confronting the hydra

BIG PROBLEMS WITH SMALL WARS

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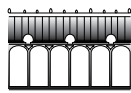BIG PROBLEMS WITH SMALL WARS

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Dedication

To the soldiers of the Australian Army who have fought, and continue to fight, Australia's wars.

Disclaimer

Executive summary

Australia needs to worry a little less about the small problems it has with big wars, and address some of the big problems that it has with small wars.

Small wars, such as insurgencies, became the most prevalent form of conflict globally in the middle of the 20th century. The 2009 Australian Defence White Paper predicts that intrastate conflict will remain the most common form of war in the period to 2030. Australia has a long record of involvement in such conflicts, although participation has always been a matter of choice. But the fact that these are wars of choice for Australia, and that it frequently only plays a bit part, does not mean that they are insignificant in cost and political impact. And history demonstrates that small wars of choice can become wars of necessity.

Australia's interest as a democratic middle power that *chooses* to engage in counterinsurgency conflicts requires the development of sound strategic policy approaches and capabilities to defeat the insurgency Hydra. Despite this, the focus of Australia's national strategic policies has remained on conventional, interstate warfare. Examples from Australian experience highlight the difficulties that arise from adopting a primarily tactical approach to counterinsurgency and the enduring nature of counterinsurgency as a policy problem. Insurgency itself is not a tactical action — it is a holistic strategy, aimed at a political outcome. So countering insurgency must be a

strategic action, irrespective of whether carried out by a host nation or a middle power acting as a member of a coalition.

This paper identifies five effective ways for a democratic middle power such as Australia to conduct counterinsurgency: population focus, an indirect approach, pre-emption, information activities and the use of adaptive measures. These provide a framework for the development of an appropriate counterinsurgency strategy for Australia's circumstances.

Eight policy recommendations are made to support the development of a strategic approach to Australia's involvement in counterinsurgency conflicts:

- Defence White Papers must provide adequate policy guidance, rather than narrative, about Australia's ongoing concern with counterinsurgency. A policy framework must be stipulated (a population focus, an indirect approach, pre-emption, information activities and the use of adaptive measures) to inform Australian national policy relating to the conduct of counterinsurgency.
- Development and publication of a whole-of-government counterinsurgency doctrine.
- Identification, training, education and deployment of a cadre from across relevant government departments to enable a true whole-of- government approach to counterinsurgency. Implicit in this recommendation is the requirement to prepare such a group for possible employment alongside Australian Defence Force, Coalition and Afghan National Government organisations in Afghanistan.
- Creation of a national counterinsurgency centre of excellence that is focused on whole-of-government, regional and coalition approaches.
- Development of more robust educative mechanisms to support decisions made about counterinsurgency by the National Security Committee of Cabinet and higher political decision-makers.

- Further development of the defence capabilities required for successful counterinsurgency campaigning. Key areas of investment must be human intelligence, electronic warfare, surveillance, psychological warfare, information operations, civil-military affairs and unconventional warfare.
- Australia must improve upon its ability to assist friendly foreign counterinsurgency forces. This should be done through development of the capability to train, mentor and, if necessary, lead indigenous counterinsurgency forces. Such a capability will have utility far beyond the current fight in Afghanistan and will assist Australia with an indirect approach to counterinsurgency.
- A greater role for the Australian Federal Police in counterinsurgency campaigns, beginning with the present campaign in Afghanistan.

Contents

List of boxes, figures and tables

List of acronyms

ADF   Australian Defence Force
AFP   Australian Federal Police
ANZAC   Australian and New Zealand Army Corps
ASEAN   Association of South East Asian Nations
AusAID   Australian Agency for International Development
AQI   al-Qaeda in Iraq
BCE   Before the Christian era
BIG   Bougainville Interim Government
BRA   Bougainville Revolutionary Army
CNAS   Center for a New American Security
CORDS   Civil operations and rural development support
CRA   Conzinc Rio Tinto Australia
DFAT   Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

GWOT	Global War on Terror
HN	Host Nation
IDG	International Deployment Group
INTERFET	International Force East Timor
IO	Information operations
ISAF	International Security Force Afghanistan
JAM	Jaish Al Mahdi
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam
MCP	Malayan Communist Party
MRLA	Malayan Races Liberation Army
MNF-I	Multinational Force Iraq
NSA	National Security Adviser
NSCC	National Security Committee of Cabinet
NSS	National Security Statement
OAS	Organisation Armée Secrète
OEF-P	Operation Enduring Freedom–Philippines
OMS	Office of the Martyr Sadr
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army
PM&C	Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
PMG	Peace Monitoring Group
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
RAR	Royal Australian Regiment
TMG	Truce Monitoring Group
VC	Vietcong
WOG	Whole-of-government

Acknowledgements

Chapter 1

Setting the scene

Small wars,[1] typified by insurgency, became the most common form of conflict globally during the latter half of the 20th century.[2] Paradoxically, strategic policy amongst Western nations during the same period has disproved that 'nations prepare for the last war rather than the next', as it has maintained a focus on conventional, interstate warfare. Rather than developing and implementing suitable strategic policy approaches to countering insurgency, the record suggests that states have repeatedly defaulted to treating the problem as a lower order or tactical issue of relatively little enduring consequence. Such an approach fails to account for the true and enduring nature of insurgency. From Algeria to Afghanistan it has been fraught with failure and creates continuing risk.

Aim

The aim of this paper is to identify and describe policy implications of a strategic approach to counterinsurgency, with particular reference to Australia's involvement in such conflicts. It will thus focus on the strategic level of analysis:[3] that is, the level where national objectives are identified and their achievement is planned through coordination of all the elements of national power. The premise behind this is that

countering insurgency demands thought and action at the level where politics, policy, strategy and their enablers interact. Giving primacy to tactical and operational activities to win small wars and insurgency misses the critical nexus between politics and population that lies at the heart of every such conflict.[4] Understanding and responding to the political 'why' of such wars helps illuminate the path to their resolution. History has repeatedly demonstrated that while these wars can be *lost* by failure at any level (tactical, operational or strategic), they are only *won* if suitable policy and strategy is developed and implemented at the national level.[5]

The Hydra

The mythological story of the Hydra is an apt metaphor for the complexities of fighting insurgencies. The monster required its adversaries to do battle with all of its many heads at once — focusing on one head invited lethal attack from the others. To complicate the task, cutting off a head would cause two more to grow in its place. Like the Hydra, the nature of insurgency presents multiple problems. These are inextricably linked across a range of political, societal and cultural policy issues that defy simple responses. Governments that fail to understand the nuances of these wars and attack only one manifestation of the problem risk failure.

Australia as a case study

This paper concentrates on Australia's experiences with insurgency conflict. The Australian example highlights both the enduring nature of counterinsurgency as a policy problem and the difficulties that arise from adoption of a tactical approach. It also provides a previously under-examined case study that can assist with identifying the policy implications of a strategic approach. The examination of Australia's involvement in nine selected conflicts will demonstrate a clear pattern of engagement in counterinsurgency. The absence of a case study about Afghanistan reflects the fact that the Afghanistan conflict is

contemporary and dynamic and the historical record of Australian involvement is not complete. Throughout the paper, text boxes contain brief outlines of the Australian counterinsurgency experience in these nine conflicts. They highlight key policy lessons suggested by history. Along with the discussion in chapter three, they underscore that despite frequent involvement, the acknowledged likelihood of future involvement, and the cost and risk involved, Australia has not developed suitable policy and enabling functions that prepare it for the task of counterinsurgency.

It will also become apparent that Australia's geography, relative cultural homogeneity and political stability have not quarantined it from having to deal with insurgencies. This is true today, whether directly through Australian participation in conflicts such as those in Iraq and Afghanistan, or indirectly through insurgency-related problems in Australia's region. While Australia's counterinsurgency experience is in some ways distinctive, it has enough in common with the experiences of other nations to inform general policy approaches to the issue.[6] Understanding of these case studies also suggests that the Australian record in counterinsurgency is really no better than that of any other developed Western nation, which calls into question what might be referred to as the 'conceit' of Australian counterinsurgency superiority.[7]

Box 1

Pre-Federation conflicts

It may be assumed that the first small wars fought by Australians occurred long before European settlement. The first Australian small wars that we have contemporary records of were those of, in effect, colonial and imperial expansion as British colonists entered the land of various indigenous nations.

The overseas deployment of Australian colonial forces in the years before Federation was limited to minor roles in campaigns in various outposts of the British Empire.

The Maori Wars were the first overseas conflicts to involve the Australian colonies, although they did not involve any homogenous, discrete force raised from the resident populace. The British troops garrisoned in the Australian colonies deployed to New Zealand to fight Maori rebellions in the 1840s and again in the 1860s. Some 2500 citizens of the Australian colonies volunteered to serve in New Zealand militia units, primarily in the Waikato region. These troops saw little heavy fighting, and fewer than 20 were killed in action.

The first official deployment of a formed body of Australian colonial troops occurred on 3 March 1885 with the embarkation of an expeditionary force from the Colony of NSW, bound for the conflict in the Sudan. The Sudan Contingent comprised two batteries of field artillery and an infantry battalion, numbering around 500. The contingent stayed only a few months, saw little action, and suffered heavier losses on the voyage home from illness and misadventure than in combat. Despite this, the contingent holds its place in Australia's military history as its first official fighting force.

