'Winning Hearts and Minds'

'The Unlearned Lesson of Counterinsurgency'

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Introduction

During the past year many observers have commented on the failure of the U.S. led coalition to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. Disturbing photos of prisoner abuse and footage of an American soldier shooting an Iraqi civilian who lay on the ground contributed to this perception. Reports of misdirected bombs and the shooting of the Italian escorting a freed hostage to safety have made matters worse.

Bad as such images are, however, the characterization of American counterinsurgency as deliberately and unnecessarily heavy handed is not entirely accurate. U.S. soldiers understand the importance of winning hearts and minds. Unfortunately, they have little training for or experience of how to do so. The real problem is an institutional failure to learn from past counterinsurgency campaigns, in particular the successful British campaign in Malaya and their own experience in Vietnam.

Definitions

Discussion of insurgency and counterinsurgency must begin with a definition of terms because of the tendency to lump very different conflicts under broad categories like 'low-intensity conflict,' 'operations other than war,' and 'stability and support operations.'[1] Insurgency is an organized effort to gain control of state from within, using a combination of propaganda/subversion, guerrilla warfare, and terror. Guerrilla warfare refers specifically to operations by insurgents against conventional military formations.

'Terror' is violence aimed at the general population and intended to spread fear. Such fear demonstrates the government's failure to protect its people and may compel cooperation with the insurgents and discourage cooperation with the authorities.

Insurgents may be ideologically motivated, but their goals are decidedly political. Malayan and Vietnamese insurgents shared a communist ideology, but they sought to gain political control of their respective countries. Some Iraqi insurgents embrace Islamic extremism while others have a less militant worldview; all seek to overthrow a U.S. appointed governing council widely considered illegitimate and end the foreign occupation.

Insurgency versus terrorism

A clear distinction must be made between insurgency and terrorism. Insurgents will use terror, both to intimidate opponents and to keep their own supporters in line, but they do so in a highly selective and very limited manner. Shortly before the Irgun bombed the King David Hotel in Jerusalem (1946), they warned the British to evacuate the building. Insurgents need to win support of the general population and so wish to avoid unnecessary violence that might alienate ordinary people.

Contemporary terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda and its affiliates divide the world into the righteous, who support them, and the unrighteous, who deserved to be killed. They seek to

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1 I made this same case for precise definition fifteen years ago. Thomas R. Mockaitis, *British Counterinsurgency: 1919-1960* (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 1.

A Marine shouts instructions to soldiers of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps during a firefight while on a joint patrol in Nasir Waal Salaam, Iraq 2004 (Photo U.S. Marine Corps, K.R. Reed; collection IMG/KL)

make a dramatic impression with as much death and destruction as possible. These terrorists may have short term political goals, such as overthrowing the Saudi government, but subordinate these immediate objectives to the larger struggle between good and evil.

They exercise little restraint and no discriminations. While insurgents will target soldiers, police officers, and government officials, contemporary terrorists will kill ordinary men, women, and children. Some organizations occupy a grey area between insurgency and terrorism. The Basque insurgent group ETA began as a liberation movement with specific and for the most part reasonable goals but has degenerated into a mere terrorist organization for whom violence has become an end in itself.

If insurgency seeks to overthrow an existing government, then counterinsurgency by definition consists of steps taken by that government to thwart the insurgents. Despite what its name suggests counterinsurgency strategy need not be purely reactive. It must, however, be comprehensive. A threatened state must defend its people and institutions, address the root causes of unrest that lead ordinary people to support the insurgents, and conduct offensive military operations against the insurgent forces and organization.

Counterinsurgency strategy is easy to describe but very difficult to devise and even harder to implement. Governments like individuals find self-examination and reform difficult to undergo. The temptation to dismiss insurgency as mere terrorism or criminality can prove irresistible. Few insurgencies begin and none advance without at least the tacit support of a significant segment of the population disillusioned with its own government. Counterinsurgency depends on regaining support from the disaffected, winning the hearts and minds of the people.

