful to discuss today’s military terms once more. Or does the division of war into different classes of war mean that we are giving up the Clausewitzian way of looking at war? This is a potentially important question.

The term ‘low intensity conflicts’ (LIC) became for some years the most used replacement term for counterinsurgency, especially in the USA and UK.⁸⁵⁷ After the Vietnam War ended, the term COIN became ‘political incorrect’ in leading U.S. circles – especially during the Carter administration (1977-1981). The term *civil war*

⁸⁵⁵ See, for example, FM 3-05.130, pp. 1-4 to 1-5.

⁸⁵⁶ According to the most widely used English translation of Clausewitz book: Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 75.

⁸⁵⁷ See, for example, Kitson (1971).

was not in common use, although it has been used by some authors. Traditionally the term civil war has been used in connection with war between opposing groups (like ethnic/separatist groups, ideology- or religion-based parties, political groupings), inside an officially recognised state's borders.⁸⁵⁸

These so-called LIC conflicts may be described as conflicts in which the participants normally have limited objectives/goals, even if this is not always the case. But in this kind of conflict it appears that the military component may obscure more fundamental sociological, economic and political issues/goals at stake. Some of these local conflicts have escalated into big civil wars and have even become regional wars involving neighbouring countries, including one or more great powers. But such risks will not normally be looked upon as high or obvious for the participants at the outset of the conflict. Some of these long-lasting conflicts in Africa, for example Congo and Sudan, have included participation by troops from neighbouring countries.

As discussed earlier in this book, such conflicts may take the form of civil war, insurgency, guerrilla war, insurrection, separatism or terrorism. The former Soviet Union, including some of its client states, became involved in many of these conflicts, especially between 1970 and into the late 1980s. Samuel Francis published in 1981 an account of Soviet involvement with terrorism, insurrection and insurgency movements in different parts of the Third World. For example, he wrote: 'That the Soviet aid to terrorists is not merely occasional and that it is connected to the strategic objectives of Soviet political warfare is shown by the nature of Soviet and Soviet-surrogate support facilities in the form of training, weapons, and propaganda.'⁸⁵⁹ In the period after the withdrawal from Vietnam (especially between 1975 and 1981), the USA did almost nothing in response, i.e. the U.S. tolerated the Soviet proliferation of crises/conflicts at the low-intensity level. This was in the post-Vietnam period – because of the disillusionment with the American foreign involvement in Vietnam, the U.S. practised a *policy of inaction*. This unwillingness to become involved in new LIC engagements also had an impact on the U.S. force structure and operational thinking. Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*, introduced during this period (dated 1 July 1976), only considered conventional and nuclear warfare. This doctrine document symbolised the growing high-technology fixation after Vietnam. It is difficult to find anything in this document focusing on important human factors like, for example, an opponent's political will as an object of the military action.⁸⁶⁰ Thus, the doctrine writers had not prioritised the development of a more precise and flexible military instrument that could have provided forces for response to various LICs. Instead the U.S. Armed Forces should from now on prepare only for *conventional* high-tech-based warfare (especially in Europe).

⁸⁵⁸ The U.S. Armed Forces has now left out a definition of the term Civil War, and the term is now rarely in use. See U.S. Department of Defense, *Directory of Military and Associated Terms* (as amended through 31 October 2009).

⁸⁵⁹ Samuel Francis, *The Soviet Strategy of Terror* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1981), pp. 5–6, 22–23.

⁸⁶⁰ Donald Vought, 'Preparing for the Wrong War', *Military Review*, May 1977, pp. 28–29 and 33.

As mentioned in earlier chapters, Douglas S. Blaufarb described the development of the counterinsurgency thinking in his book *The Counterinsurgency Era*. His book provides an overview of the development from 1950 to 1976, and reviews the changes in U.S. thinking about COIN both before and during the American intervention in the Vietnam War. He wrote in the last chapter of his book:

*The fundamental lesson to draw from our misadventures of the counterinsurgency era is the one already emphasized by many – the lesson of the limits of American power. It is also of importance that we should understand in what way our power, great as it is, can be challenged by a few thousand ragged jungle fighters armed with a dedicated leadership, a tested theory, and great patience. Too many have fallen back on the easy excuse that we failed in Indochina because our power was constrained and leashed, that more bombs, more destruction, more firepower was the answer. At the end of this account of what we tried to do, and how and why it fell short, it is to be hoped that some will be convinced that the failure was one of understanding: an inability to perceive the underlying realities of both our own system and that of the countries into which we thrust our raw strength. The scars of these failures will be a long time healing, but possibly, in time, understanding will take the place of revulsion in our thinking about the meaning of our unhappy experience (...)*⁸⁶¹

The quote above is a very important observation. Blaufarb was probably the first American who described the so-called *counterinsurgency era* as a whole, and he put the development into a challenging perspective. He was very concerned about the limits of even American power. And as we have seen in the description of other insurgencies earlier in this book, Western powers have repeated many of the mistakes of the past. It is here of interest to mention what General William DePuy wrote in September 1986: ‘U.S. combat forces were not and are not the preferred or proper instrument for counterinsurgency operations amongst the people.’⁸⁶² The General’s point was that the U.S. military is not the *preferred* instrument for COIN – his view was that if the locals can do it, they should. But history has shown circumstances where Western armed forces can be the *proper* instrument, as in Iraq in late 2007, when ‘someone’ had to bring Iraq back from the brink of total chaos. DePuy also wrote that the forces doing COIN must be well-trained and well-disciplined. Why? COIN warfare is always difficult to perform in a proper way, and without proper training for this kind of warfare even well-equipped Western forces may get into trouble.

⁸⁶¹ Blaufarb (1977), pp. 310–11.

⁸⁶² Richard M. Swain (Compiler), *Selected Papers of General William E. DePuy* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Army Combat Studies Institute, 1994), p. 373.

Both the theories and practice of COIN had changed in the mid-1970s, if compared with the theories and thinking presented in books and articles published in the early 1960s. It looks like little remained by 1975 of the analytic theories and structure developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s that had constituted the basic justification for the American engagement in Vietnam. The U.S. thinking from the early 1960s about the threats from ‘people’s war’ (see also Mao Zedong’s ‘protracted conflict’) had to be adjusted because of the American direct intervention (1965) with its own ground forces in South Vietnam.⁸⁶³ To classify the war in Vietnam with the not too specific term *insurgency*, i.e. in which the authority of a particular political regime is challenged, rather than calling it a *revolution* in which the legitimacy of an entire political system is contested, portrays the background of the war selectively. The thinking about Maoist *people’s war* became one of the important ‘myths’ of the 20th century. Mao’s methods for peasant-based revolutionary (guerrilla) warfare, where he linked together a political organisation with guerrilla tactics, led to the Maoists’ defeat of the nationalist Kuomintang regime in China. This view, or interpretation, would during the second half of the 20th century exert *strong influence* over both revolutionaries’ and contra-revolutionaries’ thinking about modern warfare.⁸⁶⁴ Few of the many Western writers who examined this topic dealt systematically with the nature of revolutionary war and asked: what were the *internal* dynamics of this kind of war?

The Vietnam War was different from most of the earlier American wars, even if it is true that, for example, the U.S. Marine Corps had taken part in a series of *small wars* in Latin America between 1890 and 1965. The U.S. military response to the political challenges of revolutionary war was labelled COIN, while the underlying historical, political, economical and sociological nature of the conflict behind the ‘insurgency’ was not very well understood. We may probably talk about at least three or four different ‘wars’ in the Vietnam area (Indochina) between 1945 and 1975. The character of these wars also changed over time; not only did these wars involve guerrilla warfare (including use of terrorism), but all the main participants also used military forces best characterised as conventional trained main forces, equipped with heavy weapons. Even the ‘insurgent forces’ had organised regiments and divisions as early as in the late 1940s, and the important battle for Dien Bien Phu was mainly conventional warfare, as seen both through Viêt-Minh and French eyes. And as described earlier in this book, the American military strategy for the war after 1965 was primarily based on a military approach, i.e. use of firepower and large-scale military operations, and not on more political, social and economic subsidiary programmes under the umbrella of COIN.

⁸⁶³ A very interesting book describing the thinking in the early 1960s about Communist-led insurgencies is: Robert Strausz-Hupé, James E. Dougherty, William R. Kintner & Alvin J. Cottrell, *Protracted Conflict. A Challenging Story of Communist Strategy* (New York, Harper & Row, 1963), see especially Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and Chapter 4.

⁸⁶⁴ Douglas Pike, *PAVN* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1986), p. 213. Here he wrote: ‘(Maoist Revolutionary War) is a strategy for which there is no known, proven counterstrategy.’

While COIN strategy was always used in some form in South Vietnam, it only became really important after the NLF-recruited soldiers in South Vietnam and North Vietnam's main forces dispatched to South Vietnam had lost the military battles during the Tet offensive in the spring 1968. Maybe the North Vietnamese-controlled Communist forces were not very interested in 'insurgency' as such – they were pursuing a *revolution*. It is important to know something about the very different strategic thinking behind this if we are to understand the differences behind the opposing powers in Vietnam. The very different views on what the war was about made it possible for the Communist leadership to endure the Americans' application of massive force.

And as the Soviet Union and China were no longer 'political comrades' in the 1970s, the USA under President Richard Nixon took advantage of the deep schism in the Communist world. This so-called 'normalisation' of U.S. relations with China reduced the American fears of Chinese expansionism – one of the major justifications for the American Vietnam intervention in the first place.⁸⁶⁵ Another factor was that American anti-war sentiments were gathering genuine popular momentum from around 1968 (i.e. after the Communist Tet offensive).⁸⁶⁶

By 1975, it was time for the Americans to adjust their traditional thinking about counterinsurgency. Although the Communist threat was not over – there were still many revolutionary wars underway in Asia, Latin America and Africa – it was by the late 1970s easier to see that the Communist expansion, despite its advanced indoctrination, tested organisational principles and training methods, performed unevenly from country to country (and in some areas the Communist cadres had showed themselves to be incompetent). The Communist ideas, especially Mao Zedong's, were still committed to waging a people's war until the West was 'surrounded' and would give up, but these theories had at this time lost some of their former inspiring appeal. But we should not be mistaken – in the period from 1975 to 1990, we saw many serious insurgencies.⁸⁶⁷ But what we in the West called these conflicts/civil wars, was changing.

It is in retrospect easy to see the *disparity* between the types of conflicts the U.S. most likely could face as a participant in support of an allied regime outside Europe, and the U.S. military forces available for this kind of support in the early 1980s. I think the most frequently cited reason for the decline in the willingness of the Carter administration to project its power was the disillusionment resulting from America's (self-inflicted?) *political* defeat in Vietnam. We may talk of this as a small 'revolution'

⁸⁶⁵ Blaufarb (1977), pp. 295–97.

⁸⁶⁶ Bruce Andrews, *Public Constraint and American Policy in Vietnam* (London/Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1976), pp. 28–35.

⁸⁶⁷ According to John Richard Thackrah's statistics, there were almost 40 insurgencies in the period from 1975 to 1990, i.e. to the end of the Cold War. John Richard Thackrah, *The Routledge Companion to Military Conflict Since 1945* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2009), see especially 'Chronology of Main Events', pp. 280–282.

within the American political establishment as regards the extension of power and employment of military forces in international politics. Powerful anti-war and anti-military sentiments, especially among the political elite, comprised one of the factors behind this revolution.⁸⁶⁸ Not before almost two years into the Reagan administration (1981-1989) can we see some changes, including more money spent, for example, on Special Forces and foreign 'anti-Soviet/anti-Communist' aid/support, especially towards Latin American countries with ongoing insurgencies (especially El Salvador and Guatemala).

Around 1980, some American writers started arguing that the USA should develop a new strategic concept based on so-called power projection, later named 'Rapid Deployment Forces'. This doctrine, it was argued, would result in the development of strategies and military capabilities that would provide the United States with a capacity to inject the appropriate instruments of political influence, and ensure that the U.S. would have forces capable of intervening in LICs that threatened its security interests. Another factor that became very important was the thought that the U.S. must correctly assess the nature of the different LICs or 'unconventional wars' (UW) – a new term more and more used in the literature after 1980. While it is always important to assess the nature of a conflict, everyone with good judgement should have concluded on the basis of the Vietnam War that accurate assessment is never easy.

In 1980, Bard O'Neill et al. published a book that identified six variations of insurgency, based on O'Neill's examination of the assumed goals of different revolutionary movements (in the late 1970s). The goals were according to the authors: secessionist, restorational, revolutionary, reactionary, conservative and reformist.⁸⁶⁹ (We may of course see different mixes of these 'standard types', depending on the local conditions.) This was an important step. Accordingly, one of the reasons behind the introduction of the U.S. term UW was that the USA would have to prepare for a range of very different types of warfare – and the Americans could find themselves involved in both *support* of insurgents and part of a counterinsurgency. The view that the U.S. would primarily be on the COIN side was probably the most common, but the planners also had to think about 'the third option: the use of guerrilla warfare, counterinsurgency techniques, and covert action, to achieve policy goals'.⁸⁷⁰ This was hardly 'politically correct' at this time, but is today an important part of modern COIN theory.

⁸⁶⁸ See, for example, Samuel Huntington, 'The Soldier and the State in the 1970s', printed in Frank Margiotta (editor), *The Changing World of the American Military* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1978).

⁸⁶⁹ Bard O'Neill, William Heaton & Donald Alpert, *Political Violence and Insurgency: A Comparative Approach* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1980).

⁸⁷⁰ Theodore Shackley, *The Third Option* (New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1981), pp. 17–20.