The Boxer Rebellion of 1900-01 was the final conflict to which Australia sent solely colonial forces. Once again, Australian forces saw little action. Deployed in June 1900, the colonial forces, which consisted primarily of ships and combat personnel from the naval forces of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, arrived in China after the cessation of major hostilities. Consequently, Australian involvement was limited to minor offensives only, and none of the six deaths sustained during the expedition was in combat. By March 1901 the emergency had all but subsided and the Australian forces returned home to a newly federated nation.

While the pre-federation contributions were generally low key — Australian colonial forces saw little action and sustained few casualties — they were not without historical significance or contemporary relevance. These campaigns presaged many Australian deployments in the 20th century — they were characterised by Australian forces in the role of a junior 'coalition' partner in broad scale counterinsurgency campaigns, and Australian colonial commanders had little input into the direction of the campaigns.

Outline and scope

At the outset it is worth clarifying crucial parts of the often confused terminology of insurgency. Clear definitions of the key terms *insurgency* and *counterinsurgency* are vital to sound thinking on the subject. The rest of this introduction will offer those, along with perspectives on two issues, *terrorism* and *asymmetry*, often confused with insurgency.

The next chapter will examine the nature of insurgency and counterinsurgency to inform the subsequent policy analysis. Chapter three presents Australia's circumstance as a case study demonstrating counterinsurgency as an enduring policy problem. The current situation will be assessed with a view to highlighting options for a more effective policy approach. The paper concludes with analysis of such a possible approach and some implications.

Key concepts about the nature and conduct of insurgency and counterinsurgency will be examined in order to inform the discussion of policy objectives. This paper is not, however, intended as a definitive guide to counterinsurgency warfare.

Meanings matter

The definitions of core terms in discussing insurgency are contested and frequently confusing, 'as elusive as the guerrillas themselves.'[8] The

careless use of terminology by 'experts' in newspapers and journals, imprecise political speeches, the poorly named 'Global War on Terror' and its successor, 'The Long War',[9] have combined with nightly television military briefings from Iraq and Afghanistan to heighten misunderstanding.

Two issues further complicate matters. The first is that the use of the term 'terrorism', frequently associated with insurgency, is laden with emotive associations. The emotional response that acts of terrorism often provoke can hinder efforts to understand the nature of the problem, leading to policy missteps. The second issue is that specialised terms can often be over-used when discussing insurgency in order to advance particular organisational or political interests.[10] As a senior British army officer observed, 'Endless debates about nomenclature and a sea of acronyms obscure clarity'.[11]

Insurgency and counterinsurgency defined

… if we misdiagnose the problem we are not likely to come up with a solution.[12]
– Sir Michael Howard

Insurgency represents a rift within a state that has developed beyond normal non-violent political discourse. The 1648 Peace of Westphalia established the modern norm that states are the sole legitimate users of internal violence. In exchange for acknowledging state sovereignty and ceding the right to use violence, populations expect governments to protect, serve, enable and support them. Where governments do not meet the expectations of their people, and political negotiation fails, tensions build. Aggrieved elements of the population may then reject the state's monopoly on the use of violence. This creates the necessary conditions for insurgency, perhaps best understood as a form of societal warfare.

For the purposes of this paper, the definition of insurgency is:

An organised, violent and politically motivated activity conducted by non-state actors and sustained over a protracted

period that typically utilises a number of methods, such as subversion, guerrilla warfare and terrorism, in an attempt to achieve change within a state.[13]

It follows that counterinsurgency is the response by government to the existence of an insurgency. Therefore, the definition of counterinsurgency is:

Political, social, civic, economic, psychological, and military actions taken to defeat an insurgency.[14]

While a more detailed examination of the enduring nature of these conflicts follows, it is worth highlighting three ideas arising from these definitions. The first is the centrality of irregular or non-state belligerents. The second is the issue of political motivation. The third is the breadth of approaches used by insurgents and necessary for counterinsurgents. These three factors will be shown as key to developing effective counterinsurgency policy.

The issue of terrorism and insurgency

It has become common to use the terms terrorism and insurgency interchangeably. However, they are not the same, and it is worth explaining the relationship between them. Terrorism can be a tactic adopted, with varying degrees of success, in insurgent campaigns.[15] But not all terrorist attacks are part of an insurgency and many insurgencies do not restrict themselves to terrorist activities. Terrorism is a tactic or operational method used by a range of violent groups, while insurgency is a holistic strategy. It is at least theoretically possible that an insurgency could function without the use of terrorism. Strategist Colin S. Gray suggests that '… if an irregular enemy confines itself, or is compelled to be limited, to acts of terrorism, the threat that it poses to political stability is an order of magnitude less severe than is the menace from insurgency.'[16]

While each terrorist outrage that occurs generates a new range of counter-terrorism responses, it is rare that policies are ever fashioned

to address the insurgency-related issues that are ultimately at the root of many such acts. Perhaps one of the most grievous strategic errors of the Bush Administration's 'Global War on Terror' was the focus on manifestation (terrorism) rather than on root causes — that is, the broader set of policy issues that give rise to insurgencies and other security concerns. Australian strategic policy formulation seems to be moving towards more explicit recognition of this problem,[17] but a more precise understanding of the relative importance and impact of terrorism and insurgency to national interests is warranted.

On the asymmetric nature of insurgency

Over the past decade the term asymmetry has become so common in military-strategic affairs that it is at risk of becoming meaningless. A 1999 RAND Corporation report provides a suitable concise definition of asymmetry in war: 'Asymmetric strategies attack vulnerabilities not appreciated by the "target" (victim) or capitalize on the victim's limited preparation against the threat.'[18] Increasingly there has been a preoccupation with associating the concept of asymmetry with insurgency. It could be argued that labelling a particular form of war as asymmetric is tautological, since the conduct of all forms of warfare strives to be asymmetric.[19] The history of warfare is that of the quest to gain asymmetric advantage. The 1991 and 2003 destruction of Saddam Hussein's armed forces by the technologically superior United States and its allies provide compelling examples of asymmetric warfare.

Where an insurgency becomes asymmetric, it does not come from any one tactic, method or characteristic of the insurgent. Rather, it arises from the state's failure to recognise the true nature of insurgency and to respond across the full spectrum of government and social endeavour. The insurgent has chosen the social and political fabric of the state as the battlefield; it is the counterinsurgent that inadvertently makes the fight asymmetric by acting with military-centric or other incomplete responses. This is the one aspect of asymmetry that is germane to understanding and developing sound strategic policy approaches to insurgency.[20]

Chapter 2

Understanding insurgency and counterinsurgency

Introduction

The American soldier turned scholar Andrew Bacevich suggests that 'The beginning of wisdom about war lies not in tracing how it has changed, but in grasping how its core nature is permanent.'[21] This chapter does not seek to provide a definitive account of insurgency and counterinsurgency, but aims rather to provide enough background on the core, permanent nature of insurgency and counterinsurgency to set the scene for practical policy analysis. Since the focus of this paper is at the strategic level — where national policy is developed and enacted — this analysis will avoid detailed examination of tactics.

The complexity and dynamism of insurgency-related conflicts often make them hard to understand. Still, the impact of these traits should not be overstated. Much contemporary writing about insurgency offers needlessly complicated analysis. In fact, the basic characteristics of insurgency and counterinsurgency are identifiable and relatively easy to grasp. The complexity arises when these need to be translated into policy or action.

One common approach to explaining insurgency seeks to address Colin S. Gray's maxim that 'The contexts of war are all important.'[22] This approach attempts to adopt taxonomic classifications of 'context'

and 'type' in describing insurgency.[23] However, since the character of an insurrection is largely shaped by the society in which it takes place, guerrilla movements 'are an awkward topic for generalisation.'[24] The taxonomic approach thus leads to endless lists of every 'type' of insurgency, which risks overstating the complexity of insurgency without illuminating its enduring characteristics. Accordingly, this chapter will aim for insights into the enduring and common characteristics of these conflicts rather than a description of their many manifestations.

Despite claims that there is something predominantly novel about today's counterinsurgency challenges,[25] the enduring characteristics of insurgency and counterinsurgency remain useful in identifying suitable contemporary policy approaches. We do not start with a blank sheet when confronting modern insurgency: millennia of experience in dealing with such challenges help explain the nature of current conflicts. Some argue that because each new conflict is unique, history is of little use. Yet the nature of the current set of insurgency problems is not unfathomably unique. The works of 19th- and 20th-century counterinsurgency analysts such as Charles Callwell and Charles Gwynn[26] suggest that if they were able to visit a contemporary conflict, such as Afghanistan, they would find much of it familiar. Despite claims made about the 'new' nature of the Iraqi conflict, the successful execution of the 2006-08 'surge' reflected long-established counterinsurgency principles rather than an innovative response to a hitherto unknown problem. Change in insurgency-related conflict tends to comprise linear evolution — through the adoption of new technology for example — rather than revolution.

War is a passionate human endeavour that resists simple categorisation. That said, a set of key themes can be identified to assist understanding the nature of insurgency and counterinsurgency. These are:

- The differences between conventional warfare[27] and insurgency;
- Violence and criminality;
- The importance of ideas and narrative;
- Human and social concerns; and
- Practicalities.