British Counterinsurgency

Britain has enjoyed a greater degree of success in counterinsurgency than most other nations.[2] This success derived from extensive experience dealing with unrest throughout an empire spanning a quarter of the globe.

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[2] The Dutch Colonial Army was generally effective in Indonesia during the nineteenth century. Although General Maxim Weygand successfully pacified Morocco during the interwar period, the French fared poorly in Indochina and Algeria.

An Iraqi child walks alongside a *National Guardsman* as he patrols through the neighborhoods of Iskandriyah, Iraq, 2005
(Photo U.S. Navy, B. Aho; collection IMG/KL)

upon to come to the aid of the civil power. In rendering such aid the soldier is not different than anyone else. He remains under the direction of the civil authority throughout an emergency and must be able to legally justify any use of force as the minimum necessary to quell unrest.

A series of military pamphlets repeatedly reminded the soldier that use his goal was not the eradication of an enemy but the restoration of order. Any use of force must be the minimum necessary to achieve an immediate result and could not be employed to create a wider impression.[4]

Winning hearts and minds

Limitations on the use of force encouraged a different approach to counterinsurgency. Denied the ability to rely on firepower and overwhelming force, for which they usually lacked the resources in any event, the British sought to address the causes of unrest that provoked political violence in the first place. This approach came to be called winning hearts and minds.

In the words of the late Sir Robert Thompson, who helped design the

From the Northwest Frontier of India to the streets of Aden, British soldiers cooperated with local police and colonial officials to quell disturbances ranging from riot to insurrection. Through a painful process of trial and error involving not a few defeats, they developed a strategy that has proved effective not only in traditional counterinsurgency but in peace-enforcement operations as well.[3]

The British based their counterinsurgency strategy on a few broad principles: minimum force; winning hearts and minds; civil-military cooperation; and tactical flexibility.

Minimum force

Minimum force is not merely a counterinsurgency principle but a fundamental tenet of English common law. Any British subject may be called

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3 For the efficacy of the British approach in humanitarian intervention see, Thomas R. Mockaitis, *Peace Operations and Intrastate Conflict: the Sword or the Olive Branch?* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999).

4 The pamphlets produced by His/Her Majesty's Stationary Office bore such titles as *Duties in Aide to the Civil Power* and *Notes on Imperial Policing.* The British incorporated the same guidance into their *Counter-Revolutionary Warfare* and *Wider Peace-keeping* manuals.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Kyle Luker talks with boys at a school during a dismounted patrol near Balad Air Base, Iraq, 2005
(Photo U.S. Air Force, M. Buytas; collection IMG/KL)

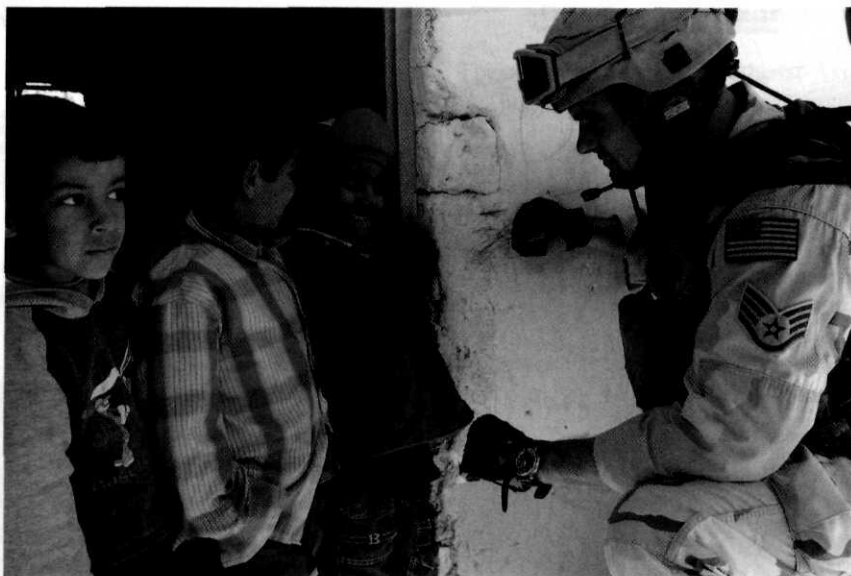successful strategy in Malaya, 'government has to be seen as working.'[5]

> Contrary to popular belief, much unrest stems not from political oppression but from what today would be called 'quality of life issues'.