7.3. The 'Renaissance for counterinsurgency'

As mentioned earlier in this book, the events following 9/11 revived interest in the different forms of irregular warfare, including COIN. But it is difficult to understand post-9/11 development without an understanding of the radical doctrine changes in the USA, and later in NATO, in the early 1980s, combined with the (partly unrealistic) high-tech hopes from the middle of the 1990s until around 2005. The new 'great word' was *transformation*. Rarely has a military organisation set about transforming itself as self-consciously as the U.S. Army did in the late 1990s until 2005. This slogan – *transformation* – was part of an overall process that was met with great endorsements from the U.S. Defense Department (especially Donald Rumsfeld) and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and strong U.S. congressional political support. The concept was linked with the ideas of a coming so-called *Revolution in Military Affairs* (RMA). The growing interest in 'RMA thinking' during the 1990s had around the year 2000 created a strong political and military acceptance of the need for military transformation if the RMA goals were to be achieved.⁸⁷¹

Like Robert McNamara's so-called 'whiz kids' in the late 1960s, advocates of RMA applied *business analogies* to war and many of them borrowed heavily from economic and systems analysis. According to Jim Stockdale, the thinking about so-called graduated pressure and rapid decisive operations promised efficiency in war – planners could determine precisely the amount of force necessary to achieve desired effects. Graduated pressure would apply just enough force to affect the adversary's 'calculation of interests' – we would understand when he had reached his 'tipping point'. In rapid decisive operations, U.S. forces, based on what Stockdale called a 'comprehensive system-of-systems understanding of the enemy and the environment', would be able to attack nodes in the enemy system with a carefully calculated amount of force to generate 'cumulative and cascading effects'.⁸⁷² But what is the relevance of this thinking in a long-lasting insurgency/guerrilla war? Rufus Phillips, in his recent book *Why Vietnam Matters*, argues that the political and psychological component of American strategy was missing in Vietnam because of a failure to 'recognize the ultimate political nature of the war during the critical years 1963–1968'.⁸⁷³ Maybe we can state the same about the initial strategies for the wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan?

871 Department of Defense, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on DOD Warfighting Transformation*, (Washington D.C.: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, August 1999), pp. 5–6. The so-called Defense Science Board defined transformation as a change that is focused on military operations, managed by the organisation itself, and aimed towards the 'very big change' implicit in an RMA. The pursuit of RMA involved 'fundamental changes in military capabilities including new doctrines, operational concepts, and organizational structure'.

872 Jim Stockdale, *Thoughts of a Philosophical Fighter Pilot*, (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1995).

873 Rufus Phillips, *Why Vietnam Matters. An Eyewitness Account of Lessons Not Learned* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2008).

There was an urgency to the transformation process for the U.S. Army around the year 2000 – it wanted to become more relevant in, as the enthusiasts saw it, a rapidly changing geostrategic environment in which, according to the new theories, *strategic speed and lethality* could no longer successfully exist as separate variables. According to Major General James Dubik, at that time the head of the experimental force at Fort Lewis: ‘Right now our heavy forces have limited strategic deployability and our light forces have limited tactical utility. Transformation will take care of that disconnect.’⁸⁷⁴ (See a few comments from RMA enthusiasts.⁸⁷⁵)

Another factor played a part in the process – the Kosovo War in the spring 1999. As no detailed analysis had as yet been done about what had really happened on the ground, there was considerable conjecture about the U.S. Army’s (lack of) strategic relevancy, especially in U.S. newspaper and magazine articles. According to the most common views, the 78-day-long air campaign had been decided by the about 730 fighting aircraft committed to the air campaign, ranging from F-16s to the newest B-2 bombers. They flew more than 36,000 sorties against Serb forces in Kosovo and infrastructure in Serbia. It was widely thought that this is what future military campaigns would look like, making the U.S. Army less strategically relevant.⁸⁷⁶ The Deputy Secretary of Defense at that time was even more direct: ‘If the Army holds on to nostalgic versions of its grand past,’ he said in August 1999, ‘it is going to atrophy and die.’⁸⁷⁷ This was of course ‘enthusiast talk’ at its worst, and was based upon the hyped early evaluations of the air campaign against Serbia, results that would later be downgraded and adjusted considerably. But different parties were obviously concerned about matters such as the deployability, lethality and sustainability of the U.S. Army.

As mentioned earlier, in 1991 the United States, with allied support based on an UN mandate, defeated the Iraqi army that had occupied Kuwait in a short war only to stumble into a long post-war turmoil with the still acting Saddam Hussein regime in Baghdad. In 2003, the United States and its allies once again attacked Iraq and stumbled into another long period of post-war turmoil. How could this happen? Gideon

874 James Dubik, ‘IBCT at Fort Lewis’, *Military Review*, September–October 2000, p. 18

875 Richard J. Dunn, III, ‘Transformation: Let’s Get it Right this Time’, *Parameters*, Spring 2001, pp. 22–23. Stephen P. Aulin, ‘Stumbling Toward Transformation: How the Services Stack Up’, *Strategic Review*, Spring 2000, p. 39. John Barry & Evan Thomas, ‘Not Your Father’s Army’, *Newsweek*, 22 November 1999, pp. 49–52.

876 Some of the early analysis of the Kosovo War and the Serbian campaign into Kosovo failed to take into account the actions of the Kosovo Liberation Army that complemented the NATO air campaign. They also exaggerated the destruction of Serbian armoured vehicles done by the air attacks, and did not look into the very important fact that the traditional Serbian ally, Russia, withdrew support for the Serbian leadership. All these factors have later been taken into account in reports published after 2000. See for example: Department of Defense. *Report to Congress: Kosovo / Allied Force After-Action Report* (Washington, D.C., 31 January 2000).

877 Colin Clark and George Seffers, ‘Hamre to U.S. Army: Rethink Future War Strategy’, *Defense News*, vol. 14, no 35, 6 September 1999, p. 6. (From the same article; ‘Retired Lieutenant General Thomas Rhame, the commander of the 1st Infantry Division in Desert Storm, was not receptive to the message: “The current trend seems to be to say the Army is not relevant, but I’m not willing to respond too warmly to all this relevancy crap until someone is prepared to guarantee me what the threat will be in the future”.’)

Rose argues, in his penetrating look at American wars during the last century, that American political leaders have focused more on ‘beating up the enemy’ than on creating a stable post-war environment.⁸⁷⁸ American leaders during wartime, Rose wrote in his book, have repeatedly ignored the need for careful post-war planning. But they can and must do a better job next time around; making the creation of a stable and sustainable local political outcome the goal of all wartime plans, rather than an afterthought to be dealt with once the real military work is over. According to him, what happened in Iraq was only the most prominent example of this phenomenon, not an exception to the rule. One obvious reason, according to Rose, is that Americans often underestimate the political aspects of war. He asks, how could the strongest power in modern history fight two wars against the same opponent, Iraq, in just over a decade, win lightning military victories both times, and yet still be unprepared for the aftermath? Rose argues that American leaders have repeatedly ignored the need for careful post-war planning. He recommends making the creation of a stable and sustainable local political outcome the goal of all wartime plans, rather than an ‘afterthought’ to be dealt with once the fighting in the war is over.

Dan Reiter, in his book *How Wars End*, asks why some countries choose to end wars short of total victory while others fight on, sometimes in the face of bad odds.⁸⁷⁹ In his book, Reiter draws on empirical data to describe six wars and how they ended. Among his other findings, Reiter’s description of his thoughts about limited wars is of interest for the problems discussed in this book:

*Beyond wars aimed to change a rogue’s leadership, limited wars can be used to solve credible commitment problems. However, the empirical record is less encouraging of the conclusion that limited wars can serve this function, even if one side can change the balance of power or capture an element of the good that can make future defection by the other side more costly or less likely to succeed. Among the cases in this book, the Soviet Union hoped that its territorial acquisitions following the Winter War would improve the security of its northwest region. These hopes were not met, as after the war Finland permitted Germany to base troops on Finnish soil, and Finland joined Germany’s June 1941 attack on the Soviet Union. Israel hoped that its acquisition of the West Bank, the Golan Heights, and the Sinai peninsula in 1967 Six-Day War would dissuade its neighbors from attacking again in the future, although Egypt initiated the War of Attrition in 1969, Egypt and Syria both attacked to initiate the 1973 Yom Kippur War, and in 2006 Hezbollah launched missile attacks on Israel territory beyond the Golan, in Lebanon.*⁸⁸⁰

878 Gideon Rose, *How Wars End. Why We Always Fight the Last Battle* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).

879 Dan Reiter, *How Wars End* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 1–7.

880 Reiter (2009), p. 228.

Important here, looking into the future, is that some of the most worrisome foes like fanatic terrorist groups and authoritarian states like North Korea and Iran are very difficult to bargain with, and they can not be easily coerced or frightened into submission. These kinds of foes may be willing to engage in very costly or more or less suicidal operations, as authoritarian leaders and terrorists have little concerns about civilian casualties. These kinds of leaders may be looked upon as irrational or fanatics, with little concern for their own death. If such groups or regimes have WMDs at their disposal, they may probably use them against their enemies (for example a Western state), if they can get access to efficient delivery means, including use of, for example, suicide bombers.⁸⁸¹

One of the best books to date chronicling the events after 9/11 was written by David Ucko. He writes about the years in which the Americans were forced to relearn how to fight organised insurgents using terrorism as their main weapon in Iraq. Ucko in his book does almost the same as Blaufarb did after the Vietnam War, i.e. he reveals that to this day there is still considerable military resistance to really giving priority to irregular warfare, especially as this will be a threat to big high-tech military programmes.⁸⁸² In his foreword to David Ucko's book, Lt. Col John A. Nagl wrote the following statement:

*The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review offered rhetorical support but failed to link strategy for the 'Long War' with new development priorities. What Secretary of Defense Robert Gates calls "Next-war-itis", coupled with a "no more Iraqs" backlash within the military, could once again wipe out the hard-learned lessons of irregular warfare that will then have to be learned again when the next enemy of the United States decides to avoid our strengths and attack our relative weaknesses.*⁸⁸³

Why do I bring these problems forward here in the Concluding Chapter? Because the USA is still the leading Western military power and the American military and political thinking still dominate the international military trends. And the American way of fighting wars is still very important for the Western thinking about future warfare.

After 9/11, the U.S. military has been engaged in an internal debate about counterinsurgency warfare. This is partly a debate about COIN tactics and techniques, i.e. about *how to do* COIN better. But the maybe more important debate is about what *priority* COIN should receive in the coming U.S. defence planning and prioritisation. Specifically, should the United States continue to focus primarily on preparing for future 'great power wars' and strive to retain dominance through air power, naval power

881 Reiter (2009), pp. 23–25, 39–40, 49, 135, and 227.

882 Ucko (2009), pp. 1–6.

883 Ucko (2009), p. viii.

and other advanced and expensive warfare capabilities, or should it retool for various *small wars*? This latter view coincides with the idea that the United States also needs much greater civilian capacity for nation-building, development assistance, etc. If we study the different sources, much of the attention seems to have focused on 'how to do it better' issues, and less on the desirability of the proposed change. Those who have argued for radical change often point to the various wars the United States has fought in recent years. Particularly the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been debated. Many of the writers supporting reprioritisation after 2006 have claimed that the U.S. and NATO must plan for taking part in future 'COIN-like' wars in the Third World.

Critics of the current priority of counterinsurgency have put forward arguments against these priorities. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were, according to, for example, Stephen M. Walt, the direct result of two errors: 'We didn't get Bin Laden when we should have, and we invaded Iraq when we shouldn't. Had the United States not made those two blunders, we wouldn't have been fighting costly counterinsurgencies and we wouldn't be contemplating a far-reaching revision of U.S. defense priorities and military doctrine.'⁸⁸⁴ According to Brigade General H.R. McMaster, the so-called 'Vietnam syndrome' was not gone for good. It now seems possible that the memory of the Vietnam War, according to McMaster, will maybe forever be part of the public imagination because of the two conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq – producing something like a 'Vietnam syndrome on steroids'.⁸⁸⁵ Clearly, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the political debates concerning the nature and scope of U.S. involvement in those countries, have resurrected the lessons of the Vietnam War once again. To succeed in Afghanistan, i.e. ensuring that an anti-Taliban government survives a few years after NATO and the USA have left, the international community, in one way or another, must tackle the countries' big problems in Afghanistan with corruption, make aid more effective, commit to long-term reconstruction, improve cooperation with the threatened government and pursue a regional solution to the conflict. But can this be done with the Karzai political regime still in power in Kabul?

Some of this scepticism is understandable. As the debate over U.S. policy and strategy in Iraq and Afghanistan intensified after 2005, voices on all sides invoked the Vietnam War to support their arguments. Some suggested that at the level of grand strategy, the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq were related campaigns in the broader war on terror, just as Vietnam was one chapter in a wider Cold War; others, making the case in ideological terms, likened today's global fight against adherents of Salafi Jihadism to yesterday's struggle against world Communism. The wars in Afghanistan

884 Stephen M. Walt, 'Building on 2 blunders: the dubious case for counterinsurgency', *Foreign Policy*, february 24, 2012 http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/11/16/building_on_2_blunders_the_dubious_case_for_counterinsurgency.

885 H. R. McMaster. 'This Familiar Battleground. Policy makers, in their haste to forget the Vietnam War, also forgot to learn from it.' *Hoover Digest*, No. 4, 2009. (First printed in the winter 2009 issue of *World Affairs*.)

and Iraq also evoke the American experience in Vietnam because they present complex problems with a multitude of political, military, economic and cultural dimensions.⁸⁸⁶ Many historians have criticised Robert McNamara and other architects of America's intervention in Vietnam for having slighted the human and psychological dimensions of war and refusing to pay due respect to the complex Vietnamese Communist strategy of *Dau Tranh*, a strategy that employed a mosaic of shifting, complex, political and military actions over a long period of time.