War, but different

As a form of war, insurgency conforms to Clausewitz's concept of war as an amalgam of politics and violence. David Galula has paraphrased Clausewitz to reinforce this idea by describing insurgency as '… the pursuit of the policy of a party, inside a country, by every means'.[28] This is also true of the counterinsurgent's effort where '… the fight against the insurgents is not set apart from the normal practises of government'.[29] However, there is a profound philosophical difference between insurgency conflict and conventional warfare. General Sir Frank Kitson, the pre-eminent British counterinsurgency thinker of the last century, perhaps best expresses this difference:

> … the main characteristic which distinguishes campaigns of insurgency from other forms of war is that they are primarily concerned with the struggle for men's minds, since only by succeeding in such a struggle with a large enough number of people can the rule of law be undermined and constitutional institutions overthrown. Violence may play a greater or lesser part in the campaign, but it should be used very largely in support of ideas. In a conventional war the reverse is more usually the case and propaganda is normally deployed in support of armed might.[30]

Whereas the violent destruction of enemy forces is an obvious end to itself in a conventional campaign, it is relevant to an insurgency campaign only to the degree that it advances the battle for the minds of the population. Shaping and influencing people's thinking is the most decisive act in this form of warfare.

Different circumstances
Other important differences exist between the nature of insurgency and conventional warfare. As Galula observes, while the experience of conventional war is largely the same for all protagonists, in insurgency warfare there are marked differences between the experiences of the

opposing sides.[31] One difference relates to the material conditions experienced by the protagonists, which directly influence the ways they fight. Another aspect relates to the rules by which both sides act. The insurgent's circumstance of being relatively weak often compels actions that are criminal and outside the laws of armed conflict. The different experience of the two opposing sides in an insurgency leads to another feature of insurgency distinct from conventional war — the centrality of the non-state actor.

State and non-state actors

The central role of *non-state actors* has direct bearing on the nature of insurgency conflict. Insurgents do not represent a 'state' — they are in direct competition with the polity of their state and generally seek to supplant it. This creates several immediate and practical difficulties for the state. In conventional or 'state-on-state' warfare a range of coercive sanctions are readily available to the protagonists. These can range from diplomatic and trade sanctions to the use of force to destroy a state's infrastructure or population. However, since insurgents at many stages of their campaigns lack anything resembling the traditional apparatus of a state, they possess some unique advantages over state protagonists. Because they have less that is obviously vulnerable to direct attack or sanction, and what they do possess remains hidden, targeting them can be much harder than targeting a 'conventional' enemy. Given that insurgents are often hidden within the population, the risk of collateral casualties from imprecise attacks on them by the state is increased. Such casualties are then easily exploited in insurgent information operations. All of this compels counterinsurgents to think quite differently about achieving strategic effects. Policies must move from the physical realm to the cognitive one, to influence those things that motivate the insurgents.

It is important to distinguish between non-state actors and state actors who support or mimic insurgents. Sometimes external state actors operate clandestinely within a country to further their national interests. This can occur through support for indigenous insurgents, independent action or a combination of both. But such external state

actors are not insurgents. They are best regarded as participating in state-on-state war, conducted irregularly.[32]

Box 2

The Second Boer War

The Second Boer War arose from tensions unresolved from the First Boer War (1880-81). The conflict, between two Boer Republics and the British, was initially relatively conventional, but it became a difficult and costly insurgency. This occurred because, despite early and notable Boer successes, the conventional military superiority of the British and allied forces resulted in the occupation and subsequent annexation of the Boer Republics. The Boers were compelled to adopt an insurgent strategy in order to avoid military defeat.

The war was the first in which Australia fought as a sovereign nation. Effectively, the birth of the Australian Army was in the middle of a counterinsurgency war. Six contingents of Australian volunteers, totalling more than 16,000 men, served in the conflict. After an initial period of limited success, the Australians adapted quickly and gained a reputation for their abilities in counterinsurgency operations.

British counterinsurgency planning sought to deny the enemy support from the civilian population and infrastructure. Two key measures served this aim: a security presence was established at significant infrastructure nodes; and much of the rural Boer population was forcibly removed from the land and incarcerated in concentration camps. Complementing these measures was the use of light and highly mobile counterinsurgent forces (including some Australian mounted troops) that could match the Boer Commando's relative strengths.

The war highlights several counterinsurgency precepts, particularly the utility of separating the insurgents from the population. It also provides an example of what not to do in achieving this. The cruel conditions that incarcerated civilians endured in concentration camps worked against British claims of moral legitimacy and provided a powerful motivation for many Boers to keep fighting — it sustained the Boer narrative.

Finally, the Australian experience in South Africa highlighted the importance of adaptation and learning in counterinsurgency warfare. The Australian contingent's ability to adapt relatively quickly to both the prevailing conditions and the irregular strategy employed by the Boers made them a useful counterinsurgent force.

Violence and criminality

Like all war, insurgency warfare is violent. This may seem a statement of the obvious but it is worth emphasising, because the tendency of some observers to use euphemisms such as 'stabilisation' and 'peace enforcement' when describing insurgency-related issues can obscure the true nature of the challenge. The violent character of insurgency conflict creates a non-permissive environment that, if not fully recognised, leads to inadequate policy responses. The use of violence by insurgents to achieve their political purpose highlights the critical difference between insurgency and other forms of political activism. Similarly, the sanctioned use of violence by the state in response marks a crucial contrast (for democratic states at least) with normal, peaceful forms of reaction to political dissent.

A typical response to the use of violence focuses almost exclusively on the violence itself. While it is imperative that a state seeks to maintain a monopoly on violence within its borders, paying insufficient attention to why non-state violence is occurring can be self-defeating behaviour. It often makes the 'ways' and the 'means' by which a political opponent's outcome is being pursued the objective of policy, rather than the underlying political 'end'. For example, as William Colby noted with regard to repeated US policy missteps in the Vietnam War: '… the focus on the enemy's military strength again took the spotlight from his even more important political plans and activities'.[33]

Insurgents, by definition, find it impossible to eschew violence. They 'pursue political power through bullets rather than ballot boxes — either because they lack the popularity to achieve success in free and fair elections, or because the established political authorities deny them this option.'[34] Violence within an insurgency can range from low-level thuggery and intimidation to large-scale violence, such as the ethnic cleansing in Baghdad during 2006 and 2007. The level of violence likely to be deemed acceptable by insurgents varies considerably, often depending upon factors as diverse as the state response, levels of development and support, the depth of communal animosity, and the cultural norms of the host society. [35]

Second-order effects of violence

Insurgencies also use violence to achieve effects that go beyond purely military objectives. Typically, a large element of the population will not choose sides until it is clear who is likely to win.[36] The violent defeat of state security forces can be a powerful demonstration to putative supporters (or opponents) of the prospects for the insurgency to defeat the government. The demonstration of violence can coerce the population into supporting the insurgency. Many acts of terrorism by insurgents are of negligible military value but have enormous political or psychological importance to the realisation of their ambitions. The bombings of the al-Askari Mosque in Samarra, Iraq during 2006 and 2007 for example, precipitated ethnic cleansing. Insurgent terrorism is a communication strategy[37] that uses the 'propaganda of the deed'.

Criminality

Insurgency is both an act of war and a criminal activity. This criminality

of insurgency has several drivers. The use of violence by insurgents is only one of them. International laws govern the conduct of war between modern states. Issues of criminality generally only arise in the case of a prosecution of an 'unjust' war or demonstrable breach of the laws of armed conflict. By contrast, criminality is central to insurgency warfare, as the very act of violent insurrection is invariably illegal under the laws of the nation where it occurs.

The criminal nature of insurgent actions is a distinction between such activity and legitimate dissent.[38] When opposition and dissent from the 'ruling' view within a state crosses outside the accepted, legal bounds of political behaviour (such as the use of violence), insurgency may arise. The line between legitimacy and criminality is sometimes confusing and arguably in the eye of the beholder, particularly when otherwise seemingly unitary movements within a society have a number of branches. In the United Kingdom, Sinn Fein and the Provisional Irish Republican Army together constituted an example of this. In contemporary Iraq, such confusion might be seen in the relationships, real or perceived, between the Office of the Martyr Sadr (OMS), Jaish al Mahdi (JAM) and the so-called Shia 'Special Groups'.

The criminality of insurgent activity is the reason why counterinsurgency theory advocates the primacy of police forces in combating insurgency.[39] Treating insurgency as a criminal matter offers the state several benefits. First, maintaining the primacy of civil police (albeit often with the support of the military to address levels of violence that may be beyond the police capabilities) avoids the political ramifications from the imposition of martial law. Next, it reinforces the very rule of law that insurgents seek to disrupt or supplant. Finally, it is the presence of police rather than soldiers among the population that represents the important appearance of 'normalcy' in most societies. The police are the face of the government in many counterinsurgency campaigns. In addition, because of the habitual association that police have with the civil population, they can be an effective source of intelligence. Conversely, the destruction of the police force by an insurgency can powerfully convey the idea that the government is weak and inept.

The vitality of ideas and narrative

The critical role of 'the idea'
Insurgencies are wars waged within societies, in contrast to conventional wars, which are between societies. People make up societies and, as long as their basic needs are satisfied, will normally require particularly strong ideas to be motivated to undertake violent action against their own society. Such ideas — including the perception that basic needs are not being met[40] — drive the formation of what can be called the popular objective of an insurgency. Robert Taber describes this popular objective as:

> *A political objective, based on firm moral and ideological grounds, that can be understood and accepted by the majority as the overriding 'cause' of the insurgency, desirable in itself and worthy of any sacrifice.*[41]

This objective, rather than any particular individual, group or military asset becomes the 'centre of gravity'[42] for insurgents and sustains their fight.