If people experience poverty, declining standard of living, or even relative deprivation in a prosperous society, they will be more amenable to subversion.[6] The British in fact sought to outbid the insurgents for the hearts and minds of the people.

Intelligence
Applying limited force against the insurgents while addressing the causes of unrest produced an additional dividend: intelligence. Once a disgruntled population saw conditions improving they began to realize that they had more to gain by supporting the government than by supporting the insurgents, they were more willing to cooperate with the security forces.
Such cooperation came more easily when those forces avoided indiscriminate killing and preserved the rule of law. The two counterinsurgency principles worked together. The require-

ment to use minimum force necessitated hearts-and-minds approach, which in turn provided the intelligence that allowed force to be used in a limited and selective way.

Civil-military cooperation
A strategy, conventional or unconventional, is only as effective as the means available for implementing it. The third element of British counterinsurgency was a mechanism for coordinating the elements of the campaign and the actions of those involved in conducting it. Long before anyone thought of 'civil-military cooperation,' colonial officials known as District Officers were meeting with police commissioners and soldiers to respond to a crisis. History had helped make the British army ideally suited to counterinsurgency operations. Both its supporters and detractors maintained that it was 'a collection of regiments' rather than an army.[7]

Designed as an imperial police for an island nation whose navy had always been the first line of defense, this collection of regiments developed a highly decentralized system of command and control.
Counterinsurgency has been called a corporal's war in which platoons or even sections pursue and destroy correspondingly small units. Such war-

fare requires that junior officers and NCOs be allowed considerable latitude in the conduct of operations. The British have always allowed and indeed encouraged initiative by its younger leaders.

Malayan Emergency

British counterinsurgency achieved its greatest success during the twelve-year struggle with Communist insurgents for control of the Federation of Malaya (1948-1960). During World War II the British trained and armed the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Liberation Army. When the British returned to reassert colonial control, this Marxist group renamed itself the Malayan People's Liberation Army. Based primarily in Malaya's Chinese community (38 per cent of the population), the MPLA enjoyed considerable support among rubber tappers who supplemented their income with subsistence farming on marginal land along the jungle fringe.

Lacking citizenship, title to their land, and equal opportunity, these Chinese peasants could be easily induced to supply insurgent bands operating in the deep jungle. Britain's post war decline and loss of face to the Japanese during the fall of Singapore combined