If we look back on many of the articles and books written in the period 1995 to 2005, it is interesting to read some of the thoughts about 'efficient fighting'. Some policy makers argued that the mere demonstration of American military prowess would be sufficient to alter the behaviour of the enemy. This flawed assumption underestimated the complexity of war and the level of effort and time required to achieve wartime objectives.

Paradoxically, concepts associated with so-called *revolution in military affairs* were based partially on the desire to avoid another Vietnam. In the 1990s, the Weinberger-Powell doctrine of use of so-called 'overwhelming force' was eclipsed by the certainty that U.S. technological superiority would deliver in future wars what had proven so elusive in Vietnam: rapid, decisive victory. If an adversary had the temerity to threaten U.S. national security interests, a transformed military would mount 'rapid decisive operations' that would 'shock and awe' all foes. The most enthusiastic proponents of these concepts argued that U.S. technological advances would 'lock out' potential adversaries from the 'market' of future conflict. 'Network Centric Warfare' counted on surveillance and information technologies to deliver 'information dominance' over all potential adversaries.

And as discussed earlier, COIN is a political problem. It calls for a political scheme that focuses on security, political transition, reconstruction, economic development, governmental development, diplomacy and the rule of law. Applied to Afghanistan and Iraq, these ideas invited especially Americans but also other NATO states to indulge in the conceit that so-called decisive victory could be achieved by small numbers of forces backed with superior technology.

Even in 2004, three years after the invasion of Afghanistan and one year after the invasion of Iraq, senior defence officials in the Pentagon continued to advocate what at that time was called the '10-30-30 idea' for national defence. The idea was that small and lightly equipped forces would deploy to a distant theatre in 10 days, defeat the enemy within 30 days and then ready themselves for another mission in another 30 days. This may have looked great on PowerPoint slides, but today probably nobody could present such ideas and be taken seriously.⁸⁸⁷

886 Gompert and Gordon (2008). An important point in this book is that every insurgency is different in circumstances, character – and only some of them will be of interest for U.S. security interests.

887 For readers interested in sources from this period, the interviews and articles presented from late 2003 and into 2005 in the

Because counterinsurgency, for one, is fundamentally a political problem, the framework that connects tactics to strategy ought to be a political scheme that directs and integrates an entire array of initiatives, military operations and programmes in the areas of security, political transition, reconstruction, economic development, governmental development, diplomacy and the rule of law. As the earlier mentioned David Galula observed in his book *Counterinsurgency Warfare* (second printing, 1965), there is always interplay between political and military actions. Because of this, politics and military actions *cannot* be tidily separated. On the contrary, every military move has to be weighed with regard to its political effects and vice versa. Galula wrote:

*The insurgent, whose political establishment is a party and whose armed forces are the party's forces, enjoys an obvious advantage over his opponent, whose political establishment is the country's government, which may or may not be supported by a party or by a coalition of parties with their centrifugal tendencies, and whose army is the nation's army, reflecting the consensus or the lack of consensus in the nation.*⁸⁸⁸

Galula's book provides, as earlier discussed, an analysis of how to 'countermine insurgency' and the elements that might create its defeat. Galula concedes, for example, that: 'Very little is offered beyond formulas – which are sound as far as they go – such as, "Intelligence is the key to the problem," or "The support of the population must be won".'⁸⁸⁹ The essence of his text is clearly stated: 'What we propose to do is to define the laws of counterrevolutionary warfare, to deduce from them its principles, and to outline the corresponding strategy and tactics.'⁸⁹⁰ Galula in his book defined what he called *protracted struggle* as something conducted methodically in order to attain specific intermediate objectives, leading finally to the overthrow of the existing order, i.e. the existing regime.⁸⁹¹ Another point he made was that 'an insurgency is a civil war. Yet there is a difference in the form the war takes in each case.'⁸⁹²

The typical Communist techniques used in these rebellions during the 1950s and 1960s are described in Chapter 4 in his book. Another point he made was that predicting when a revolution will break out is very difficult – its beginning is so vague that to determine exactly when an insurgency starts will always be a difficult legal,

'Pentagon-affiliated' periodical *DefenseNews* may be of interest. Very similar to the concept of graduated pressure (on the enemy) presented shortly above, concepts like *rapid decisive operations* and the associated so-called '10-30-30- plan' were mostly grounded in visions of wars that U.S. defence officials *would like to fight*, rather than the kind of wars that current enemies do fight. The lack of interest in problems connected to what potential *future enemies* were likely to force upon U.S. and other Western forces is part of this military debate.

888 Galula (1965), p. 9.

889 Galula (1965), p. xii

890 Galula (1965), pp. xii–xiii.

891 Galula (1965), p. 4.

892 Galula (1965), p. 5.

political and historical problem for the threatened regime.⁸⁹³ Seen from the counter-insurgents' view, Galula wrote:

The transitions from "peace" to "war," as we have seen, can be very gradual and confusing. Even when the insurgent follows the shortcut pattern, violence is always preceded by a short period of stirrings. In Algeria, for instance, the police, the administration, and the government suspected that something was brewing during the summer of 1954. (...) ⁸⁹⁴

Octavian Manea interviewed the French Professor Etienne de Durand for the website smallwarsjournal.com (2010). Manea asked:

What should we learn today from the DGR people's (i.e. doctrine de guerre révolutionnaire or French Counterinsurgency Doctrine) failed public relations experience to manage their public opinion/internal audience back home? To what extent is the public opinion a center of gravity in what we call today a war among people?

To which Durand replied:

In a Western democracy, public opinion back home is certainly a center of gravity for any COIN campaign that is long and costly enough to appear on the radar screen. It was the case back in the 50s and 60s and still is today. The main lesson to be drawn from the French experience in this respect is twofold.

First, "be careful what you wish for, you might very well get it": since they had felt abandoned in Indochina by the French people, the professional military demanded and got that the draft be mobilized for Algeria and that the whole nation be committed. This ensured that the right numbers and troop ratios would obtain, but also fuelled controversies and war fatigue back home, culminating in a political countdown toward war termination. Mobilizing the population generally comes with a heavy price tag attached to it: the non-negotiable need to show quick results.

Second, total war cannot be decreed, neither by the military, nor even by the government. Ultimately, as Clausewitz pointed out, it is the people that decide whether the stakes at hand are vital or not. In the case of Algeria, the French

⁸⁹³ Galula (1965), see Chapter 3, 'The Insurgency Doctrine', pp. 43–62.

⁸⁹⁴ Galula (1965), p. 63.

*people accepted for a time that Algeria was part of France, but the political, human, and moral costs of the war, from casualties to the use of torture, ensured a continuous erosion of support, so much that the public was ready to follow De Gaulle and grant independence to Algeria in the end. Accordingly, it is essential to have a good sense of where the public is susceptible to lie in the long haul, before embarking on very ambitious war aims or even grand rhetoric.*⁸⁹⁵

Historically it has been difficult to put an end to many of the insurgencies we have seen after the Second World War. A term like ‘peace with honour’ is a tacit acknowledgment that some sense of national pride must be preserved when considering the removal of combat forces from a war that is not going as well as hoped. National pride, honour and prestige are strategic preoccupations. National credibility with one’s allies, deterrence of potential adversaries and regional stability are all part of short- and long-term calculations. For example, Gil Merom in his book made a point about how the then French Prime Minister Guy Mollet changed his views: ‘Once in power, and after being bombarded by tomatoes during a February 1956 visit to Algiers, Guy Mollet – the same Mollet who had previously argued in public that the war was “stupid and leading nowhere” (...) – suddenly suggested that “France without Algeria would be nothing.”’⁸⁹⁶ But some years later, confronted with the inevitability of Algerian independence and the end of French sovereignty in Algeria, what became most important to President Charles de Gaulle was that the handover of power to FLN and withdrawal of the French forces would ‘be done well, and with honour’.⁸⁹⁷ Ambitions change with the fortunes of war.

And what happens when the foreign troops leave? Very often in civil wars this will be a sad and brutal time for people who have collaborated with the ‘wrong people’. In an article published in *smallwarsjournal.com*, Paul Rexton Kan gives some interesting examples:

When it came to the status of those who worked alongside the disengaging forces, no matter whether or not guarantees of safety were expressed by the withdrawing party or by groups who would potentially carry out reprisals, they suffered in the wake of departing forces. In Al alongside Israel geria, as the reprisal attacks and massacres occurred, de Gaulle was adamant that the

harkis were not to be repatriated in France and went so far as ordering that those who arrived in France be returned and ordered the army not to intervene to stop the massacres. In the frenzied evacuation of Saigon, few South

⁸⁹⁵ Manea (2010), p. 4.

⁸⁹⁶ Merom (2003), p. 90.

⁸⁹⁷ Christian Fouchet, *France’s last representative in Algeria*, quoted in Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954-1962* (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), p. 379.

Vietnamese collaborators were rescued while President Gerald Ford ordered naval vessels to remain off the Vietnamese coast to rescue refugees even though the North Vietnamese worked to prevent them from fleeing. With the dissolution of the USSR in the previous year, the fall of President Najibullah's regime in Afghanistan was treated with disinterest by Boris Yeltsin's Russian Federation. In his inauguration speech, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak promised "to take all necessary measures to guarantee the future of the Lebanese security and civilian personnel who have worked alongside Israel over the years." Yet with compensation and resettlement packages, the SLA and other collaborators were left largely to fend for themselves when the withdrawal actually occurred. Sadly, the choice of "suitcases or coffins" for collaborators is often made for them by the withdrawing party.⁸⁹⁸

One important question for the coming years will be how to handle conflicts in the Third World, including the still ongoing war in Afghanistan.

With the ongoing 'popular revolutions' in the Middle East as a new phenomenon, there will probably be many conflicts also in the coming years. Most of these conflicts may be put under the heading irregular war – a term which always includes use of different forms of violence.

According to most updated theories on 'COIN warfare', this kind of conflict/war should be conducted with full support from all government assets and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), not merely military forces. In practice, both in Iraq and Afghanistan, the military has conducted the vast majority of the government's portion of the COIN efforts. In the case of the USA, the military has been the central player for a variety of reasons, including the military forces' resources and ability to operate in unsecure environments. Today the term COIN is well known from its use during the latter stages of the second U.S. war in Iraq. As mentioned earlier, the COIN thinking has developed over time, and one of the newer definitions is 'those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency.'⁸⁹⁹ The same view was also presented by General Stanley McChrystal in his 2009 recommendation for Afghanistan, describing the best means to prevail there.⁹⁰⁰

898 Paul Rexton Kan, 'Making a Sandwich in Afghanistan: How to Assess a Strategic Withdrawal from a Protracted Irregular War', *Small Wars Journal*, 24 February 2011, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/making-a-sandwich-in-afghanistan>. 899 JP 1-02.

900 Stanley McChrystal, 'Commander's Initial Assessment', 30 August 2009, http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/Assessment_Redacted_092109.pdf. (McChrystal later had to step down because of a media-created scandal, and could not follow up on his intentions.)

7.4. Towards the end of 'The Second COIN Era'?

One very notable characteristic of COIN is its *indirect approach* to combating terrorism and organised insurgency. A so-called 'COIN strategy' focuses on the local civilian population, seeking to secure the population from the insurgents (terrorists), and to obtain popular support through effective governance, including fair public services – eventually defeating the insurgents or making their activity irrelevant.⁹⁰¹ Counterinsurgency's high cost in both resources and lives begins with the large number of *counterinsurgents* required to provide security. In a conflict against well-organised insurgents, expenditures for personnel, equipment and materials also are required for civil works programmes to support the host government. COIN conducted in a remote, rugged and insecure area, such as Afghanistan, clearly costs more. Especially the costs of transportation and transportation security have been very high in Afghanistan.⁹⁰²

And because of these facts, it looks like the Western powers' will to engage in new interventions in these kinds of conflicts is not very great after the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In a speech to cadets at West Point in February 2011, the former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates warned against future land wars like the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but stated that America should not forget the difficult lessons it has learned from those conflicts. Gates said: 'In my opinion, any future Defense Secretary who advises the president to again send a big American land army into Asia or into the Middle East or Africa should "have his head examined," as General MacArthur so delicately put it.'⁹⁰³ The views expressed in Gates' speech will probably have an impact, i.e. the U.S. will probably for many years to come refrain from deploying large numbers of ground combat troops to most of the world's conflict areas.

Could this speech also be looked upon as one of the first official speeches indicating the coming end of the 'Second U.S. COIN era'? The consequences of this approach, if it becomes a new American political policy, are at least twofold: One is that this signals an end to last year's strong involvement by U.S. (and NATO) ground forces in long-lasting COIN campaigns. The priority given to training, equipping and deploying U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps for fighting COIN campaigns in the last five to six years will not be continued, if this interpretation is correct. The other is that this speech probably signals that the U.S. Army's traditionally very important heavy

901 FM 3-24, Introduction and para. 1-113 and para. 6-1.

902 Ibid. (2006) para. 1-67. Here the doctrine writers stated that previous conflict planners assumed that a ratio of 10 or 15 counterinsurgents per insurgent was required to prevail; currently a ratio of 20 to 25 counterinsurgents for every 1,000 civilian residents is recommended.