The importance of the popular objective is central to the nature of insurgency conflict. The currency of an idea typically does not require anything approaching the investment of money, capability and effort needed to maintain a conventional army. This accounts for both the concept of insurgency as a 'poor man's war' and for the longevity of insurgencies. The paramount role of the 'idea' that a popular objective represents also questions the utility of military force as the principal policy tool to counter insurgency. Use of military power, while often essential in order to establish or maintain security, is a sub-optimal way to counter what is essentially a political and ideological attack. A major difficulty for counterinsurgents is that the full breadth and depth of skills required in countering and winning political and ideological fights do not routinely exist in modern militaries. Further detailed exploration of this issue occurs in a later chapter.

The insurgent narrative

The fact that a political ambition may exist with the latent 'potency of mesmerizing ideology'[43] does not guarantee that it will succeed as popular objective for an insurgency. A successful popular objective needs a good supporting narrative. People respond to a good story well told. Insurgencies seek to exploit this human trait by developing a narrative to support and propagate their objective among the target population. Without a strong enough narrative, a would-be insurgency's ideas are unlikely to become a popular objective: they will remain stillborn thoughts in the minds of a minority. That this concept remains crucial to fomenting insurgency is highlighted by a quote from a senior al-Qaeda figure in 2005: 'We are in a battle, and more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media …'.[44]

It is equally true that the weapon of insurgent narrative can misfire if it lacks a viable popular objective at its heart. This situation will ultimately lead to rejection of insurgent aspirations. The Sunni 'Awakening'[45] within Iraq's Al Anbar province between 2005 and 2007 is a compelling example. While by no means the sole reason for the Awakening, the record suggests that, while the Sunni tribes of Al Anbar initially found the al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) narrative attractive at a superficial level, they ultimately rejected AQI and its objective. The AQI objective had become associated with subjection of the population to intolerable violence by the insurgents, combined with submission to an unacceptably extreme form of religious control by the terrorist organisation.[46]

The key point for policy development that arises from the foregoing discussion relates to Kitson's observation that '… *In a conventional war the reverse is more usually the case and propaganda is normally deployed in support of armed might.*'[47] Strategy for dealing with insurgency must recognise what is essentially a reversal of the relationship between armed might and propaganda from that which applies in conventional war. The successful transmission of ideas becomes the currency of success while firepower, offensive operations and other traditional means of securing victory in warfare become supporting activities.[48] As the International Crisis Group notes in the Afghan context:

> *The Taliban is not going to be defeated militarily and is impervious to outside criticism. Rather, the legitimacy of its ideas and actions must be challenged more forcefully by the Afghan government and citizens.*[49]

Challenging these insurgent ideas is the province of what is termed 'Information Operations' (IO).[50] These operations are ultimately about telling a better story than one the enemy tells.

Telling a better story

A consistent and effective narrative arguably provides the counterinsurgent state with its most effective weapon against an insurgency. Robert Taber tells us that 'Isolation, military and political, is the great enemy of guerrilla movements.'[51] Political isolation occurs through the dislocation or defeat of the idea that motivates and mobilises the insurgents and their supporters. Yet ideas cannot be shot, imprisoned or exiled. The imprisonment of Nelson Mandela and the incarceration or banning of the rest of the leadership of the African National Congress by the Apartheid regime failed to suppress the idea of democracy which lay at the heart of the ANC insurgency. This is just one example of the resilience of ideas against physical measures.

The most effective way to counter an idea is by replacing it with another. By creating a narrative that offers an effective 'alternative idea' to that of an insurgency, the counterinsurgent can directly address the root of the problem rather than its outward manifestations.

The aspect of consistency of narrative is critical because it goes to the heart of the question of trust. Narratives can and should evolve as the situation changes, but the core internal logic of the narrative must remain consistent. If the state's narrative is inconsistent, it raises difficult questions in the population's minds as to whether its position was honest to begin with, thus potentially reinforcing the insurgency narrative.

The role of ideas invariably trumps the role of violence in resolution of insurgency. Sir Lawrence Freedman summarises the vitality of ideas and narrative to critically understanding the nature of insurgency conflict:

… superiority in the physical environment is of little value unless it can be translated into an advantage in the information environment. A sense of security, for example, is a matter of perception as much as physical fact.[52]

Coercive violence, by definition, makes people act in ways they otherwise would not. But this effect wears off once the coercion ceases. Ideas, on the other hand, can motivate people to action and thought without the constant application of force. The battle of ideas is therefore ultimately more decisive in ending insurgency conflict.

Human and social issues

Rectitude[53]

Rectitude, defined here as acting morally with integrity and justice, is a key concept in understanding insurgency and counterinsurgency. It has a direct relationship to the vitality of the idea explored in the previous section. Insurgents and their supporters make decisions influenced by their hearts as well as their heads. Protagonists lacking rectitude will have profound difficulties in getting others to accept whatever is morally ambivalent about their position or deeds. The South African example suggests failure associated with a lack of rectitude. The Apartheid state had a well-developed counterinsurgency strategy, supported by highly effective security forces rarely beaten in direct action. Despite this seemingly overwhelming advantage, the state lacked rectitude — the iniquity of its policy meant that most people, at home and abroad, were never going to accept anything less than its removal. A similar situation arose during and after the Algerian struggle for independence of the 1950s and 60s. The actions of the French military and, later, organisations such as the Organisation Armée Secrète (OAS), offended much of the population of Metropolitan France, which '… was roused to indignation at what was being done in its name, and much of the sentiment for withdrawal stemmed from this incident.'[54]

Successful protagonists in insurgency conflicts possess some form of relative moral 'good' that can be seen, both by their supporters and the

target population, somewhere near the core of their popular objective. This is not to state that 'moral rightness' can only exist on one side, nor is it trying to suggest that all insurgencies are automatically wrong and counterinsurgencies right. Unlike in conventional warfare where the society is at war because the state has made that decision, in insurgency elements of society can choose to opt 'in' or 'out' — on either side. Perceptions of rectitude can also be an important element of attraction to the cause. Rectitude also helps maintain the ability to persist in the fight.

Persistence

The strategist Carl von Clausewitz recognised that the more protracted an insurgency (which he called 'peoples' war') the more likely it was to succeed. David Galula suggests that the longer an insurgency lasts, the more likely it could convince the population that it can defeat the state. However, the idea that time favours the insurgent can be just one reason for persistence in these wars. Another reason such conflicts can endure is that they can also bring substantial personal gain to the insurgent.[55]

Accepting a popular objective to the point of risking everything by becoming an insurgent is generally not a decision taken lightly. The very decision has a powerful effect on those people taking it. Their resolve increases. Having made the necessary mental adjustment and sacrifice, a person becomes more likely to endure whatever it takes to win. There is an obvious association between this idea and the capacity for insurgent violence previously discussed. Often after taking part in a particularly bloody act, individual insurgents may feel that they have crossed some imaginary line that precludes them from ever rejoining normal society. They begin to think that since they cannot 'go back' to their old life the only option is to win, however long it takes. All of this means that persistence is also crucial to successful counterinsurgency.

Time is often far less friendly to the counterinsurgent than the insurgent. 'True believers' among insurgents[56] are radicalised and thus motivated to endure the necessary cost. On the other hand, if the wider population of a state is indifferent or opposed to a counterinsurgency cause, the polity will find it increasingly hard to justify and sustain

its actions. This links back to the need for a consistent and effective narrative. Similarly, the violent characteristics of insurgency can have a severely negative impact upon the will of those not committed to the state's campaign. Successful counterinsurgents must above all be patient. Once again, Galula has an answer to why this is important:

> As the war lasts, the war itself becomes the central issue and the ideological advantage of the insurgent decreases considerably. The population's attitude is dictated not by the intrinsic merits of the contending causes, but by the answer to these two simple questions: Which side is going to win? Which side threatens the most, and which offers the most protection? [57]

Some long-term insurgencies do gradually become 'stale' and less effective. This suggests that there may be an optimum time beyond which insurgents' persistence actually becomes a liability, as an extremely long campaign can signal their failure at least as much as the state's. [58] State persistence is an effective tool against insurgency because it creates doubt among the uncommitted and any wavering insurgents about the rebellion's chance of success. This leads to consideration of the place of reconciliation and compromise in insurgency conflicts.

Box 3

The Malayan Emergency

The Malayan Emergency (1948-1960) provides an example of the benefits of adaptation and a comprehensive counterinsurgency campaign. The war developed from post-WWII instability in the British colonial possession of Malaya. Unrest emerged from food shortages, widespread corruption and the breakdown of the rule of law. Additionally, sections of the ethnic Chinese population were aggrieved at the apparent inability of the colonial government to bring about an independent Malayan state, in which they anticipated greater political recognition.

This disquiet came to form the central agenda of an insurgency from the late 1940s to the early 1960s, prosecuted by the Malayan Communist Party (MCP). The MCP evolved out of the wartime resistance movement known as the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army. Despite the formal dissolution of the resistance following the restoration of the colonial government, the movement continued to exist, retaining much of its organisational structure and its strong affiliation with the Chinese community. From 1948, the military wing of the MCP, later known as the Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA), engaged in a campaign of guerrilla warfare against the British colonial government and its post-independence successors. The tactics employed by the MCP and MRLA were typical of insurgencies before and since. The sabotage of commercial and agricultural operations such as tin mines and rubber plantations, the destruction of infrastructure and transport, and the abduction and murder of prominent pro-government figures were commonplace.