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[5] Interview with the author, 1987; Robert Thompson's *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (London: 1965), is a classic that should be re-released.
[6] Insurgent leaders, however, usually come from the middle or even upper class, where prosperity allows them the luxury of studying ideology.
[7] Byron Farwell, *Queen Victoria's Little Wars* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1985).
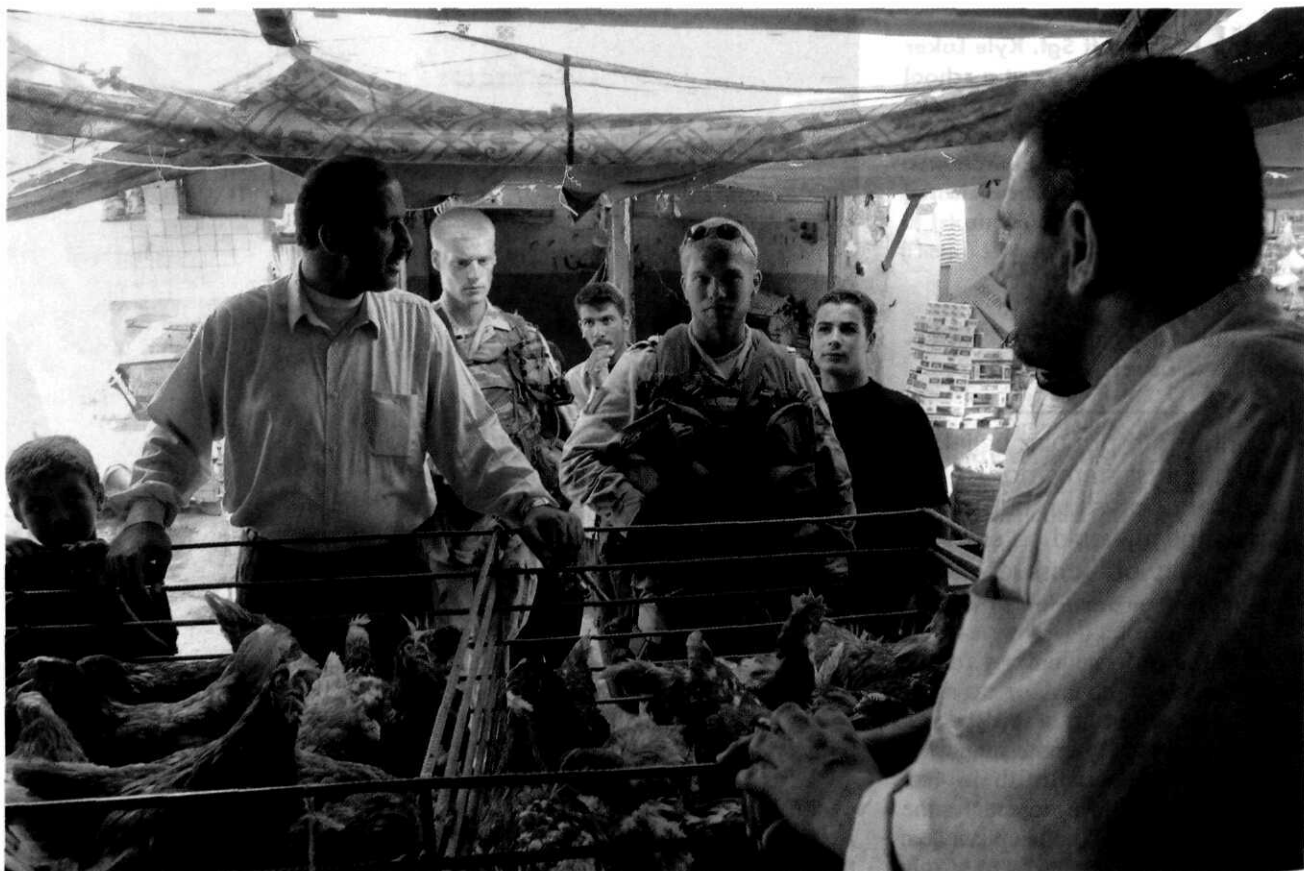
Al Muthana, 2004. Patrol in and around Ar Rumaytah (Photo CAVDKM, R. Mol; collection IMG/KL)

with this ideal environment and the MPLA's equipment and training, boded well for an insurgent victory.

Harold Briggs

Britain responded haltingly to the insurgents using an approach virtually guaranteed to fail. They concentrated on attacking insurgent guerrilla bands in the jungle using large sweeps while making no real effort to address the causes of unrest on which the insurgency fed. Companies and even battalions swept the jungle in futile operations that announced their arrival to the agile enemy who simply melted away and reformed elsewhere.

The situation began to change in 1950 when the newly appointed Director of Operations Harold Briggs developed the comprehensive plan the bears his name. Briggs compared defeating the insurgents to destroying malaria carrying mosquitoes. Swatting them did

no good if one did not destroy their breeding grounds.[8] The Chinese squatter villages with all of their social and economic problems had to be addressed. Briggs decided that relocating the Chinese to 'new villages' away from the jungle fringe would break the link with the insurgents. They forcibly relocated entire villages into secure compounds surrounded by wire and guarded by British troops.