903 Robert M. Gates, *Speech As Delivered by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates*, West Point, NY, Friday, February 25, 2011, website U.S. Department of Defense, <http://www.defense.gov/Speeches/Speech.aspx?SpeechID=1539>.

divisions and brigades, designed to be the core of American *land power* as part of U.S. global strength since the Second World War, may be heading for dissolution.⁹⁰⁴

But Gates also said that the U.S. must not forget the lessons it has learned since 2001, and that the government must try to solve ‘fester- ing problems’ *before* they become crises. The odds that the U.S. would repeat ‘another Afghanistan or Iraq —in- vading, pacifying and administering a large, Third World country’ will be low. And Gates did not want a new ‘post-1975 situation’ for the U.S. Army:

What we can expect in the future is that potential adversaries – be they terrorists, insurgents, militia groups, rogue states, or emerging powers – will seek to frustrate America’s traditional advantages, in particular our ability to shoot, move and communicate with speed and precision. From the look of things, the Army will not repeat the mistakes of the past, where irregular warfare was shunted to the side after Vietnam. The odds of repeating another Afghanistan or Iraq – invading, pacifying, and administering a large third world country – may be low. But in what General Casey has called “an era of persistent conflict,” those unconventional capabilities will still be needed at various levels and in various locations. Most critically to prevent fester- ing problems from growing into full-blown crises which require costly – and controversial – large-scale American military interventions.

*A second challenge that I believe faces today’s and tomorrow’s Army – your Army – is whether and how the Army can adapt its practices and culture to these strategic realities. From the beginning of the wars in Iraq and Af- ghanistan, our soldiers and junior- and mid-level leaders down range have been adjusting and improvising to the complex and evolving challenges on the ground – in many cases using the Internet, especially tools of social media, to share tactical lessons learned in real time with their colleagues at the front or preparing to deploy back here in the United States.*⁹⁰⁵

Gates listed a few of the challenges facing the United States that will continue after U.S. involvement in both Iraq and Afghanistan has been wound down. These challenges include: terrorism and terrorists in search of weapons of mass destruction, ‘unfriendly’ countries like Iran, North Korea, military modernisation programmes in Russia and China, the ongoing ‘revolutions’ in the Middle East and the lasting problems with failed and failing states. He also mentioned problems like cyber threats, piracy, nuclear pro- liferation and both natural and man-made disasters in his speech as future challenges.

904 Gates (2011).

905 Gates (2011).

And as an indirect comment on the ongoing debate both in the USA and in Europe about the future need for heavy armoured forces, he said that there is a need for heavy armour and firepower. ‘The Army is not going to just build schools and sip tea,’ the secretary said. Still, the prospects for another head-on clash of large mechanised land armies seem less likely. ‘The Army will be increasingly challenged to justify the number, size and cost of its heavy formations to those in the leadership of the Pentagon, and on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue, who ultimately make policy and set budgets.’⁹⁰⁶

But there will also be a need for counterinsurgency and humanitarian assistance in the future.⁹⁰⁷ Enemies will seek to attack the United States where they believe America is weakest. ‘The Army will not repeat the mistakes of the past, where irregular warfare doctrine was shunted aside after the Vietnam War,’ Gates assumed.⁹⁰⁸

Michael Few, the editor of the electronically distributed Small Wars Journal, which is probably the leading forum for debate about all forms of irregular warfare today, wrote in an interview with the American military author Col. Bing West about his book *The Wrong War* (2010):

The wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan led to a resurgence and explosion of theory and study into small wars, a field once relegated to minor departments of security studies and defense analysis. Much of this discussion and debate takes place at Small Wars Journal through major stakeholders such as LTC (ret.), John Nagl, LTC (ret.), David Kilcullen, General David Petraeus, and LTG William Caldwell, as well as numerous junior and field grade officers and NCOs returning from the field trying to apply practice to theory. Has this increase in the study of small wars provided the collective community a greater wisdom of war and warfare?

The new religion of benevolent counterinsurgency has been defined by the best writers. Especially in Big Army, attracting attention and prominence is helped enormously by an advanced degree and by the publication of theoretical papers on macro topics at the high level of warfare.

The new COIN, however, remains an unproven theory, with a distinct downside. Since non-kinetics have been advocated as the smart approach to warfare, from the top down the infection of risk-aversion has spread. Most battalions know the sections of their AOs where the troops will be shot at; those areas

906 Gates (2011).

907 Gates (2011). Gates: ‘Looking ahead, though, in the competition for tight defense dollars within and between the services’ (...) ‘the Army also must confront the reality that the most plausible, high-end scenarios for the U.S. military are primarily naval and air engagements – whether in Asia, the Persian Gulf, or elsewhere.’

908 Gates (2011).

*are avoided until rotary-wing CAS is scheduled; that takes four to seven days. Every casualty is investigated; if a junior officer has strayed from the published regulations, he is in trouble. Every company and battalion commander must give away the money he is given, and must insure his books balance, etc. We have overly entangled and distracted our rifle companies, and we have turned a blind eye to the need to detect, arrest and imprison those in every village who are true Taliban or part-timers. (...).*⁹⁰⁹

The description above is probably in accord with the military realities in Afghanistan today. In a political situation where both U.S. and NATO forces are preparing for a withdrawal, few are willing to risk their soldiers' lives. Or as written in a blog comment on the quote above:

*'Aversion to risk: not a true aversion to casualties mind you – but an aversion to the risk a negative happenstance could have on one's career – marks most of the efforts there. There are exceptions, but THAT was the rule I found. If that is the rule for battalion commanders today – just think what the future brigade commanders and general officers we are molding today will be like after they get promoted under this system.'*⁹¹⁰

Colonel Bing West served in Iraq and lately he has also been 'embedded' with U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan; on the basis of his experiences, he stated: 'the Sunni tribes, with an established hierarchy and strong intra-clan ties, came over to our side because, as their leaders told me, they concluded we were the strongest tribe. It was no accident that the Sunni Awakening began in Anbar, where the Marines had hammered the insurgents – al Qaeda and Sunni tribes alike – year after year. In Afghanistan, the Pashtun sub-tribes have no such established hierarchy. Many villages have scant contact with the next. The Pashtuns will remain neutral and standoffish until they decide who is going to win. They are convinced the Taliban will return as we pull out.'⁹¹¹ Another sharply formulated view from Bing West is based on the fact that after 9/11 the U.S. decided to go after al-Qaeda and the Taliban-regime in Afghanistan. He has also commented on the development in an interview, 'When Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda walked down the east side of the Tora Bora mountains into the tribal area of Pakistan,

909 Michael Few, 'The Wrong War. Interview with Bing West', *Small Wars Journal*, February 21, 2011, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-wrong-war-an-interview-with-bing-west-updated>.

910 Few (2011).

911 Few (2011). David Kilcullen has in comments on smallwarsjournal.com said that he never intended any of his writings on COIN to imply that killing was not only involved, but an essential element of COIN. Bing West clearly states in the quoted interview why that is the case. The real problem is maybe that today's Western anti-insurgent strategy is not working – i.e. is it the wrong strategy, rather than the 'wrong war'? See also David Kilcullen's description of counterinsurgency theory in Kilcullen (2010), pp. 149–155.

we stopped as if hitting a concrete wall. We then decided to build Afghanistan into a modern, democratic, economically vibrant nation. Our generals ordered our soldiers to be nation-builders – a giant Peace Corps in armour. Afghanistan was the wrong war for that misguided strategy.’⁹¹²

In late April 2011, a critical evaluation of the U.S. Department of Defense’s handling of the war in Afghanistan was published. This report, named *The Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence Counterinsurgency, (COIN) Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Operation*, sheds particular light on the internal U.S. problems with COIN and other connected efforts.⁹¹³ One of the major findings was that after 10 years of COIN warfare the U.S. DoD still lacked a ‘common understanding of COIN’. Another finding was that DoD had an overly narrow interpretation of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR), i.e. intelligence collection made by airborne platforms. According to the report, ISR capabilities had not been used ‘effectively during COIN operations that deal with populations – in part because a comprehensive set of intelligence requirements for COIN does not exist.’⁹¹⁴

The U.S. Army’s *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* manual states that ‘at its heart, a counterinsurgency is an armed struggle for the support of the population’.⁹¹⁵ Central in connection with the thinking around a so-called ‘population-centric COIN strategy’ is the assumption that poverty, illiteracy and the unmet needs of the population are important factors fuelling instability and insurgencies. If the threatened regime and its supporters are able to provide, for example, humanitarian support, reconstruction and development assistance, *this* will play a critical role in winning the support, or the hearts and minds, of the population. This assumption is illustrated in the foreword to the U.S. Army’s *Stability Operations* manual (FM 3-07), which states that ‘the greatest threat to our national security comes not in the form of terrorism or ambitious powers, but from fragile states either unable or unwilling to provide for the most basic needs of their people.’⁹¹⁶ Money is here viewed as a key component of hearts and minds operations.⁹¹⁷

912 ‘True-Life Grit. Marine-to-Marine reporting from Bing West in Afghanistan’, An NRO Interview, *National Review Online*, March 3, 2011, <http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/261146/true-life-grit-kathryn-jean-lopez..>

913 U. S. Department of Defense, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Defense Intelligence Counterinsurgency (COIN) Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Operations*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, February 2011, <http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/dod/dsb/coin.pdf>.

914 See the included Memorandum for the Chairman in the ‘Report of the Defense Science Board...’. See also the Report’s Executive Summary, p. vii: ‘The defense intelligence community has not translated those aspects of commander’s intent dealing with COIN into intelligence requirements, though the *United States Government Integrated Civilian-Military Campaign Plan for Support to Afghanistan* describes in detail the need to focus on population security, governance, and economic development.’

915 U. S. Department of the Army, Headquarters, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, Field Manual FM 3-24.2, April 2009, p. ix.

916 FM 3-07, p. vi.

917 Paul Fishstein, ‘Winning Hearts and Minds? Examining the Relationship between Aid and Security in Afghanistan’s Balkh Province’, Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, November 2010, http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/4DBB1DCC1CA6E10B852577DC006EF093-Full_Report.pdf, p. 57.

The Western nations do not fight *existential wars* today – or at least have not done so since the Second World War. What we do is more like the pre-Napoleonic so-called ‘cabinet wars’, i.e. fighting about a province or for ‘honour’ – not for the life or death of one’s own country. Today, at least for the political leadership, this kind of ‘small war’ probably makes more sense. Based on this kind of thinking, being too risk averse in an existential war may significantly impair the war effort. I think this is an important development, and may result in what is described in an article by Artemy Kalinovsky:

And early in 1987, the Afghans announced a “policy of national reconciliation,” advocated and planned by Soviet officials, in the hope of facilitating some accommodation between the communist government, its various political opponents and insurgents. Soviet representatives even sought out top mujaheddin leaders and conducted meetings with them.

But by the fall of 1987, Gorbachev and many of his top advisers thought that none of their efforts to salvage Afghanistan were going to work. Their last hope was an agreement with the United States that would at least stop American aid to the mujaheddin while letting Moscow continue to supply Kabul with arms. (A deal was eventually reached but proved too vague to be effective.) At this point, though, Moscow had lost faith in being able to achieve anything in Afghanistan, and senior Soviet officials seemed to be mentally preparing for Najibullah’s defeat.

Today, the Obama White House seems to be going through a similar process regarding its own Afghan war. Recent books and news reports about the administration’s decision-making reveal that the president came to office well aware that Afghanistan had been neglected at the expense of the war in Iraq and was sliding into chaos. And since then, the administration’s debates and initiatives echo the Soviets’ in the waning years of their conflict.

From pretending the Taliban was a spent force, the United States has moved to talks not just with minor commanders but with the group’s leadership. The appointment of the late ambassador Richard Holbrooke as special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan was reminiscent of Gorbachev’s appointment of veteran diplomat Yulii Vorontsov as a sort of Afghanistan factotum. And an early small-footprint approach has given way to a troop surge through which the U.S. military – with decreasing NATO support – is hoping to

break the back of the insurgency, even as the date that a reliable Afghan army will be ready moves further into the future.

A cynic might say that Obama has doubled down in Afghanistan because he is afraid of domestic criticism should that country collapse on his watch. And Gorbachev's concerns about how failure in Afghanistan could be used against him no doubt figured into his calculations as well. Yet it is likely that, for both men, worries about defeat centred on what it would mean for their country's power and prestige. Like the Soviet Union, the United States is not just a country but an idea and a mission; like Gorbachev, Obama wants to fulfil rather than discredit his country's promise.⁹¹⁸

In contrast to the wars fought in the 20th century (for example the Second World War), could 'risk averse' be a modern form of the old term *cabinet war*? And might this 'low-key' warfare make good sense? No single action (or inaction) is probably going to make any big difference in the so-called grand scheme of things, as COIN operations in a Third World country normally will not be a fight for the survival of Western states.

But if we instead try to see the conflict/war from the *insurgents'* viewpoint, what we in the West may look upon as a local war (conflict) may look like *a fight for survival* for a local insurgent movement.

Western political leaders and soldiers do not (yet) refuse to fight wars – even if it sometimes may be difficult to see whether Western states have a clear long-term strategy that demands fighting. But the tasks and purpose are maybe not always clear enough for the Western soldiers involved in these *small wars*. This lack of an agreed upon and well-developed *political and military strategy* is very often a problem today.

As discussed earlier in this book, Western leaders have at least four broad 'strategies' through which they may employ military forces to counter different kinds of violent extremism:

1. Counterinsurgency,
2. Counterterrorism,
3. Support to an ongoing insurgency,
4. Antiterrorism work.

The earlier described so-called *long war* (against different extremist organisations) is now anticipated to still continue for a long time – perhaps for generations. If this is

⁹¹⁸ Artemy Kalinovsky, 'Obama's Russian lessons: How the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan', *The Washington Post*, 29 April 2011.

the case, it is important to select the best strategy (or a combination of strategies) for employing Western military forces.

There are many historical lessons to be drawn from earlier efforts to combat both insurgency and terrorism. It is always wise to behave efficiently and sustainably, and avoiding overreacting, i.e. acting incompetently, or appearing to be either over-reactive or incompetent. Based on what we now have seen from post-9/11 developments, Western use of the 'revitalised' counterinsurgency theories and practices has not been very efficient, and this activity does not look sustainable from a military, economic and especially a *political* perspective.