Although the initial response to the insurgency was somewhat indifferent, the assassination of the British High Commissioner in 1951 by Communist terrorists brought greater attention to the conflict. Victory came through the coordinated implementation of social and economic policies that addressed the grievances of marginalised sections of Malayan society combined with execution of a military campaign that vigorously pursued the perpetrators of the insurrection. This strategy was largely the brainchild of the British Director of Operations during the early stages of the Emergency, Sir Harold Briggs.

The Australian contribution to the Commonwealth Forces during the Emergency was substantial given the size of the Australian Defence Force at the time and its commitments to other conflicts in the region. Australian Infantry and RAAF aircrews conducted combat operations against insurgent forces, supported by other units from the Australian Army, RAN and RAAF, which also assisted with the reconstruction of infrastructure.

An often-misunderstood fact about the victory in Malaya is that it arose despite considerable initial failures in military and government policy and performance. A key lesson the conflict demonstrates is the vitality of learning and adaptation by all elements of a counterinsurgent force. The eventual successful realisation of Briggs' conceptual planning also reinforces the utility of a comprehensive approach.

Compromise and reconciliation

Cicero said an unjust peace was better than a just war. The historical record suggests the more successfully concluded counterinsurgency efforts typically involve clear compromise. It also demonstrates that ideas, ultimately, cannot be bludgeoned out of people. In any case, it would always be inappropriate for a liberal democracy to pursue such an option. Changing ideas requires dialogue and engagement with other ideas, and compromise of some form is necessary to address the grievances at the heart of an insurgency.[59] Of course, in some insurgent conflicts there is always the possibility that grievances can become so ingrained that they exceed the ability of either or both sides to compromise. The art of compromise, then, is time sensitive — steps need to begin before grievances become intractable.

The use of compromise has a twofold effect. It can reduce the impact of an insurgent narrative by providing the state with the seed of a convincing counter-narrative. A RAND Corporation report summarises some of the useful potential effects of compromise in a counter-insurgency campaign:

> … *giving dissidents a voice, and coopting guerrilla demands that have wide popular support — all with the goal of out-persuading and out-mobilizing, not merely out-fighting, the guerrillas.*[60]

The possibility of compromise raises the question of reconciliation. Insurgency conflict fractures societies, creating rifts that can provide the sources of future tension and conflicts. It is a maxim of counterinsurgency warfare that 'Lasting peace — that is, lasting victory — comes through conciliation.'[61] Reconciliation requires parties to make the necessary accommodations that will allow society to resume a degree of normalcy. An important point given the current tendency for other nations to become involved in the support of a host nation's counterinsurgency efforts is that the reconciliation is necessarily between the host nation state and the insurgency — not the insurgency and the third party states.

The Iraqi conflict well illustrates the benefits of practical reconciliation efforts. The engagement of many former Sunni insurgents within the 'Sons of Iraq' (SOI)[62] organisation since late 2007 and its adoption by the Government of Iraq helped substantially weaken the Sunni insurgency in parts of Iraq in 2007 and 2008. This process has cut across sectarian lines and in broader areas of Iraqi life beyond the geographic region dominated by the Sunni minority. As *The Washington Post* noted in 2008:

> *Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has purged many Shia extremist leaders that he considered irreconcilable, and replaced them in many cases with former Ba'athists (most Sunni) with whom he thought he could work.*[63]

The Iraqi example is by no means unique. The Northern Ireland peace process, leading to a power-sharing arrangement in a viable

democratic structure, shows that extreme political rhetoric and practical reconciliation measures are not always mutually exclusive.[64] This experience suggests another enduring characteristic of insurgency-related conflict — the high premium afforded to adaptability.

The adaptive nature of insurgency conflict

All successful insurgencies are highly adaptive.[65] Insurgent movements start from a position typically of weakness combined with agility. The path to successful insurgency necessarily involves a lot of adaptation and learning. The transition from being reasonably law-abiding citizens to members of a violent, subversive organisation is fraught with peril. Those who survive have had demonstrated and reinforced to them, from a very early stage of their struggle, the benefit of being adaptive. This can reinforce an institutionalisation of adaptive behaviour in insurgent organisations. So counterinsurgents need to work hard to disrupt this adaption cycle.

To be successful, counterinsurgents must identify changes in the way that insurgents act, and be agile enough to adjust the campaign. There are four crucial elements to effective adaptation by counterinsurgents:

- Sound intelligence regarding the insurgency;
- A deliberate system of critical review and analysis that reports in a timely fashion to leadership that is willing to both listen and act as and where necessary;
- An education system to pass on the necessary adaptive measures and inculcate them with the full range of counterinsurgency actors; and
- A sound policy framework and doctrinal basis upon which to evaluate what is happening.

The cultural norms of the society in which the conflict is occurring affect the ability of the various actors to adapt. This introduces the notion of culture as a key driver of the nature of insurgency conflict.

The role of culture

Because insurgencies are wars within societies, fought about matters regarding the form of political leadership, policy and structure of those societies, there is a far greater correlation between success and cultural sensitivity than that present in conventional wars. As Sir Lawrence Freedman observed:

> Success in such warfare depends on an understanding of behaviour and attitudes, and so science and engineering may provide fewer clues about its future than sociological and anthropological assessments of questions of identity and social cohesion.[66]

Perhaps unfortunately for contemporary Western military preference, the centrality of culture to insurgency and counterinsurgency profoundly changes the nature of the problem. It moves from one of a 'pure' military science, to be logically analysed and fixed in a mechanistic fashion, to a study in sociological behaviour bounded by the unpredictability of complex human relationships and passion.[67] It follows that the best methods to use in fighting such wars are ones that have the right cultural and social fit. This may seem obvious, but may also be counterintuitive to what might theoretically otherwise be 'best practice' in counterinsurgency.

The current conflict in Afghanistan provides a ready example. Some authors have argued that in Afghanistan the use of appropriate cultural understanding would involve abandoning the idea of reinforcing the central government and resorting to empowering tribal leaders and restoring balance to a tribal cultural system that has effectively been in crisis since the Soviet invasion.[68] The paradox arises from the point that, while the aim of the counterinsurgent is to support the state, the apparent cultural imperatives associated with Afghan society suggest a way forward that requires diminishing the central authority of the state. This example also highlights another point about culture and counterinsurgency: that 'cultural awareness' is more complex than merely not causing offence through inadvertent breach of polite social

norms at the level of personal exchanges. The true complexity that issues of culture bring to resolution of insurgency relates to understanding the feasibility of protagonists' political objectives with respect to prevailing culture norms in the target society. Those involved with insurgency conflict must not only use *ways* and *means* that resonate within the culture of the target society, but must also be seeking a political *end* that is culturally suitable.

Yet culture is not a panacea in defeating insurgency. The pattern of the past decade, where foreign powers have helped counter insurgency within a host nation, has perhaps unduly highlighted the role of culture. Examination of history suggests that this, while understandable, may actually be a 'false positive'. The fact is that cultural understanding, including language skills, does not provide a 'silver bullet' for insurgency. There are many insurgency conflicts, such as the examples of the ongoing communist one in the Philippines and that with the FARC in Colombia, that have persisted despite the fact that the counter-insurgency forces share the same cultural dispositions as the insurgents. Colin S. Gray summarises this issue:

> *The problem lies with the iconic adoption of culture as the answer. It is not. Recognition of the importance of culture is a part of the answer to the question of how to be effective in war against irregular (and regular!) enemies.*[69]

Knowledge of how culture affects insurgency-related conflict is important, but most typically it is of greatest use when mixed with an understanding of its contextual relationship to the other human and social issues already discussed in this chapter. These issues, when combined with knowledge about the material and physical practicalities of insurgency and counterinsurgency, can lead to the kind of rich understanding needed to inform policy development and implementation.

Material issues and practicalities

Organisation and support

Every insurgency is organised in some fashion, otherwise it is just a mob. The need for secrecy might not make the organisation readily apparent, or conventional in appearance. If the organisation is invisible to counterinsurgents, it is probably the case that their search is either unsophisticated, or that they are not looking hard enough or in the right places.

The degree of organisation can be either a strength or a vulnerability of an insurgency. Good organisation that retains operational security can hide insurgent designs and plans while advancing the popular objective. A poor or security-compromised organisational structure can seriously set back the insurgent cause. A point often misunderstood about an insurgent organisation is that it has a complexity that relates not only to the sophistication of the structure and its inherent protective measures but also the range of activities that highly evolved insurgencies embrace. Insurgencies are readily associated with their violent acts, leading to an emphasis on the military functions of their organisations. This does not fully recognise that insurgencies aim to attack governance across the full range of state activity. Successful insurgents thus adopt organisational structures that frequently resemble those of government. Therefore counterinsurgents focusing policy on military and security aspects can fail to respond across the full spectrum of government endeavour, thus potentially ceding some important aspects of the fight.

Guerrilla war is typically 'waged by the few but dependent on the support of the many.'[70] Support takes many forms, from provision of personnel such as foreign jihadists; financial support from a diaspora; or the smuggling of arms into a conflict zone. Such support can and should be a target for an efficient and determined counterinsurgent. A range of relatively simple initiatives such as asserting border controls, tracking and regulating capital flows and public diplomacy campaigns aimed at target populations are examples of policy measures that can reduce insurgent support. The current situation with Taliban

insurgents supporting each other across the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan highlights the imperative to act on such initiatives.