Life in the new settlements was not always rosy, and few would have entered them voluntarily, but eventually these villages had decent housing, running water, adequate sanitation, schools, and clinics. Aware that at least some of those forcibly relocated will still support the insurgents, the British carefully controlled the food supply, making sure that the Chinese would be adequately fed but that they would have little to spare for the guerrillas in the jungle.

This food denial strategy forced the insurgents to focus increasingly on logistics and enabled the British to launch highly effective interdiction operations and ambushes along increasingly restricted supply routes.

Implementing the strategy

Although Briggs had devised the correct strategy, implementing it proved difficult. To coordinate the activities of police, civil servants, and soldiers across Malaya he created a series of District, State, and Federation committees to get all of the players around the same table. To energize the system, however, required more authority than Briggs possessed. As Director of Operations he controlled the security forces (military and police), but the civil authorities remained under

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8 Harold Briggs cited in Mockaitis, *British Counterinsurgency*, p. 115.

the control of the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Guerney. Guerney's murder by the insurgents in 1951 spurred the British in resolving the problem of divided command.

The new High Commissioner, General (later Field Marshall) Gerald Templer also served as Director of Operations. The four stars on his uniform left the soldiers in no doubt as to his authority. Templer provided the energy to make the Briggs plan work.

Command and control
The last element of the British approach to counterinsurgency was a decentralized system of command and control. Insurgency is a corporal's and a subaltern's war. Junior officers and NCO's had to be free to exercise good judgment, taking appropriate action in the field without asking up the chain of command. The regimental system and British training encouraged such initiative. Small unit operations replaced the fruitless sweeps of the early period and, combined with the hearts-and-minds campaign, produced decisive results.

The effectiveness of British tactics could be seen less in 'body count' as in the increasing number of surrendering insurgents.

Realizing that a live Communist guerrilla willing to cooperate with his former enemies was far more valuable than a dead one, the security forces offered generous amnesties and even rewards for information.

Criticism
The mid-1950s Templer had turned the tide of the insurgency, which for-

mally ended in 1960 with Malayan independence. The Communist leader, Chen Ping, did not surrender for another twenty years, a fact that should give those hell-bent on capturing Osama bin Laden pause to consider what their priorities ought to be. By almost any measure the counterinsurgency campaign was highly successful.

Critiques point to the advantageous of colonial control, the absence of a friendly neighboring state supporting the insurgents, and confinement of the insurgency to the Chinese minority to explain away the British victory. Success in Oman using the same methods a decade later makes such criticism disingenuous. British counterinsurgency consists of basic principles, which flexibly adapted to each unique situation, can still produce results.

The Vietnam War

The war that wracked Southeast-Asia for a generation was far more complex than the Malayan Emergency. Facile comparisons between the two are inappropriate. The U.S. inherited the Vietnam War from the French following their decisive defeat in at Dien Ben Phu in 1954. Despite American efforts to portray the war as an anticommunist crusade, their adversaries and much of the world considered it a war for independence from colonial rule.

The struggle was a hybrid conflict involving conventional forces, the Peoples Army of Vietnam, and insurgents, the Viet Cong.[9] The shear size and population of the country, its contiguous borders with states providing safe havens, and unobstructed supply route into Communist China made the

Vietnamese citizen alongside the road as American troops pass, 1967
(Photo J.W. Madzelan; Collection IMG/KL)

9 Peter Dunn, 'The American Army: the Vietnam War, 1965-1973,' in Ian Beckett and John Pilot, eds., *Armed Forces and Modern Counterinsurgency* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), p. 77.

conflict far more challenging than Malaya.