COIN is always a *high-risk strategy* because it is a large effort, being both highly visible and very ambitious. Through the use of COIN, the U.S./NATO may easily act incompetently - or be *perceived* as overreacting or being incompetent. COIN in today's Western political and medial reality is very demanding, especially as the *Western political leaderships* do not like to be committed in long (so-called 'endless') wars.

Activities like counterterrorism, support to insurgency (as seen in Libya 2011) and antiterrorism are easier to perform, and they are more sustainable from a military and economic perspective. This is mainly because they do not have a high political profile, and may be easier to wind up if success is unlikely. But these three 'strategies' also have inherent political dangers or constraints. However, it is less likely that the Western powers will overreact, behave incompetently or be perceived as being incompetent through engaging in one or more of these three strategies, than by engaging in an ambitious counterinsurgency campaign to 'save the threatened country'.

Direct or indirect support to insurgencies is economically and militarily efficient and sustainable, but supporting a 'friendly insurgency' always carries substantial political risks. Thus, an overall long-term strategy combining counterterrorism/antiterrorism is probably the least risky way of employing Western military forces to counter today's violent extremism.

In my view it is important that especially the *officers* involved in this kind of activity understand the local realities if our armed forces are deployed to a foreign country. We must always remember that use of violence is important in all kinds of warfare and that most modern wars typically involve four different forms of violence.

Activities in support of a regime's fight against insurgents are today normally labelled as *counterinsurgency*. But as mentioned above, real COIN is an ambitious and resource-intensive activity where the Western states involved take the responsibility for 'saving' the threatened state or regime. We may consider this an all-out effort involving a great political risk for the counterinsurgents.

The kind of activities described above may also be grouped under ‘irregular warfare’ as the overarching term. As described earlier, there is today no agreement about the ‘most correct terms’ for the activities mentioned above, but use of violence is always an important part of all kinds of insurgency and counterinsurgency.

From the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have learnt that the real test of a foreign intervention is not the defeat of the totalitarian regime we target (for example the Saddam regime in Iraq) – it is what comes next. According to the Greek poet and philosopher Heraclitus (around 500 B.C.) who wrote that, ‘War is the father of all things, the king of all: some it has shown as gods, some as men; some it has made slaves, some free,’ we better be very careful.⁹¹⁹ Heraclitus’ lesson is very simple and I think it may be of relevance even today: we must beware the consequences not just of defeat, but also of victory.

919 *iWise wisdom on-demand*, <http://www.iwise.com/3lMBt>.

A SWEDISH VIEW ON IRREGULAR WARFARE

Michael Gustafson

A.1. Background

Since 2008, so-called irregular warfare (IW) has been a growing concern for the Swedish Armed Forces due to the current participation in ISAF operations in Afghanistan as well as the need to teach the topic to officers during their general training and education in War Studies at the Swedish National Defence College (SNDC).

Likewise, there is a need to develop military practice and theory, both in terms of so-called irregular warfare and the competences and fighting power that are still required in regular or conventional warfare, whether simultaneously or separately in an operational environment. That said, it can be argued that there are several practical, theoretical and, above all, mental and cultural differences in Sweden between thinking on these two ways of describing warfare. Practice and theory regarding regular warfare can be said to have shaped both organisational and individual thinking and preferences in practice since Gustav Vasa's successful insurgency and irregular warfare at the beginning of the 16th century, when the counterinsurgency efforts of the Danes were obviously less than successful. Irregular warfare (in a broad sense) had for this reason not been a subject of any structural substance and content in officer education, unit training or operational reality from the birth of the Swedish Armed Forces in the 16th century up to until around 2007–08. During this time period there have been differences – such as in the Western approach to developing warfare capabilities – in how to view and value the 'small wars' concept in connection with the 'real' fundamentals of warfare. At least three concepts can be seen.

First, there are the concepts of guerrilla warfare or 'kleinkriege', which were applied in Finland during the 19th century against Russia as a complement to the regular military operations, and developed during the 20th century to form different 'jäger' units of company or battalion size that are geographically and climatologically spe-

cialised.⁹²⁰ A further development of these conscript formations emerged during the 1990s with the birth of a Special Forces concept as a military joint strategic resource. That said, ideas of irregular warfare did impact on the development of resistance thinking⁹²¹ to be applied in the case of an invasion and occupation of Swedish territory. In military thinking, 'free warfare' became a term and principle to be used for all units overrun by the enemy. However, teaching of this concept of guerrilla warfare as a last resort was limited to brief overviews at the end of field manuals and training involved (at best) only one short field exercise during conscript training.

Finally, 'small wars principles' for defending against hostile special operations warfare were developed into various forms of 'anti-Spetznaz' ranger units during the 1990s.⁹²²

In fact, a unifying thread runs through thinking and practical conceptualisations of irregular warfare principles in Swedish military history. Lars Ericsson Wolke, a professor of history, argues that two unifying threads can be seen in Swedish military idea development. The first of these concerns tactical concepts for combat against a superior aggressor in harsh forest terrain.⁹²³ Seen in an overall perspective, one can note that practical concepts for irregular warfare principles *in support* of regular warfare have existed and been more or less influential in military thinking in the Swedish Armed Forces. This tradition might however be argued to have constituted a rather diluted view and was overall not given a particularly high priority in the officer corps as a whole. During the Cold War period and in Swedish invasion defence doctrine, irregular warfare has not been included in military theory education, resulting in an officer corps that is neither mentally (or practically) trained nor used to thinking about strategy, operational art and tactics in ways other than the common regular warfare principles of the Western world. This situation has begun to change in some ways since the beginning of the 21st century.

From the theoretical and educational perspective, Professor Nils Marius Rekkedal's work on military theory at the Swedish National Defence College from the beginning of 2001, has resulted in several influential writings and books concerning both regular (or conventional) and irregular warfare.⁹²⁴ This introduction of other forms of war and

920 Army Parachute ranger Btms (strat/operative level), Artic and Lapland ranger Btms (op/tactical level), Coast Ranger Company (tactical level).

921 Alf Meyerhöffer, *Svensk Motståndsrörelse*, (Karlskrona, Sweden: Folkförsvaret Förlags AB, 1955). One of the best-known post-Second World War writings and arguments on the importance of understanding (and using) irregular warfare as a means of resistance.

922 Army Military Police Squadrons, Air Base Ranger Platoons, Navy Base Security Companies. These units were later to be organised jointly also in a Security Btn concept (including tactical HUMINT patrols) that was developed during the KFOR years in the Balkans. An example of thinking concerning the maritime environment and defence against special operations is the 1994 *Taktiskt reglemente för marinens bassäkerhetsförband; trm bassäk, part 1, Base Security Company*.

923 Lars Ericson Wolke, *Krigets idéer* (Stockholm: Medströms Bokförlag, 2007), pp. 360–361. See also pp. 180–186 regarding thinking on irregular warfare concepts for winter conditions during the 19th century.

924 One example of these writings is Rekkedal, Nils Marius, *Modern krigskonst. Militärmakt i förändring* [Modern military art, armed forces under change], (Stockholm: Krigsvetenskapliga institutionen, Försvarshögskolan, 2002), first published in 2002 and then updated and reprinted several times. Using the expressions 'guerrilla warfare', 'low-intensity conflicts' and

warfare to officer students might be argued to be the first attempt to broaden military thinking in modern Swedish officer education. The first doctrinal descriptions in the Swedish Armed Forces of 'irregular forces' and 'asymmetry' appear in 2002, but they were not developed in any great depth.⁹²⁵ The next doctrine for joint operations, released in 2005, did not include further analysis regarding new forms of warfare. On the other hand, the Swedish use of Special Forces is here mentioned for the first time.⁹²⁶

Work on a historical summary of military thoughts on war and warfare, both for use in officer education and to provide support to doctrinal work, resulted in the book *Militärteorins grunder*, published in 2005, containing descriptions of 'theories on ground operations in Small Wars'.⁹²⁷ A summary of irregular warfare and counterinsurgency theories was also produced for the Swedish Defence Forces, which were no longer focusing exclusively on regular warfare. These summaries focus primarily on historical and theoretical perspectives. Rekkedal's writings have a different approach and a clear focus on problematising *contemporary* challenges in the Art of War.

Still, no changes were made to the officer education syllabus until 2008, a year after the publication of the highly influential U.S. Field Manual 3-24 *Counterinsurgency*. A five-week course in irregular warfare was introduced in the basic officer course. Later, in 2010, a course in 'contemporary operations' was fully devoted to joint counterinsurgency operations.

As for the Defence Forces' view on the 'new' area of irregular warfare and counterinsurgency, the Army has taken its first step to approach this issue in its current draft of a new Field Manual, which provides examples of combat against 'regular' or 'irregular' opponents.⁹²⁸ Also, approaches to stabilisation and COIN are mentioned (in brief), and described in a manner similar to U.S. FM 3-24. A more extensive description of irregular warfare, counterinsurgency and other related activities (guerrilla warfare, unconventional warfare, etc.) is expected to be part of the new military strategy doctrine, currently under production and planned to be finalised in 2012.

Since 2009, the U.S. COIN Field Manuals have been used in the training of the forces for ISAF and as sources for Swedish Field Manuals. The inclusion of irregular warfare aspects is currently under production. In general, thinking concerning irregular warfare is fully concerned with multinational operations abroad, and is currently not a visible part of thinking concerning the national defence of Sweden's territory. Also, departing from the earlier approach to ranger operations under the former invasion defence concept, where parts of the forces were assigned more or less 'small wars'

'asymmetry', Rekkedal delivers (pp. 210–247) the first comprehensive work on irregular warfare theories in modern Swedish officer education.

925 *Militärstrategisk doktrin* (Stockholm: Försvarsmakten, 2002), pp. 27–28.

926 *Doktrin för Gemensamma operationer* (Stockholm: Försvarsmakten, 2005), pp. 35–36.

927 Jerker Widén & Jan Ångström, *Militärteorins grunder* (Stockholm: Försvarshögskolan, 2005), pp. 194–208.

928 *Reglemente för Markoperationer, remiss 3* (Stockholm: Försvarsmakten, 2009), see pp. 171–193 and 101–106 for a COIN approach for Swedish units.

principles of operations, today all forces must understand and operate against irregular opponents. Still, in terms of the basic character of irregular opponents that operate seamlessly with violence ranging from subversion to tactical combat (depending on actual capability), no discussions of note have been carried out in Sweden regarding the role of the military and the police. In a way, such discussions were more common during the Cold War and, obviously, during the years of the submarine intrusions in the late 20th century.

In general, the current debate in Sweden regarding military activities can not be said to involve any substantial discussions and thinking concerning irregular warfare. Some examples of thinking can be found in the Royal Academy of War Science Proceedings.⁹²⁹

In addition, the subject has been viewed with more interest in the theses written at the Defence Academy since 2008. Regarding research, however, one can notice quite a change. Since 2009, several academic approaches (both from individuals and orders from the Defence Forces) have seen the light, a departure from academic interests in earlier years. In their military writings, officers have shown a rather limited interest in thinking about irregular warfare. This can be noticed especially with regard to their interest in tactics and operational art in irregular warfare, even in the Multinational Experimentation series, which during 2008-09 focused on irregular warfare. The greater focus on military strategy (and often on politics and strategy), at the expense of the core of the military profession, tactics and operational art, can be said to have been a hallmark of Swedish military thinking since the end of the Cold War. What happens if and when there is less emphasis on and demand for thinking on the very core concept of the military function? And what might then be the thinking fundamentals to be applied to a new dimension of warfare and tactics for the Swedish officers as a collective?

That question has led me to carry out a dissertation study focusing on tactical thinking in irregular warfare. An introductory part of the study is a survey regarding the question '*What characterises contemporary thinking at the Swedish National Defence College on tactics enabling conventional armed forces to be prepared to engage in irregular warfare?*' This survey has been completed. The results will be presented and discussed in the sections below in order to give an example of current thinking on the subject of irregular warfare.

929 Michael Gustafson, "Irregular Warfare" and "Counter Insurgency". En utblick mot nya fokus i begrepp och innebörder', *Kungliga Krigsvetenskapsakademiens Handlingar och Tidskrift*, nr 5, 2008. Michael Gustafson, 'Modern Irregular Warfare and Counterinsurgency– today's military challenge within Campaigns and Operations, by, through and with people', *Kungliga Krigsvetenskapsakademiens Handlingar och Tidskrift*, nr 1, 2009. Michael Gustafson, 'Perspectives on War Studies and Irregular Warfare', *Kungliga Krigsvetenskapsakademiens Handlingar och Tidskrift*, nr 2, 2009.

A.2. The operationalisation approach

This survey examined the topic by means of a qualitative and quantitative analysis of a collection of questions on the subject. The aim was to investigate how a sample of officers, at a given time (autumn 2010), expressed their views on aspects of Irregular Warfare, analysed with an adapted field theory. The results are assessed to present an overview of trends in thinking and will be further used in the work with subsequent surveys and interviews. The results are clearly indicative in nature. The work is also a methodological pilot trial with an adapted field theory drawing on empirical data on the Swedish military. The question has been preliminarily operationalised into three specific sub-questions in order to seek the existence of dominant groupings of thinking (here understood as a majority of answers of the same kind/value).

The sub-questions are as follows.

- Are there groupings in expressed thinking regarding certain areas of violence that have to be handled in tactics in IW? If so, which areas of violence do they concern?
- Are there groupings in expressed thinking that can be linked to a military culture that regards traditional, regular warfare tactics to be sufficient in IW, or is it considered that new thinking is needed?
- What other groupings regarding similar or different thinking on tactics in IW can be derived from the results?