Bearing the costs

In 1774, a British commander witnessing the situation on the eve of the American Revolutionary war cautioned his superiors in England:

> *If you think ten thousand men sufficient, send twenty; if one million pounds is thought enough, give two; you will save both blood and treasure in the end. A large force will terrify, and engage many to join you, a middling one will encourage resistance, and gain no friends.*[71]

This commander clearly grasped a key factor commonly misunderstood about insurgency — that of cost.

The association of insurgency conflict with labels such as 'Small Wars' or 'military operations other than war'[72] and the apparent frugality of insurgent activity leads to the misperception that such wars are cheap — and cheaper than conventional war. As David Galula simply put it *'Insurgency is cheap, counterinsurgency is costly.'*[73] Not only is it a costly business,[74] but the costs are not always obvious. Beyond the cost of so called 'blood and treasure'[75] there is an opportunity cost that is not always as apparent but is perhaps more important. Societies preoccupied with insurgency will not attend to other matters as well as they might have otherwise. These include issues of development, social justice, education and health. Violence and fear in a society also create widespread trauma and potentially sow the seeds of future discontent and trouble. Thus measures to pre-empt the conditions that foster insurgency are a wise investment. If such efforts fail, counterinsurgents must be ready to bear the wide costs of the ensuing conflict. Understanding both the quantitative financial costs and the qualitative political and social costs of insurgency conflict reinforces the need for a comprehensive approach.

The comprehensive approach

Successful counterinsurgency campaigns need a comprehensive approach. In the words of historian, author and former US Army Officer Andrew Krepinevich:

> *Counterinsurgency requires a unity of effort and command among the military, political, economic and social dimensions of the conflict. Reconstruction efforts in the absence of security will almost certainly fail, as will attempts at political reform.*[76]

There is nothing new about this. A study of the British record in colonial counterinsurgencies during the 20th century noted that success more often occurred where there was close co-operation between the military and civilian government on matters *'that attacked the causes of unrest at the same time that it combated the insurgents'.*[77]

Selection of the term 'comprehensive' to describe this enduring characteristic of successful counterinsurgency, rather than the 'whole of government' or 'interagency' labels used in Australia and the United States respectively, is deliberate. Those terms are so loaded and used with rhetorical abandon that they risk losing much of their meaning. They also restrict thinking about counterinsurgent actions to those relating to the instruments of the state. Since insurgency is essentially societal warfare, counterinsurgency requires a 'whole of society' approach. Use of the word comprehensive embraces this idea. It allows for diverse approaches that incorporate, for example, commercial entities, religious elements and other non-governmental organisations as well as the instruments of state in any considered response to insurgency. Importantly, for those trying to understand the nature of effective counterinsurgency action, the term 'comprehensive' suggests that:

> *… the fight against the insurgents is not set apart from the normal practises of government; rather the campaign is fought on all fronts: political, economic, cultural, social, administrative and military.*[78]

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan provide examples of this at the tactical level through the use of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT). These multi-disciplinary organisations work to address lines of operation involving the economy, development, civil capacity-building and governance. Of course, the need for a comprehensive approach is equally applicable at all levels of the conflict. All too frequently the ability to implement such an approach depends upon the permissiveness of the environment, reflecting the degree to which the state or the insurgency has attained control.

Box 4

Confrontation

The Republic of Indonesia strongly objected to the 1963 proposal to incorporate the former British colonial possessions on the Malay Peninsula and the island of Borneo into the new state of Malaysia. Irregular Indonesian militias sought to foment an insurgency against Commonwealth forces on Borneo. As the conflict wore on, incursions by Indonesian regulars across the shared land border on Borneo became the norm, changing the character of the war.

Australia's initial contribution to the conflict in 1964 was the deployment of engineers and other combat support personnel to assist Commonwealth forces in the border regions of Borneo. Throughout the conflict, Australian Special Air Service (SAS), Artillery and Engineering personnel continued to serve in British Units. Additionally, stationed on the Malay Peninsula from April 1955 were Australian infantry troops, and limited numbers of RAN and RAAF personnel as part of the British Commonwealth Strategic Reserve.

The first combat operations involving Australian forces occurred in October 1964 when the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR) operating out of their base at Terendak, Malaya, along with Commonwealth counterparts, confronted and captured a group of Indonesian troops that had deployed on the Malay Peninsula. As hostilities in Borneo escalated over the following months, an increasing number of Australian personnel were seconded to Commonwealth forces in Sarawak, with 3 RAR ultimately undertaking a five-month deployment in the province from March 1965. Upon completion of this deployment, 3 RAR returned to Terendak, where they were relieved by 4 RAR in August 1965. In April 1966, 4 RAR deployed to Sarawak, operating in the same area in which 3 RAR had served. This deployment lasted until a peace settlement ended the conflict in August 1966.

The hallmark of the conflict was small-scale incursions on the part of the Indonesians, and retaliatory response on the part of Commonwealth forces. Australian infantry and SAS deployments were primarily involved in patrol, ambush and pursuit operations in border regions, operating in both Malaysian and Indonesian territory. The political sensitivity involved with pursuing insurgents into Indonesian territory meant that little to no public acknowledgment of such counter-incursions and pursuits were made on the part of the Australian government. Australian casualties in the campaign were 23 dead and 7 wounded.

Many of the lessons Australia, and the RAR in particular, took from the conflict were to inform tactical activity in the subsequent involvement in the Vietnam War. Confrontation also placed Australia in a delicate geopolitical and strategic situation — highlighted by the need to preserve commitment to longstanding Commonwealth partners and maintain regional stability while managing the delicacy of Australia's relationship with Indonesia. In this respect, confrontation anticipated the delicate geopolitical and strategic situation that could arise for Australia in any future involvement with counterinsurgency conflicts in the region.

The imperative to control and pacify

To use the vernacular, protagonists in insurgency conflict strive to be 'control freaks'. This is because:

> *The type of sovereignty or control that prevails in a given region affects the type of strategies followed by political actors. Political actors try to shape popular support (or collaboration) and deter collaboration with their rival (or defection). As the conflict matures, control is increasingly likely to shape collaboration because political actors who enjoy substantial territorial control can protect civilians who live in that territory — both from their rivals and from themselves, giving survival-oriented civilians a strong incentive to collaborate with them, irrespective of their true or initial preferences.*[79]

The control sought encompasses the population, borders, information, commerce and narrative about the struggle — just about anything else that can be subject to control. The term 'pacification' refers to the use of control measures by the state, supported by complementary policy actions, to remove or prevent direct insurgent control of all or part of the population. History is full of examples of such control aiding counterinsurgent success. The British policy of using 'protected villages' to control elements of the population during the Malayan Emergency reflected the success — however slow and controversial — that they experienced with the use of concentration camps to control the Boer civilian population during the Second Boer War. The unpalatable nature of both these examples suggests why, of all the counterinsurgency characteristics, this one is perhaps the most problematic for modern democracies. Unfortunately, its difficulty does not diminish its importance.

Ideally, counterinsurgents achieve control with the co-operation of the target population — one of the desirable outcomes of successful and enduring pacification. However, control must occur, with or without the acceptance of the population. Sir Michael Howard's observation that 'order has to be established and maintained before

more positive and creative measures of "nation-building" can take place'[80] highlights the imperative to provide control as an enabler since it 'is a truism of counterinsurgency that a population will give its allegiance to the side that will best protect it'.[81] Security without control is a chimera, more than likely to signify a temporary lapse by the enemy rather than a permanently advantageous situation. Nor does achieving control signify the end of the insurgency. Pacification is not an end in itself but a means by which the state can create the necessary permissive environment, free of major insurgent influence, to enable the implementation of comprehensive measures addressing the issues raised by the insurgency.

Chapter 3

The Australian example: an enduring policy problem

Introduction

Defeating insurgency has been a problem for governments since antiquity[82] and remains one for contemporary policymakers. Australia's National Security Statement (NSS)[83] identifies concerns about insurgency in the country's immediate region, along with related troubles of communal violence, intrastate conflict and weak state institutions. The Australian case study shows that the record of strategic policy has typically not reflected the importance or nature of the challenge. This chapter examines five propositions to establish that counterinsurgency poses an enduring policy problem for Australia. The propositions are:

- Insurgencies have been a problem for Australia in the past;
- Insurgency presents Australia with contemporary problems;
- Insurgency-related problems are likely to present themselves to Australia in the future;
- Insurgency presents cost and risk to Australian interests; and
- Australian policies that deal with insurgency are absent, incomplete or inadequate.

A problem in the past

The ANZAC legend that arose from World War I has had a strong influence upon Australian society's imagination of war. Modern Australians associate war with the style of interstate conflict that the ANZACS fought. There is dissonance between this popular perception and the historical record. Australia's participation in state-on-state warfare has been the exception rather than the norm. The pattern of Australia's military conflicts is one of participation in insurgency-related wars. Australian involvements in the two World Wars and Korea, while significant, are the anomalies. The map at Figure 1 depicts the global scope of Australian deployments associated with insurgency that have been used as case studies in this paper.[84] These examples reinforce that many of the peacekeeping, peace enforcement and stabilisation missions in which Australia has participated have antecedents in insurgency.

The nature of Australian involvement in these conflicts, however, helps account for the institutionalisation of tactical rather than strategic approaches to counterinsurgency. Australia's campaigns have, with one notable exception, been as the junior partner in a coalition.[85] This has meant that the prime requirement of Australian participation has been to provide troops rather than strategic ideas. The consequence of this abdication of strategy to an ally was, as observed by a previous Chief of the Australian Army, 'where the campaign did not go well, we tended to hide behind our belief that our part of the campaign went well.'[86] This trend is evident from the Australian effort in Phuoc Tuy Province in Vietnam through to the conduct of operations in Al Muthanna and Dhi Qar Provinces during the Iraq War. Australia's failure to develop a strategic approach to — and our junior coalition partner status in — such counterinsurgency campaigns appears to have offered an excuse to avoid the blame from any subsequent strategic failure, perceived or real. The trend of tactical rather than strategic contributions has carried into the present.