U.S. strategy: commitment to firepower

These caveats notwithstanding, the American approach to the conflict compounded the problems inherent in an already complex and difficult situation. To begin with, the U.S. military establishment never embraced the notion of counter-insurgency as a distinct form of warfare. Despite a firm grasp of the problem and excellent work done by Special Forces and some regular units, the general attitude was best expressed by a Marine who dismissed a presentation on the low-cost, long-haul approach in Malaya, saying that, 'We'll work them over with so much steel, that six months will see the end of it'. That was in 1962.[10]

Commitment to firepower dominated American strategy throughout the war. In the age of television and growing international opposition to colonialism such a commitment produced the inevitable backlash that undermined the war effort at home and abroad. The Viet Cong referred to bombing raids as 'recruiting drives' for them, and 'body count' became the meaningless measure of progress. A U.S. trained, equipped, and largely inept South Vietnamese army proved incapable of combating insurgency, in no small measure because of the American emphasis on heavy divisions.[11]

Growing disillusions

In the midst of the conventional approach to unconventional war, effective counterinsurgency programs were developed. The Civil Operations and Rural Development Support program (CORDS) aimed at winning hearts and minds in the countryside

as did the Marine Combined Action Program. U.S. Navy SEAL (Sea-Air-Land) conducted effective small unit operations in the Mekong Delta just as Green Berets did in remote rural areas.

The Phoenix program aimed at intelligence gathering and counter-guerrilla action. Neither individually nor collectively, though, could these effective measures overcome the conventional approach of the U.S. military as a whole.
As the war dragged on and the draft was extended to college students, bringing the war into middle class homes. Growing disillusionment with the war increased following the Tet offensive, conducted by an army that Americans had been told was close to defeat.
In 1973 Vietnamization provided the fig leaf of decency to cover American withdrawal, which led to the collapse

of the Saigon government two years later.

From Vietnam to Iraq

The Vietnam War has become an industry for academics and soldiers: interpretations range from a stubborn insistence that the U.S. military never really lost the war, but that it had been sold out by politicians and the American public to glib assertions that they learned nothing from the experience. Neither explanation does justice to the complex manner in which the Defense Department analyzed and absorbed the lessons of Vietnam.

In the immediate post-war period, many in the military believed the war to have been a mistake, a wasteful diversion of resources from the proper tasks of defending Europe and the Korean peninsula. Insurgencies

10 British officer interviewed by the author and cited in Mockaitis, *British Counterinsurgency*, p. 56.
11 Andrew Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp. 23-4.

against friendly governments would no doubt occur, but opposing them would not be a core task of the U.S. military. 'Low-Intensity Conflict' became the new catch-all for unconventional warfare, and strategists relegated counterinsurgency to 'aide for foreign internal defense'. The U.S. would assist threatened states but would not conduct the campaign itself. Assistance would be provided by Special Forces.

The U.S. used this approach with mixed results during the 1980s, helping the government of El Salvador combat and insurgency while aiding an insurgency against the government of Nicaragua. America avoided the extended commitment of U.S. troops to protracted and potentially unpopular wars, but U.S. advisors could not control the actions of those they aided. This unhealthy situation led to some of the worst atrocities in irregu-

U.S. Marines escort captured enemy prisoners of war to a holding area in the desert of Iraq, during Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003
(Photo U.S. Marine Corps, B.L. Wickliffe; collection IMG/KL)
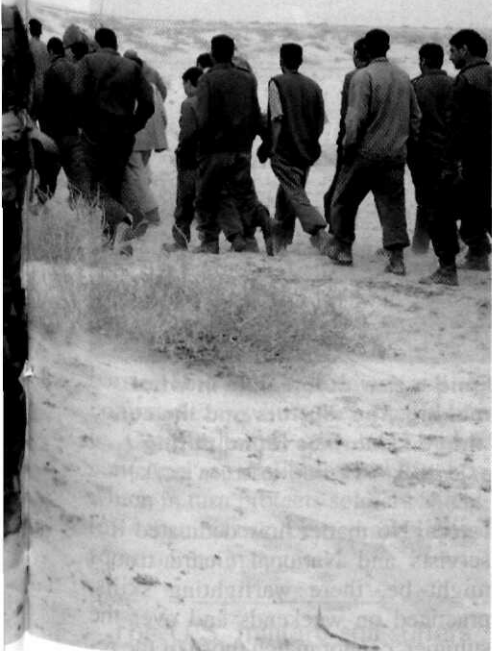
lar warfare of which the massacre at El Mazote, El Salvador was only the most infamous.