A.3. Theory and methodology

The research question can be approached from different kinds of ontological and epistemological philosophical bases. When addressing areas such as tactics and types of warfare, we also enter the world of discourse⁹³⁰ linked to explanations and understandings of theory and practice that in turn are linked to (military) social culture, traditions and education. The use of a scientific approach in war studies on phenomena linked to war and warfare is not self-evident even though the subject is often referred to as a social science with more hermeneutic links than strictly positivistic bases. It can be argued that critical realism⁹³¹ exists within the officer corps in general, with a striving for control and knowledge of measurable phenomena existing independently of human beings, but also concerns regarding phenomena that are of a non-material

930 Foucault Michel, *Vansinnets historia under den klassiska epoken*, translation to Swedish by Carl G Ljungman (Lund: Arkiv förlag, 1983, originally published in French 1961), p. 12. 'Discourse, the scientific order of conversation characterizing the scientific writings, education and exchange of thoughts within a certain area of research during a time period.'

931 Vivien Burr, *Social Constructionism*, (London: Routledge, second edition 2003), p. 198.

character and difficult to measure (particularly in combat and in warfare), such as frictions and intuition. Clausewitz's description of frictions in war is one famous theoretical influence on this.⁹³²

The strong technological focus that characterised warfare during the 19th and 20th centuries has, however, obvious traits of positivism and realistic/rational philosophy with strong links to natural science. Parts of war studies, such as tactics and operational art, might on the other hand be argued to be seen as constructions of mental images and explanations for aspects that are immaterial and thereby interpretable to a great extent as a way of seeing reality and truth as different forms of constructions.⁹³³ Accordingly, the strong influence of military history studied with hermeneutic approaches might be raised as a more suitable way of describing traditional scientific influence in war studies.

I want to describe characteristics or traits concerning thinking about tactics in irregular warfare, seeing the latter as the context or constructional way of characterising the context where the tactics are to be executed in practice. I approach this context from a deductive angle with a discourse analysis of how the term 'irregular warfare' has been explained and articulated by a collection of arguably influential writings on military theory and practice. This analysis results in a view of general traits commonly addressed as characteristics of irregular warfare, forming an empirical generalisation that I use to guide this survey.

The aim is to create empirical data that I will organise in different aspects to uncover a picture (or a new construction) of how thinking about tactics might be understood and explained in the context of Swedish officer culture, traditions, practice and military theory.

The term *irregular warfare* (IW) is commonly used today when addressing contemporary conflicts, which inevitably include the war in Afghanistan and operations in Iraq since the beginning of this century. The term is commonly understood to be vague and elusive, unlike the term *regular warfare*, which has a generally accepted meaning. Contemporary discourse on irregular warfare and COIN is theoretically problematic due to the inconsistent use of terminology, the limited educational priority given to the subject and the limited organisational knowledge (and thus understanding) of the phenomena.

In the Swedish Armed Forces, the subject of IW has not, until now, been prioritised in military theory education or military training, nor has it yet been defined in field manuals or doctrines⁹³⁴. This poses challenges in discussions and communica-

932 von Clausewitz (1832/1993), pp. 138-140, Chapter 'Friction in War'.

933 Alan Bryman, *Samhällsvetenskapliga metoder* (Malmö: Liber, 2002), p. 33.

934 Minor sections in the pre-edition 2009 *Field Manual for Ground Operations* (*Reglemente för Markoperationer, remiss 3* (Stockholm: Försvarsmakten, 2009)) and new *Swedish Military Strategy Doctrine* (*Militärstrategisk doktrin 2011 med doktrinära grunder* (MSD 12)) (Stockholm: Försvarsmakten, 2011)) will address, for the first time, aspects of both irregular warfare and COIN.

tion on military matters, from both current and historical perspectives, regardless of whether the subject is strategy, operations, tactics or warfighting capability production. Despite the newly (re)born interest in thinking about the subject of irregular warfare (since around 2005/6), a more commonly accepted view of what 'it is' has not emerged, and there is little agreement on how to handle the challenge and explain this phenomenon.

One reason for said difficulties in explaining and understanding the phenomenon of irregular warfare might be limited study and education, both in the military and research ranks and also in political circles. But there might also be other reasons for the obvious difficulties in both thinking of and acting on violence that is not organised in the way that our society has traditionally and culturally chosen. And that brings up the question of what scientific philosophical grounds most military thinking has been based on. From a conceptual view, the 'regular' style of warfare might be argued to involve a vast amount of commonly understood principles where violence is contained and regulated in decided ways that have social and cultural acceptance over the world (army, navy, air force units and combat in different forms). For over a hundred years, it has been a common truth of what warfare is or should be understood to be by people in general. It represents the common ontology of armed violence.

This is so regardless of the fact that real wars and conflicts have commonly included aspects of '*irregular warfare*'. On the other hand, aspects of '*irregular warfare*' can also be found in regular warfare. That is, instead of 'regularly' containing – by law and social norms and traditions – the production and use armed violence within predefined specific structures and organisations (military forces), the people are encouraged/threatened/persuaded to take active part in the violence, including armed violence parallel with, or as a complement to, the regular forces.

As war and warfare is a rather unusual reality for officers, particularly for Swedish officers belonging to a nation with no experiences of war for over 200 years, the views, thinking and understanding of such phenomena are based on collective (both military and social) traditional assumptions and manifestations, which are more or less universal or part of 'the Western view of war and warfare'. That was the case until Afghanistan. A long tradition of views of (regular) war and warfare is now confronted by 'new' and/or different forms of violence and threats. New names and terms, doctrines, field manuals and real combat actions have rapidly become part of 'a new reality', but to a different extent among officers in different parts of the Armed Forces, and with different consequences. While younger officers fight in Afghanistan, many senior officers deal with this reality from a distance and will never personally experience the challenges on the ground. Different views on the meaning of *irregular warfare* and

particularly COIN have emerged and will probably develop later on.⁹³⁵ Several aspects of thinking on tactics might emerge both directly and indirectly. Strategy and military expert thinkers are also commonly occupied by questions concerning how to define phenomena and activities. Although this is not always clearly expressed, a general positivistic approach with interpretative views on 'best practices' might be seen as the more general basis for traditional military thinking, often with an emphasis on historical experiences.

Whether they are experienced in those areas or not, officers enter the debate with discourses from different perspectives, and have their own opinions. They think about the areas related to what they talk about, drawing on their real-life experiences, exercises, literature and doctrines, and the media. They form views that are more or less precise and clear, more or less explainable, and comparable with doctrinal writings. As neither 'tactics' nor 'irregular warfare' are physical phenomena, but are instead labels on activities that are problematic to measure, it seems useful to take a constructionist approach. This approach could also be applied to my own experiences of how a great number of military phenomena that I have not encountered in real life (for example 'war') have nevertheless contributed significantly to my understanding of the knowledge and truth of such phenomena.

I choose to employ *social constructionism*, contrasting it with mainstream psychology, in order to be able to reveal traits in how officers 'think' about tactics. 'Thinking' as a label can be analysed and linked to Michel Foucault,⁹³⁶ focusing on the practical consequences of discourse analysis, and to Pierre Bourdieu and his field theories (different forms of 'capital', habitus, different fields of production and consumption where the capital is distributed).⁹³⁷

A particular standpoint in the theories of Pierre Bourdieu⁹³⁸ is a striving for a relational view, putting relations before an individual or the constructional focus, each on their own merits.⁹³⁹ Objective relations can not be seen, but have to be conquered and validated by research work. This action philosophy, sometimes called dispositional philosophy, departs from the possibilities provided by the agents as a group and the

935 Robert Egnell, 'Winning Hearts and Minds? A Critical Analysis of Counter-insurgency Operations in Afghanistan', *Civil Wars*, Vol. 12, Issue 3, 27 Sep 2010, p. 282–303. Critics are directed to the military use of the 'Heart and Minds' (HAM) concept, which according to Egnell produces very minor results. However, Egnell views HAM mostly from the military view, which might be discussed as COIN per definition, i.e. mostly as a civilian and strategic affair with political decisions on if HAM can be applied in the campaign and if so by whom and how. The opposite, 'enemy-centric approach' is after all not a political option, nor accountable for better effects than HAM approaches. Is it possible that the problem lies with the comprehensive approach vision and with under-dimensioned civilian resources more than in the idea of HAM per se?

936 Foucault, Michel, *Övervakning och Straff*, translated by C G Bjurström, Second edition (Lund: Arkiv förlag, 1993, first published in French 1974), pp. I – xix.

937 Donald Broady, *Kapitalbegreppet som utbildningssociologiskt verktyg*, Skeptronhäftan/Skeptron Occasional Papers nr 15, <http://www.skeptron.uu.se/broady/sec/ske-15.pdf>.

938 Donald Broady (editor), *Kultur och utbildning: Om Pierre Bourdieus Sociologi*, Uppföljning och policystudier, skriftserie 1985:4 (Stockholm: Universitets- och Högskoleämbetet, FoU-enheten, 1985). Broady (1998).

939 Bourdieu Pierre, *Praktiskt förnuft*, translated by Gustaf Gimdal and Stefan Jordebradt (Uddevalla: Daidalos, 1995, originally published in French 1980), pp. 7–9.

structure of the situations in which the agents act (the relations between them). This scientific action philosophy concerns these interactive relations between the objective structures (the social field structures) and the embodied structures (habitués structures).

Linked to how officers think about tactics or express their views when asked to do so, I argue that it is possible to adapt Bourdieu's field theory⁹⁴⁰ and particularly its cultural capital aspect to military cultural/traditional value capital (regular warfare/national defence culture versus irregular warfare/multinational crisis response operations such as COIN operations in terms of preference/priority culture) and the economical aspect to military hierarchy (influence power) capital (younger lower level officer – older senior level officer). Developing field theory in this manner might be valuable in order to show how different kinds of thinking might be grouped according to certain chosen criteria and linked to units or other groupings, such as age, experience of international missions, preferences for either offensive/defensive/stabilisation tasks, priorities for regular or irregular warfare, views on subversion/terrorism/guerrilla warfare/tactical combat, focus on operating in larger or smaller formations, capabilities for overt versus limited visible actions, and views on needs for warfighting capabilities, whether enemy- or people-centric.

Within the military system, seen as the organisation chosen by society to engage in armed activities in order to support the political strategy, the area of tactics is of key importance. Tactics is the use of means with certain methods in order to solve tasks. In general, tactics is often understood as 'how to think and act' in order to win a battle or other military activities.

Military tactics can be seen as the military core expression of the officer's trade-craft where theory is transformed into practice in combat. Traditionally, the education and training of tactics for SwAF have been almost exclusively devoted to the demands of regular warfare, and as yet an organisational culture, values and prioritisation for tactics in irregular warfare do not exist. To date, contemporary adaptation has been carried out mostly according to American tactical thinking and doctrinal expressions/thinking.

Still, parts of the SwAF's heritage from the 20th century and the Cold War, the '*jäger-taktik*', might be said to have several basics in common with 'irregular warfare'. However, seen in terms of the competence of general-purpose units (infantry/Mecc units), tactics other than those intended for regular warfare have not been a conceptual part of the SwAF warfighting capabilities. Several questions need to be addressed in this context. What in fact is the nature of tactics in irregular warfare? Is traditional tactical thinking not suitable for every form of warfare? It would be more complicated to produce, train and develop different or more tactical aspects to be taken care

⁹⁴⁰ Bourdieu (1980/1995), p. 17 referring to Pierre Bourdieu, *La distinction. Critique sociale du jugement*, (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit 1979), pp. 140–141.

of by the very same units. Different opinions on what tactics might be ‘the best’ for units have over time led to frictions and struggle for resources for ‘one’s own choice of tactics’. Also, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, tactics in general has been seen as less interesting and important in Sweden than ‘joint operations’.

Due to the fundamental differences in views on tactics, even before the ‘irregular warfare’ era arrived with ISAF operations in Afghanistan, coupled with a radical decline in numbers of units, field exercises in general in Sweden and budget cuts, I argue that more and possibly complex new fields of interest might be at hand and assuming greater importance. If so, the development of tactics, the core military tradecraft, might be hampered and delayed, and counterproductive solutions might be decided on.

In order to answer the research question, which I have divided into three sub-questions, I will analyse the collected survey data by using field diagrams adapted for the area of military thinking on tactics. The aim is to construct usable field diagrams for different investigations on military thinking. The task for the chosen theory and field theory method is to provide a foundation that is suitable for use in social science when the problem is to show the character of thinking on a subject (tactics) whose definition is not self-evident and which also exists (mentally and practically) in a explainable context that is not self-evident (irregular warfare). The aim is to arrive at an understandable new construction that combines qualitative aspects based on quantitative statistics identifying certain groupings, which can be characterised and further analysed in terms of their internal and external relations and hypothesis generation of why they exist, what they might mean and, finally, what practical consequences the results might have for the contemporary military capital of tactical thinking. Are there potential frictions between the groupings of tactical thinking and how the power structures and relations might affect the development of ‘thinking about tactics’? In the end, what practical, personnel and material consequences for tactics in irregular warfare might be at hand due to the ‘thinking capital’? Does it seem possible that the ‘thinking capital’ would enable the development of tactics for both regular warfare and irregular warfare at the same time?

In order to build a field diagram structure according to Bourdieu, some fundamental definitions are necessary. They are as follows:

Capital: symbolic and material assets in general. The capital theory/aspect is a tool that permits very different phenomena to be considered together, as they are otherwise often separated in the social sciences or humanistic disciplines.⁹⁴¹ Pierre Bourdieu was particularly interested in the relations between the art of capital and between groupings of people with different sorts of capital. Bourdieu’s sociological project is characterised by the assumption that

941 Broady (1998), p. 15.

educational sociology is not separable from sociology of the culture.⁹⁴² For me, the sociology of tactics is not separable from military sociology in general.