1. Borneo
2. China
3. Iraq
4. Malaya
5. New Zealand
6. The Solomons
7. South Africa
8. Sudan
9. Timor-Leste
10. Vietnam

Figure 1:
Map showing location of Australian counterinsurgency case studies

A problem in the present

Australia's past is indeed prologue to the present situation. The list of involvements arising from insurgencies is relatively long: 'hot' insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq, stabilisation operations in Timor-Leste and Solomon Islands, peacekeeping duties in Africa and the Middle East and border protection activities involving the many refugees from such conflicts. This list only touches on the Australian Defence Force's (ADF) involvement.[87] Other Australian government agencies have varying policy concerns arising from contemporary insurgencies. For example, the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) reports:

… there are also continuing intrastate tensions, such as those in the southern Philippines and parts of Indonesia. The Melanesian islands of PNG, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Fiji continue to be prone to instability. In all these countries, broad-based growth will be critical to shore up support for democracy and to promote stability.[88]

The countries mentioned within this excerpt are not the only countries close to Australia or its interests that are challenged by insurgency.[89] Within Australia's wider region, nine of the ten members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations have had at least one insurgency within their borders during the last century; many of them have had two or more, some of which are still present. Figure 2 is a regional map depicting the extent of recent insurgency. The development in recent years of a Taliban-inspired insurgency in nuclear-armed Pakistan is legitimately a matter of concern for many nations, including Australia. In short, Australia's wider region is rife with insurgency-related conflict. This presents a strategic policy problem beyond the perhaps more familiar issues generated by Australian involvement in counterinsurgency in more distant places such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

Successive Australian governments have acknowledged both the benefits and negative side-effects of globalisation. The Howard Government's Defence Update in 2007 opined that '… in a globalised world, ignoring problems further afield only invites these threats to come closer to Australia.'[90] More recently Prime Minister Rudd has emphasised the importance of '… comprehensive engagement with the countries of Asia' and '… closer bilateral and regional relations with our neighbours.'[91] In the globalised era there is no guarantee that the problem of insurgency within states with benign foreign policy intentions will not affect their bilateral and regional relationships. The immediate by-products of insurgency are diverse and serious. They can include terrorism, human insecurity (encapsulating issues such as poverty, hunger, ethnic cleansing and refugee flows) and the conditions for transnational crime. In the longer term, nothing less than state failure and regional destabilisation are possible outcomes.

In other words, regional insurgencies can generate major and enduring problems for Australian national interests.
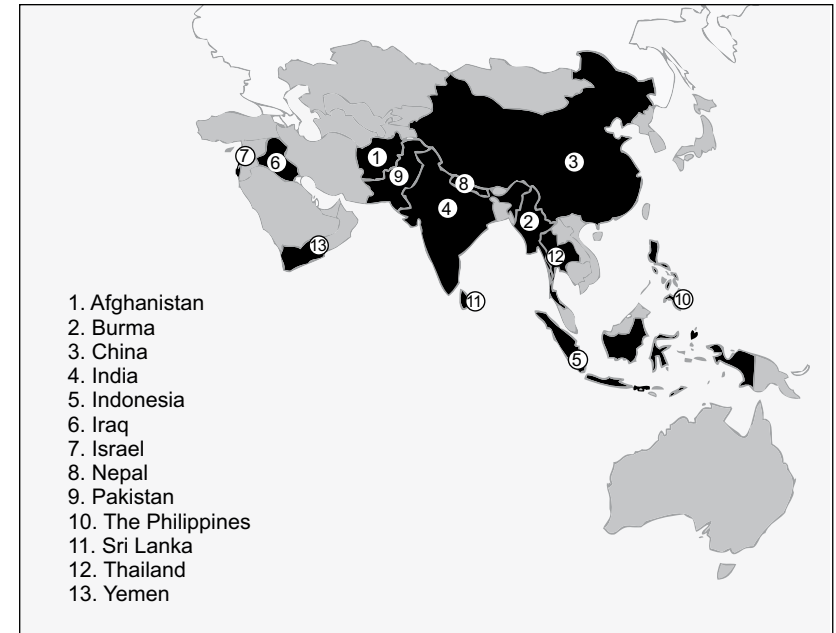

1. Afghanistan
2. Burma
3. China
4. India
5. Indonesia
6. Iraq
7. Israel
8. Nepal
9. Pakistan
10. The Philippines
11. Sri Lanka
12. Thailand
13. Yemen

Figure 2:
Regional map showing current or recent insurgencies

Box 5

The Vietnam War

The Vietnam War remains, in many respects, a watershed conflict for the Australian military. Not only was it the largest deployment of Australian troops since the Second World War, it proved politically and socially controversial.

The Australian involvement commenced with Prime Minister Robert Menzies' decision in 1962 to provide an Australian Army Training Team to assist in the instruction of South Vietnamese forces. It concluded with the Whitlam Government's withdrawal of all Australian personnel in 1973. Australia provided about 50,000 service personnel, with 519 personnel killed and 2398 injured.

Major involvement in combat operations began in June 1965 with the deployment of 1 RAR to serve under American control in Bien Hoa province. In 1966 Australian involvement in the war was recalibrated to encompass a larger Australian taskforce which was given control of Phouc Tuy province, in Southern Vietnam.

Australian operations in Phouc Tuy were reasonably successful in negating the physical threat of Vietcong (VC) insurgents throughout the province. Starting with the Battle of Long Tan in August 1966, the Australian Taskforce established and maintained tactical dominance within the province. Despite continued hostilities, this dominance was largely unchallenged for the remainder of deployment. The success of Australians in suppressing VC activity was primarily the result of effective tactics. These arose from the Army's hard-won experiences fighting the Japanese in the jungle during World War II, and subsequent engagements during the Malayan conflict and Confrontation.

Given that the war in Vietnam is widely considered today to have been an unmitigated disaster, the success of Australian forces at the tactical level in Phouc Tuy province is somewhat ironic. Although aspects of the tactics employed by Australian forces were sound, this did not translate into any ability of Australian leaders to influence the development of strategy at the higher levels of the US command. In addition, it did not translate to enduring pacification of the province, which relatively quickly reverted to VC control after the withdrawal of the Australian Task Force.

Several lessons arise from the Australian experience in the Vietnam War. One is that tactical proficiency in military forces conducting counterinsurgency is ultimately indecisive or even irrelevant if the wider counterinsurgency campaign strategy is flawed or poorly executed. Another lesson it highlights is the peril of being a junior partner in a coalition conducting counterinsurgency operations. The junior partner shares the risk of participation, while its ability to influence the campaign's conduct and strategic direction is often constrained. Given the eventual domestic unpopularity of the war, Vietnam also provides the definitive example of the need for counterinsurgents to provide an effective narrative to sustain public willingness to persist and endure the cost of such conflicts.

A problem in the future

Many of the current policy problems posed by insurgencies will persist well into the future. Australian commitment to the Afghan war appears resolute. Australian Defence Ministers have repeatedly emphasised commitment to the Afghanistan project.[92] The Australian representatives at the annual Australia/United States ministerial talks in 2009 endorsed the Obama Administration's increased focus on the

Afghanistan war and Australia's 2009 Defence White Paper reaffirmed the need for commitment.[93] However, Australia's future insurgency challenge goes beyond the conflicts that Australia is currently and directly involved in.

The Defence White Paper predicts that intrastate wars will remain the most common form of conflict until at least 2030.[94] Many of the insurgencies within the region continue to exhibit the complexities that have seen them remain unresolved for decades.[95] The journalist Sally Neighbour has highlighted just how resilient some threats prove to be in the face of efforts to destroy or contain them and in despite of some progress:

> *While substantial progress has been made in the fight against Jemaah Islamiah and its affiliates, with more than 500 arrests across the region, sobering evidence of a rebound is emerging on several fronts: in Indonesia, where JI has built a new beachhead in the volatile province of Sulawesi; in the Philippines, where regional terrorists are regrouping; and in southern Thailand, where a burgeoning insurgency is defying all attempts to contain it.*[96]

The likelihood of future regional difficulties with insurgencies goes beyond the continuation of current conflicts. The ADF anticipates future involvement in as yet unknown conflicts, stating in a key doctrinal publication released in 2007 that 'We must expect that in the future Australia will conduct stabilisation operations (such as those in the Solomon Islands and East Timor) more regularly than in the past.'[97] The Australian Government reinforced this in the 2009 Defence White Paper, noting that intrastate conflict will be '… an enduring feature, and assessed to be the most common form of conflict in the period to 2030'.[98]

A noted decline in the occurrence of interstate war reinforces the argument that intrastate conflicts will continue to loom large. Global trends in the nature of violent conflict over the last half century suggest that instances of insurgency are increasing. Ian Beckett provides

information that supports the claim that insurgency and terrorism have become the most prevalent forms of conflict since 1945:

> *According to the US Defense Department, the number of insurgencies rose from 28 in 1958 to 43 by 1964. In 1983, a directory of the guerrilla and terrorist organisations in existence since 1945 catalogued 147 groups existing or having existed in Europe, 115 in Asia and Oceania, 114 in the Americas, 109 in the Middle East, and 84 in Africa. [total of 569].*[99]