Special Forces
The decision to make counterinsurgency primarily a Special Forces task had one fortunate benefit. The SF community expanded considerably during the 1980s. To the Sea-Air-Land (SEAL) teams and Green Berets were added a new unit. The Pentagon created Delta Force in the aftermath of the embarrassing fiasco at 'Desert One,' the abortive effort to rescue American hostages in Iran in 1980. To coordinate the growing hydra of Special Forces the U.S. Congress created the Office of Special Operations Low-Intensity Conflict (SOLIC).

The boom in Special Forces did, however, have a down side that would become dramatically apparent in Iraq. If counterinsurgency remained the purview of SF community, then regular units could justifiably not train for it under the reasonable assumption that it 'was not their job'. During the Cold War, this conventional focus made sense. However, the danger that the U.S. military would once again face a large-scale insurgency for which the majority of its forces were ill-prepared always remained.

Iraq

The U.S. entered Iraq with the heavy armor, maneuver warfare army perfected and developed during the Cold War. Although the military had downsized in the decade since the fall of the Berlin Wall, it had undergone

little structural change. Plans to transition from heavy divisions to light, rapidly deployable forces were still on the drawing board on 9/11.
The forces that invaded Afghanistan and Iraq were essentially the same ones that had defended the Faluja Gap and the Korean peninsula. The U.S. had the best combined operations, maneuver warfare military in history, but it would prove to be ill-prepared for the protracted war that it would face in streets of Baghdad and Mosul.

Troop shortage
The invasion of Iraq went smoothly, even masterfully. A swift campaign aimed at minimizing civilian casualties and preventing Saddam Hussein from burning his oil wells.[12] However successful the invasion was from the operational standpoint, it had serious strategic flaws from the outset. Central Command had made few provisions for the protracted insurgency that so many experts warned would occur. The invasion force was far too small for the task assigned to it. When Army Chief of Staff Eric Shenseki warned that it would take over 200.000 troops to do the job right, the Rumsfeld Pentagon hounded him into retirement.

The coalition, consisting of overwhelming U.S. forces with a sizable British contingent and token participation by other allies, consisted of 150.000-160.000 troops. More than adequate for defeating the Iraqi Army, the force lacked the troops to restore order within Iraq or to seal the long border with Syria over which flooded *Mujahadin* who would mix with former Bathists and other disgruntled elements to create a formidable insurgency. The troop shortage meant that the coalition could not engage in the tactic of framework deployment, assigning small units to fixed area for an extended period, that the British had found so effective in Malaya.

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12 See General Tommy Franks, *American Soldier* (New York: Regan Books, 2004) for a description of the books.

Scuttle the Iraqi security apparatus

The occupation authorities compounded the troop shortage with the ill advised decision to scuttle the entire Iraqi security apparatus from police to regular army and rebuild them from scratch. Taken by Paul Bremer against the better advice of his military advisors, the decision created conditions of lawlessness that the soldiers were ill-prepared or equipped to address.[13]

Iraqi soldiers and police summarily dismissed, unpaid, and in many cases still armed provided grist for the insurgents mill. Bremer might have done well to consider the experience of the occupation governments in Germany after World War II. The Military Government removed the upper echelon of Nazis but kept the police and to some extent the military in being to maintain order. Local police spoke the language, knew the people, and had a vested interest in a return to normalcy.

Reservists

The troop shortage had other tragic consequences. To offset force reduction in the 1990s the Pentagon planned to use to the Reserves and National Guard to augment regular troops. In a conventional war such as

u.s. Marines examine mortar rounds and a BMW automobile in what they believe to be a car bomb in the making. The mortars and the car are part of the 20 weapons caches that u.s. Marines found during the operations, 2005 (Photo u.s. Marine Corps, B.M. Henner; collection IMG/KL)

Desert Storm (1991), such forces could be safely employed in rear area duties and logistics.

The strategy worked well enough in conventional war, but there are no safe rear areas in an insurgency. Long supply columns snaking north from Kuwait and manned by reservists made tempting targets for guerrilla

forces. No matter how dedicated Reservists and National Guard troops might be, there warfighting skills, practiced on weekends and over the summer, cannot match those of the regular forces.