Cultural capital: cultivated language, noblesse, 'better manners'. Can be seen as a sub-part of the more general notion of 'symbolic capital', and to be on another abstraction level.⁹⁴³ Here, it is used in the meaning of 'Military Cultural Capital' (MTCC) that can be obtained both by heritage and by acquisition. Officer culture, soldier culture and warfighting culture are examples of different aspects of military culture that have their own distinctive attributes that differ between services and arms and depend on the traditional values of units and different groupings.

Social capital: relatives, friends, associations, memberships, relations, etc. Here, it is used in the meaning of 'Military Social Capital' (MSC). For example, commanding larger Mecc/Armour units has been considered to be more important than commanding Ranger units. Social capital is an aspect that deals with both assets in reality and the view of these assets with respect to each other (a relational activity).⁹⁴⁴

Economical capital: material assets and knowledge of the rules of economy. Here, it is used in the meaning of 'Military Economy/Influence Capital' (MEC). For example, a senior officer working at a higher level at the HQ has better possibilities to influence economical priorities than a junior officer at a lower level in a field unit.

Habitus: system of dispositions that affect how people act, think and orient in the social world, often of unconscious character. One's habitus is created through childhood experiences, schooling, training and education and the life that one lives. Habitus can be seen as strategies that make people think, act and orientate in the (military) world.⁹⁴⁵ For Bourdieu, practice and ways of thinking were more important than assets.⁹⁴⁶

Field: a system of relations between positions.

942 Broady (1998), p. 16.

943 Broady (1998), p. 6.

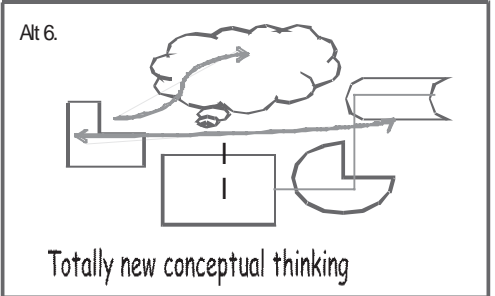
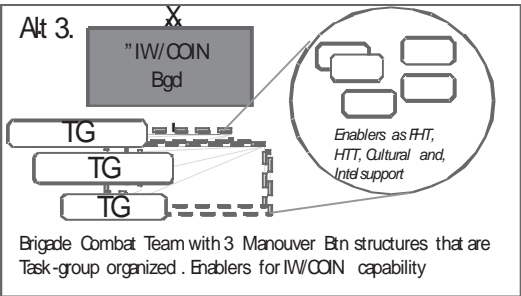
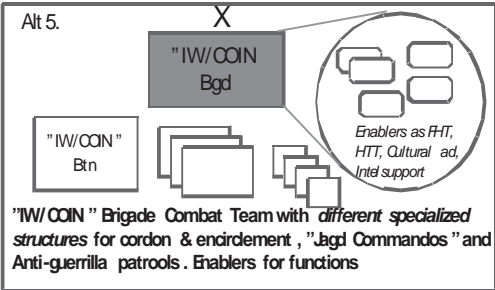
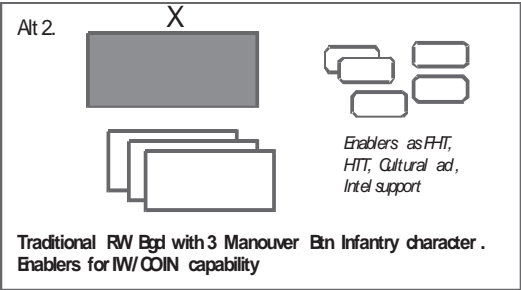
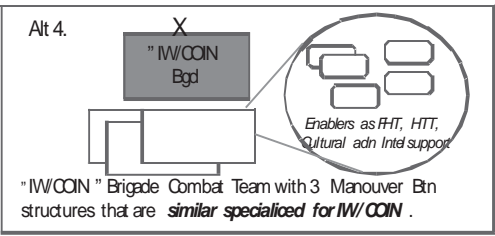
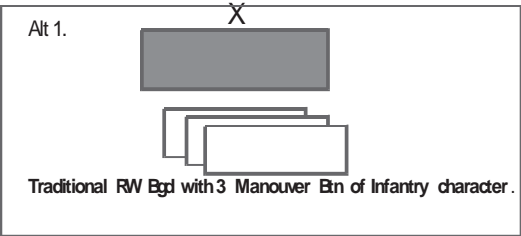
944 Broady (1998), p. 15.

945 Broady (1998), p. 16.

946 Broady (1998), p. 15.

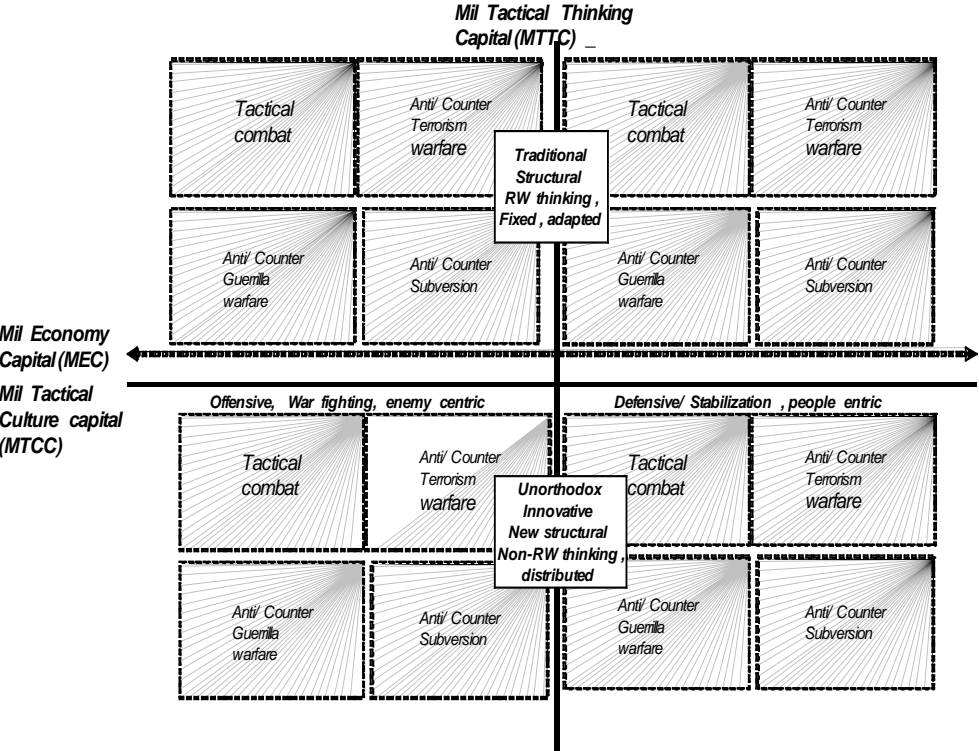
Social field: an unstable area in a society where people and institutions argue on something that they have in common. Such fields can be of either a 'production field' or 'consument field' character. The field theory can be seen as a tool for the study of the distribution of capital. Here, it is used with the meaning of the 'military social field' that relates to the fields of tactics. In order to start the construction of an adapted field diagram, I have chosen to work with the aspects of economy/influence and cultural capital on the x-axis. On the y-axis I use what I call 'Military Tactical Thinking capital' (MTTC) that represents different ways of thinking about tactical concepts that are important in fighting irregular actors/warfare.

I divide MTCC into six different categories from traditional thinking, from 'Infantry does the trick' to 'Totally unknown' and new conceptual thinking, as shown in the pictures below. Alternatives 1-3 are regarded as 'traditional' thinking and alternatives 4-6 as 'unorthodox' thinking. Each category will be found in a field diagram position over or under the x-axis.



Each quadrant in a diagram consists of four categories linked to the results from the literature study. Here I consider whether the thinking is mainly projected to one or several of the areas of ‘Tactical Combat’, ‘Anti/Counter Guerrilla Warfare’, ‘Anti/Counter Terrorism’, or ‘Anti/Counter Subversion’ as tasks that one’s own unit should be prepared to perform in irregular warfare scenarios. The results are then drawn up in the first adapted Field Diagram, as shown in the picture below:

Tactical Capital: Conceptual & Cultural oriented Field diagram structure - Draft



Mil Economy Capital (MEC)
structure /groupings will be analyzed
after the personnel groupings has
been positioned in the different fields

- 1) MTTC Traditional example is Brigade Combat team with Enablers
MTTC Unorthodox example is Patrol-structure Commandos Nomadization

The technique for analysing the results of the survey (all or selected questions) is to position the answers in the diagram and to see if certain groupings emerge (see example below). Such groupings can then be analysed in terms of matters such as habitus and relations, yielding a view of the possible consequences of the thinking character in and between the investigated samples of officers. In order to answer the actual research question, the described method and the analysis of this survey will focus primarily on what groupings might be found in certain areas of the field diagram.

A.4. The survey and the respondents

The survey consisted of ten background questions (data for the respondent), seven (open) questions on the phenomena of irregular warfare and tactics in general, ten questions on IW from a description view (regarding the empirical generalisation of how to define IW from the literature study), seventeen questions on tactics in IW (in COIN operations, referring to US FM 3.24.2 *Tactics in COIN*) and one question regarding comments and opinions on the survey.

The survey primarily focused on officers at the Swedish National Defence College, primarily within two sections in the War Studies department, the Command Group of the War Studies department, the two Higher Staff courses (for majors) and the Staff Course (for Captains), in total about 200 persons.

32 persons answered the survey, which in general terms counts as a large sample. The respondents consisted of an approximately equal amount of students and teachers, mostly majors or lieutenant colonels. 21 belong to the Army, 6 to the Air Force, 1 to the Navy, 3 to Amphibious forces and 1 to Special Forces. 14 officers are between 30-40 years, 12 between 41-50 years and 6 over fifty.

Most of them have backgrounds in operations and have mainly been serving in field units or staffs. Over 60% have been assigned on at least one international operation and 20% of them have participated in more than three operations. That said, a rather large number (almost 40%) have no international experience at all. This is valuable for the result as in general there is still a large volume of (often older) officers who only have national experience. Regarding self-assessment of personal knowledge and understanding of irregular warfare, the majority of the respondents stated that they have *a limited knowledge and understanding level* (56%). Furthermore, 31% have only limited theoretical knowledge and understanding. Only about 10% assess themselves as having deep knowledge and extensive experience.

Results of the survey

The following section summarises the results from a selection of questions in the survey that are relevant for the research question. Three sub-questions were to be answered.

The sub-questions were the following;

1. Are there groupings in expressed thinking regarding certain areas of violence that have to be handled in tactics in IW? If so, which areas of violence do they concern?

2. Are there groupings in expressed thinking that can be linked to a military culture that regards traditional, regular warfare tactics to be sufficient in IW, or is it considered that new thinking is needed ?
3. What other groupings regarding similar or different thinking on tactics in IW can be derived from the results?

Regarding the first question, the survey questions 28 and 29 clearly point out that the respondents in the sample regard **terror** and **subversion** as key capabilities within irregular warfare. Also, in their view, irregular warfare involves violence at the lower end (such as subversion, terrorism and guerrilla warfare) that has implications for tactics.

This result can be mapped directly in the field diagram. Regarding the second question, the result does not indicate any particular traditional preference in terms of regular warfare primacy. On the contrary, the answers to question 44 indicate the view that there are challenges for tactics in irregular warfare and question number 34 resulted in a majority view that there is a need for the tactical development of irregular warfare that differs from regular warfare. A view of needs for tactical development other than what is usually found within regular warfare tactics is to be positioned in the field diagram under the x-axis.

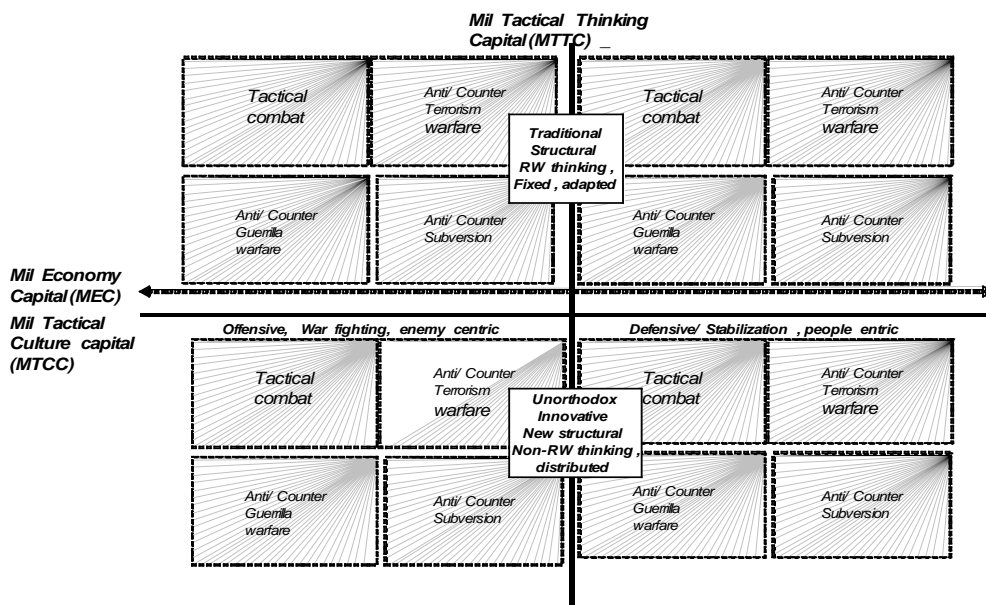
Regarding the third question concerning the other groupings that can be derived from the result, the following answers can easily be identified in groupings that think alike:

- A need for development of the roles between the military and police (question 31)
- A need to handle the complicating factor of training host nation security forces (question 33)
- A need to handle other moral/ethical aspects compared to those encountered within regular warfare, due to the opponents' modus operandi (operating within the people) (question 32)
- The usefulness and understandability of the empirical generalisation from the literature study in terms of explaining the term irregular warfare, also for outlining the differences to regular warfare (questions 18, 19 and 20). This also indicates a way of thinking that can not be connected to the 'traditional thinking' that competences in regular warfare are all that is required, whatever the conflict.