Conventional tactics

The strategic flaw had predictable consequences. Large sections of Iraq became, 'no-go areas', in which the coalition and a fledgling Iraqi government exercised little or no control.[14] The insurgency thus had a chance to develop in relative security. Having lost control of places like Faluja, the military had to regain them. In such a situation troops will fall back on tactics they know best. For the U.S., that meant firepower.

Al Muthana, 2004. Patrol in and around Ar Rumaytah
(Photo CAVDKM, R. Mol; collection IMG/KL)

13 Michael Gordon, 'Debate Lingering on Decision to Dissolve Iraqi Military', *New York Times*, 21 October 2004.
14 The term 'no-go area' refers to the ill-advised decision of the British government to stay out of Catholic communities in Northern Ireland following riots in 1969. The IRA quickly filled the power vacuum and transformed a civil rights struggle into a nationalist insurgency. Something very similar has occurred in Faluja.

To their credit U.S. forces had tried to go softly and minimize collateral damage, but increasing pressure to produce results and avoid American casualties led to an inevitable reversion to conventional tactics. The coalition recaptured a city, large sections of which had been reduced to rubble, reminding many of the ominous mantra, 'We had to destroy the village to save it'.

Hierarchical command and control
In addition to troop shortage, the U.S. led coalition has faced problems stemming from the institutional failure to learn from past insurgencies and prepare for future ones. The pervasive notion that force protection consists almost entirely of physical security and robust rules of engagement puts a barrier between the soldiers and the community in which they must operate. Good relations with local people can lead to reliable intelligence, which in turn protects soldiers and allows them to use focused and limited force on the insurgents.

> The U.S. military still suffers from a rigidly hierarchical command and control structure that micromanages tactical decisions even at platoon level.

The result is the absurd situation in which a soldier can be awarded a bronze star one minute and then court-martialed for improvising the next. Such rigid control can lead to disastrous consequences when soldiers face novel situations without clear instructions. The prisoner abuse at Abugraib may have stemmed, at least in part, from such a situation.

Repeating past mistakes
The U.S. is repeating past mistakes, but not from ignorance of history. The

experience of Vietnam has been analyzed and lessons learned, but these lessons have remained in compartments separated from the bulk of service men and women.

Special Forces can handle small insurgencies, but there are simply not enough of them to manage a conflict the size of Iraq. Untrained and in key respects ill-equipped to handle protracted war, the troops fall back on the tactics they know best. The shear might and resources of the U.S. will, of course, lead to victory in the long run. The long run, however, will be very costly in lives and money.

Epilogue: 'Smile and Wave'

An article on Iraq for a Netherlands defense publication would be incomplete without drawing conclusions of some use to the Dutch military. That military has a competitive advantage in counterinsurgency. Because the Netherlands will never face a large scale conventional war alone, it need not be preoccupied with preparing to

As Samawah, 2004. The Field Liaison Team
(Photo CAVDKM, R. Mol; collection IMG/KL)

fight one. Nor does it have the luxury of specialization.
The small size of Dutch land forces necessitates the training of two-speed soldiers, men and women with good war-fighting skills but the ability to engage in the variety of tasks necessary in a counterinsurgency campaign. The Dutch approach has already produced dividends in both Iraq and Afghanistan, which were the subject of comment in a recent *New York Times* article.[15]

There are, however, two dangers that a small military faces in developing a niche specialty in unconventional war.
The first is the erosion of war-fighting skills or, more seriously, the mistaken belief that they will never be needed. The second danger is more insidious because it is beyond the control of the military itself – the danger that politicians will deploy Dutch forces to missions that are badly conceived.
However effective they may be in winning hearts and minds in their own sector, Dutch forces cannot overcome the wrong approach ■ of a 'stronger' ally.

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[15] 'The Reach of War: Allies; Dutch Soldiers Find Smiles Are a More Effective Protection', *New York Times*, 24 October 2004.