Linking these results together, a grouping of thinking on tactics in irregular warfare can be positioned in the field diagram. Due to the clear identification of the conceptual importance of lower violence for the aggressor (and for the defender), the grouping will be positioned around the ‘*Anti/Counter Terrorism and Subversion*’ squares. As for ‘influence capital’, due to the character of the sample, major or lieutenant grade officers might not be said to belong to the most influential groups in the Defence Forces – but they nevertheless have considerably more influence than junior officers. The grouping is positioned in the middle area of the y-axis. As for the relation to ‘cultural capital’, no obvious ‘offensive’ thinking has been identified, due to which it is positioned to the right of the y-axis.

Finally, regarding ‘Tactical Thinking Capital’ and its conceptual aspect, new ways of thinking are expressed as important, and therefore it is positioned slightly under the x-axis, as can be seen in the diagram below.

Tactical Capital: Conceptual & Cultural oriented Field diagram structure - Draft



Mil Economy Capital (MEC)
structure /groupings will be analyzed
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- 1) MTTC Traditional example is Brigade Combat team with COIN enablers
MTTC Unorthodox example is Patrol structure Commandos Nomadization

Figure: Field Diagram with a sample of SNDC officers' thinking character positioned in the south-east quadrant.

A generalised answer to the research question ‘What characterises contemporary military thinking on tactics in irregular warfare at SNDC?’ follows:

A common view of expressing thinking on tactics in irregular warfare among teachers in war studies and officer students of the higher staff courses at SNDC highlights the needs for tactical development and new thinking, particularly regarding the areas of subversion and terrorism, which are seen as key competences for fighting an irregular opponent. As such enemies also operate among the people, such warfare raises moral and ethical challenges that are not usually connected to regular warfare. Closely related to this aspect, the need for the development of the roles between the military and police is thought to be important. No particular thinking that traditional competences for regular warfare is enough is identified; on the contrary, the officers view that there are differences between regular and irregular warfare, and do not address the latter with signs, words or expressions that would indicate that it would be of lower status or ‘lesser importance’.

A.5. Validity and reliability

Regarding validity (if what is asked is what is measured, Bryman (2002) pp. 88-90) the questions in the survey have been tested and discussed with a number of officers and researchers at the War Studies Department. These sorts of questions have also been tried on officers during the 2010 Combined Joint Staff Exercise. Still, this area of warfare and tactics is new to many officers and they mostly have limited experience of it in real life, and thus their thinking on the subject is highly influenced by international literature, most of it written in English-speaking countries. This means that there might be a risk that their answers to how they think on certain aspects are more of a reflection of what they remember from reading than a reflection of their own thinking per se. I have a feeling that in reality many officers do not have the time (or interest) to think about tactics, whether related to regular or irregular warfare. Still, the questions and the results can be said to be well-included in the contemporary (and also classic) discourse on irregular warfare or small wars (which is mostly, however, related to COIN). We can only speculate whether the results can be generalised to a larger Swedish officer collective. My experience so far indicates, however, that the interest in the subject of tactics is relatively marginal, as is interest in reading about war and warfare, which might lead officers to adopt a slightly more traditional view (thinking more about tactical combat than lower violence such as subversion and terrorism). On the other hand, officers in field units have greater real-life experience

of these areas than officers working as teachers and staff officer students. My overall opinion regarding the validity of the survey results is that they can be assessed to be acceptable but the questions have to be further developed and their number reduced. Also, in order to get a deeper grip on 'ways of thinking' in a newer area, interviews have to be performed. The results from this survey have to be seen as an indication of certain trends in how contemporary (middle-aged) Swedish officers choose to express their views on a relatively new matter.

Both a reluctance to give 'wrong answers' (revealing less knowledge) and the tendency to provide answers taken from what one has read rather than really thought about are concerns to be observed further. The degree of reliability depends on the measurement, the measure units and scale (Bryman 2002, pp. 43-45, 86-88) in terms of *stability*. That is, if the measurement is stable over time, one can be confident that the result does not fluctuate according to the sample of respondents. This depends on how officers view the subject of irregular warfare and tactics, and here we know (and the survey validates this) that the array of thinking is rather broad and often somewhat shallow, leading to possible limitations in stability. Thinking on a subject that (for the time being) is under significant development, as it did not exist before 2008, inevitably means that the measurements of the results will probably be unstable, even in a traditionally mentally static collective such as an officer collective.

The validity of the survey, which can be seen as an investigation of trends, is only relevant for the actual time of the investigation of a sample of officers working as teachers or studying. Although the precision of the investigation can clearly be developed, the result is still generally relevant according to my own understanding of how officers think and talk about irregular warfare. However, one aspect bothers me.

In real life, I have seldom heard discussions on lower violence areas at SNDC. There might have been a sort of projection where the officers (as they assessed themselves to be in general quite inexperienced in the area of irregular warfare) answered the questions more according to what they had read, than how they themselves actually think about tactics. The result of a larger investigation might reveal different results.

Regarding reliability, I argued for the rather extensive traceability of the documentation within this report, both concerning the supporting literature study as concerning the theoretical and methodology choices and the actual survey with its results. However, the terms, indicators and scale used in the investigation require further analysis and the questioning of their relevance and sufficiency in order to develop better precision.

A.6. Discussion

The results were perhaps not particularly surprising, given the contemporary situation in irregular warfare in Afghanistan, the rather limited knowledge of the subject and how the questions were formulated. The challenges go beyond definitions and terms – the bottom line is that difficulties arise when the enemy is hard to find, hiding and operating amongst the people. The border area between military and police tasks in dealing with subversion, terrorism and guerrilla warfare becomes a problem that not only concerns each area in itself, but also means that all these tasks must be handled in a seamless continuum – with effective tactics. The question is what tactics should be used by the military alone and by the police alone, and which should be employed by both of them. Looking at the results in the light of the military culture in Sweden, which has traditionally been regular warfare-oriented, it was maybe slightly surprising to see how positively the respondents viewed the usefulness of empirical generalisations from the literature study from the perspective of their ways of thinking on the subject of irregular warfare. Contrary to the common view that definitions and explanations of so-called irregular warfare are very diffuse and elusive, it seems that this sample of officers viewed the subject in a rather similar light.

However, it is an open question whether this is the outcome of the wording of the descriptions or if in fact the respondents had not given much thought to the matter, and as a result tended to accept the proposed definitions. Regarding the theoretical baseline, social constructionism, and the adoption of Pierre Bourdieu's field theory and diagram method, some results stand out. First, the views that examine the characteristics of thinking on subjects such as irregular warfare and tactics as constructions and thus the search for possible effects between different groupings that share the same 'thinking' can be argued to be relevant when speaking about subjects or phenomena that are hard or impossible to measure per se. The adapted field diagram has been used for mapping the results of the survey. The results do in fact clearly demonstrate that a unified grouping of officers think that focusing on irregular violence (subversion and terrorism) is a key challenge for tactics. However, as the results only represent a very limited sample, they can only be considered to indicate a possible trend.

A larger sample is needed and the questions have to be more precisely formulated in order to observe differences in thinking (which is needed if any of the groupings are to be defined and positioned in the field diagram). The goal of this method is not only to identify if and what sorts of groupings (of thinking) exist, but also further to be able to identify relations between such groupings. Relations might affect tactical thinking – i.e. whether the situation is seen through traditional/orthodox eyes or more critical, unorthodox and tactically creative mindsets. One way to both simplify and enhance the precision of questions on tactical thinking might be to base them

on the strict generalisation that irregular warfare can be seen as a construction that contains the four sub-constructions of ‘*Violence Concept*’ (VC) using the terms of ‘anti/counter subversion’, ‘anti/counter terrorism’, ‘anti/counter guerrilla warfare’ and ‘tactical combat’, already defined in the field diagram. The six generic tactical concepts outlined earlier called ‘*Military Tactical Thinking Capital*’ (MTTC), can then be used to formulate the questions more precisely.

The two aspects VC and MTTC can be combined into more pregnant questions that lead to results that are more distinctly linked to tactical thinking and tactical preferences. In all, this study has been a first attempt to link together a research question (similar to the dissertation research question), the chosen theory baseline of *social constructionism* and the chosen and adapted field theory method to empirical data. It seems possible that the dissertation research question can be solved with methodological work and a suitable analysis of the results based on my idea. Using the developed questions, data collection from units and schools in the Swedish Army will reveal if and how tactical thinking exists in *certain groupings*, and if such groupings *contain relations* that *influence collective tactical thinking* in the Swedish Army. A further question arises. If irregular warfare is seen, as generalised herein, to mainly involve four concepts of violence, often performed within the people, does the Swedish Army have and promote tactical thinking correspondingly in such an operational environment in a way that results in warfighting capabilities (physical, conceptual and moral factors) from the units decided to be produced for IO 14 (Swedish Armed Force Organisation 2014)? And if so, is war studies education adapted to such needs for the battalion and company commanders of these units?

A.7. Reflections on further Swedish thinking on irregular warfare

Thinking on irregular warfare is in its infancy in Sweden. Before 2008, hardly anybody (with some exceptions) talked about or discussed irregular warfare or counterinsurgency, and there are no traditions for education or research in this area. As in many Western countries, interest in this subject has developed significantly since 2009/10 and articulations and definitions of the area in the coming military strategy doctrine have to be seen as a paradigm development.

Furthermore, the fact that the Defence Forces have ordered research on the subject and reports are now being completed with critical views on aspects such as theoretical assumptions, problems with civil-military cooperation and tactical challenges in adapting to problematic strategy⁹⁴⁷ shows a (for the time being at least) developing

⁹⁴⁷ Robert Egnell, SNDS report on Expeditionary Capabilities, 2011-01-17.

interest in deepening the thinking on the subject all the way 'from strategy to tactics'. That said, decision makers have very little time to think and reflect on these relatively new areas and problems, and this will probably hamper the rapid broadening of knowledge and understanding of the subject. Furthermore, in officer education we have a long way to go before the whole officer corps can be said to have developed the same level of understanding of irregular warfare as in the well-known field of regular warfare. Addressing contemporary and future warfare as 'hybrid warfare' will of course not alter that situation.

As an example of Swedish officers' thinking on contemporary counterinsurgency operations, one notices concerns on subjects such as legitimacy for multinational operations, possibilities for adaptation within the NATO framework, possible needs for a national COIN doctrine or more thorough guidelines in other doctrines and field manuals.⁹⁴⁸ Also, the needs for recognition at all levels, both political and military, were addressed. Without a political declaration on whether and how Sweden will adapt to Western COIN thinking, the Defence Forces can not develop in a proper way. A special concern is the question of whether the same units can be trained equally for regular and irregular warfare. Also the questions of how to handle subversion and terrorism in irregular warfare and which parties should be assigned these tasks can not be avoided. Finally the challenges faced in training officers and leaders (especially for higher command) in 'dual-warfare' are thought to be substantial. In this regard, many officers highlight that diffuse and floating definitions and imprecise nomenclature are clearly problematic. That said, the current situation is much better than before 2007, as at least three major operational and joint doctrines are at hand (for joint COIN): NATO AJP 3.4.4, the US JP 3-24 and the British JWP 3-40. These examples of current thinking on irregular warfare represent the result of two years of interest in the area, which was earlier not on the agenda in officer education. In the future, the further deepening of thoughts on irregular warfare will probably develop in Sweden in line with the Western world in general.

The challenges today are in many ways the same for all countries with very limited resources (both military and civilian) for lengthy expeditionary counterinsurgency operations abroad. There might be a gap between what the Western doctrines request and what is feasible politically and available in terms of civilian and military resources, without potential resource increases. For Sweden, a parallel challenge – which also presents new possibilities – lies in the further transformation of the Defence Forces as a whole from a conscript force to a professional army.

From the military perspective, two areas should be given particular consideration: what limitations in different kinds of warfare are due to the limited field units

⁹⁴⁸ From the synthesis discussion ending the course '*Contemporary operations – Joint Counterinsurgency*, HSU 8 :2' attended by the senior Staff Course 2009–11 January 2011.

available, and what limitations result from the current Western (and Swedish) paradigm on dividing responsibility for the state's handling of violence amongst the people? Finally, is it even possible to increase capabilities in irregular warfare to any greater extent given the unwillingness to cooperate between the civilian and military parts of the society in the Western world? One consequence of thinking on irregular warfare is that many complicated questions come to light and are much broader than when problematising the traditional regular warfare paradigm.

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Winds of Change

On Irregular Warfare

The various forms of irregular war today, such as insurgency, counterinsurgency and guerrilla war, are normally characterised by the distinctive features of a geographical area. The so-called wars of national liberation between 1945 and the late 1970s were disproportionately associated with terms like insurgency, guerrilla war and (internal) terrorism. Use of such methods signals revolutionary intentions, but the number of local and regional conflict is still relatively high today, almost 40 years after the end of the so-called 'Colonial period'.

In this book, we provide some explanations for the ongoing conflicts. The book also deals, to a lesser extent, with causes that are of importance in many ongoing conflicts – such as ethnicity, religious beliefs, ideology and fighting for control over areas and resources. The book also contains historical examples and presents some of the common thoughts and theories concerning different forms of irregular warfare, insurgencies and terrorism. Included are also a number of presentations of today's definitions of military terms for the different forms of conflict and the book offer some information on the international military-theoretical debate about military terms.



National Defence University

Department of Military History
P.O. BOX 7, 00861 Helsinki
Suomi – Finland

ISBN 978-951-25-2271-2
ISSN 1456-4874



The Finnish Defence Forces

› www.mil.fi