It could well be that the shape of most wars to come is already well known to us. In the words of the former United States Marine Corps Commandant, General Charles Krulak, war in the 21st century '… will not be the "son of Desert Storm"; it will be the "stepchild of Chechnya"'.[100]

Another potential boost to the likelihood of increased insurgency warfare is the demonstration effect of the current insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan. These wars signal to potential belligerents what Sir Lawrence Freedman has called '… strategies that give them a fighting chance.'[101] Iraq and Afghanistan show that Western conventional military superiority in weapons, tactics, technology and manpower can be countered to some extent through the adoption of an insurgency strategy. The US military has conceded as much, with a Department of Defense study group noting: 'Irregular warfare will continue to be the smart choice for our opponents.'[102]

The demonstration effect has an important implication for threat conceptions within Australian security policy, specifically with regard to the strategy that any future state aggressor might adopt. Typically, Australian Defence White papers have regarded attack from an aggressor state upon Australian interests as being a worst-case scenario.[103] The working assumption for this scenario is that the attack will be a conventional one, and the capabilities that Australia may need to counter the threat are calculated accordingly. However, an aggressor may well look at Australia's acknowledged combat capability edge within the region, and its strong alliance with the United States,

and decide that any aggressive acts against Australian interests are best undertaken through irregular means. A hypothetical example might see an aggressor foment or support insurgency within an important Australian regional partner or neighbour. The costs to Australia of such an approach could be high if national security policy does not recognise the possibility of such threats and respond with suitable strategic policy and capabilities.

Costs and risks

The direct costs and risks to Australian interests arising from insurgencies are not trivial. For instance, many more people have died in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan than were killed either on 9/11 or in the Bali bombings of 2002 and 2005. Modern liberal democracies place a high price on individual human life. And the human costs go beyond those of the people killed or injured in the conflict: societies engaged in counterinsurgency also experience considerable opportunity costs, including a reduction in resources available for domestic welfare purposes.

There is nothing small about the financial costs associated with fighting insurgencies. The United States alone has been estimated to have spent over $US 830 billion in Iraq and Afghanistan.[104] The economist and Nobel Laureate Joseph E. Stiglitz has claimed that the true costs of the Iraq war alone have been severely underestimated, citing a cost of $US 3 trillion.[105] What does the United States' expenditure on insurgency have to do with costs to Australia? The answer lies in the burden upon the struggling United States economy. This is money that the US Administration simply does not have for other purposes, such as to address impacts of the current global financial crisis or to sustain high-end defence capabilities with which to reassure its Asian allies disconcerted by changing power balances flowing from the rise of China.

None of this is to suggest that nations should not undertake counterinsurgency because it is expensive. Rather, the point is that the high and strategically significant budgetary demands of counterinsurgency policy reinforce the need for such policy to be based upon a strategic approach. And of course, the development of smarter counterinsurgency policy might involve consideration of alternative approaches to the conduct of such campaigns, some of which might be more cost effective.

For its part, Australia has spent substantial sums on its various commitments to conflicts and stabilisation. As Table 1 shows, Australia has spent over A$10 billion on the conduct of operations and aid in just four areas of concern over the past decade.[106] To put this figure into perspective, net defence spending (including capital acquisitions) for 2008-09 was calculated at A$22.1 billion.[107] The annual budget for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for 2007/08 was A$724 million.[108]

The Rudd government has a range of ambitious foreign policy objectives.[109] The primary and most effective tool to support the government's foreign policy work is DFAT. The figures from Table 1 show that Australian expenditure on Iraq, Afghanistan, Timor-Leste and Solomon Islands alone over the last decade would cover the DFAT operating budget for a decade at 2007-2008 funding levels. Noting recent concerns about the curtailment of DFAT's activities due to budgetary cuts, this may well point to a significant opportunity cost.[110]

Table 1.

Australian expenditure, A$ million, select conflicts, 1999-2009[113]

Location	Timor-Leste	Solomon Islands	Afghanistan	Iraq
Defence spending	3,751	188	2, 047	2,314
Overseas Development Assistance and other aid	823.7	1,000	122.4[111]	115.8[112]
Total	**4,574.7**	**1,188**	**2,169.4**	**2429.8**

Insurgencies not only inflict costs, they also present risks. These range from the immediate physical risk to individuals to the possible political repercussions for foreign policy objectives and alliances. The most immediate danger is the material threat posed to Australians travelling or living overseas.[114] A Lowy Institute Paper published in 2008 noted that 'The existence of a large diasporic community affects the definition (and achievement) of the national interest.'[115] One of the most fundamental of these interests is the physical security and safety of its citizens. Insurgency can endanger Australians overseas, and there is a high level of expectation among the Australian public that the government will provide extensive consular support to those affected by troubles abroad.[116] This issue represents risk (and cost) at several levels, including physical harm to those caught up, the costs of providing assistance, and risk to the government's reputation if matters go awry.

Less headline-grabbing but no less important are the risks to Australian foreign policy interests. Prime Minister Rudd has observed that 'For Australia and the United States, strategic stability in the Asia-Pacific is of crucial importance — both now and in the future.'[117] The destabilising impact of regional insurgencies (Figure 2) is one of the most pervasive sources of security and political risk in the Asia-Pacific region. It potentially threatens the achievement of the stated Australian strategic goals 'to maximise global and regional stability and ensure the global economy remains open.'[118]

Strangely, a case can be made that Australian involvement in assisting allies to fight insurgencies could present risks to alliance cohesion and harmony. In the past Australia has shown what has been described as nothing less than 'a filial attachment' to the national designs first of Britain and later the United States.[119] Evidently, though, there is a view in Australian politics and defence policy which rejects the concept that Australia should automatically heed the requests of its allies for contributions to distant theatres of war.[120] In this context, the question can be posed as to how key allies might react to Australia's exercising greater discretion in taking part in current or future counterinsurgency actions with them. National caveats placed upon the operational activities of Australian troops on deployments may also erode an ally's view of the utility of having Australia as a war-fighting partner.

The decision in 2008 to withdraw combat troops from Iraq, the Prime Minister's stated view at a NATO summit in April 2008 that 'Australia needs to have a bigger say in determining strategy in Afghanistan'[121] and the 2009 Defence White Paper[122] all highlight that the idea that independence is at the centre of Australian policy. This is not an issue when allies fully agree, but can introduce tension if divergent views develop, such as over the level, scope and duration of commitments. Tensions can also arise where one ally chooses not to become involved in a regional counterinsurgency activity while another does. This highlights that, just as with strategic policy in conventional war, strategic policy approaches to counterinsurgency must simultaneously account for alliance management and other, potentially competing, national interests.

Policy is inadequate

Australia does not have a discrete policy that directs national efforts on countering insurgency. The National Security Statement of December 2008 describes the nature of Australia's security concerns, their relative priorities and some of the approaches to be adopted, yet analysts have observed that it contains little new specific policy detail on how these will be implemented.[123] Instead, it foreshadowed further policy documents. Public information regarding a planned new counter-terrorism white paper has been slow to emerge, while the recent Defence White Paper has broadly aligned with previous official thinking on counterinsurgency.

In the absence of a comprehensive strategy, various departments have policies that touch upon the issues in a haphazard manner. There would be a reasonable assumption in most people's minds of a policy association between the Defence portfolio and insurgency. This association is not fully realised in publicly stated policy. Neither the 2000 Defence White Paper[124] nor the 2003 Defence Update mentioned insurgency as such, even if they did focus on unstable states in the region.[125] It was not until the 2005 Defence Update that insurgency was even mentioned, and

even then only in descriptive rather than policy prescriptive terms.[126] The Howard Government's final Defence Update,[127] in 2007, identified and described several of the concerns for Australian interests that arise from insurgencies. It noted that 'Defence, at government direction, has increased efforts to help stabilise dangerous situations in fragile states,'[128] and predicted that 'The ADF increasingly will be called on to fight irregular opponents and must therefore be able to mount counter–terrorism and counter–insurgency operations.'[129] But it did not provide policy detail on how this was to be achieved. The closest it strayed towards policy guidance was to observe that a 'credible and capable military' was complementary '… to what some call "soft power,"'[130] but no explanation was offered as to how or when this complementary effect was to be realised. The 2009 Defence White Paper echoed similar sentiments about the threat posed by insurgencies and instability. While it generally expanded on the Howard Government's language in relation to soft power and the requirement for heightened civil, military and whole of government co-operation, it has continued the trend of being light on specifics.

Increasing references to soft power in Australian defence policy suggest rising recognition of the need for a comprehensive policy approach across the range of government agencies concerned with insurgency and its consequences. Yet a critical examination of other Australian government agencies reveals a situation no better than that in Defence. PM&C, DFAT and AusAID all have policy publications[131] that identify concerns directly arising from issues commonly associated with insurgencies. These documents share three characteristics. First, they tend to describe issues rather than prescribe policy detail. Next, they focus more on the manifestations of insurgency (such as terrorism) and its consequences rather than its root causes. Finally, there is a lack of useful detail about policy coordinating mechanisms and the delivery of effects across the range of possible government responses. Australia clearly lags behind the United States and the United Kingdom here, as both those countries have well-developed policy directing a coordinated approach to counterinsurgency.[132]

In response, it might be claimed that having policy specifically to respond to insurgency is unnecessary or excessive. This view is understandable. The US experience offers a useful perspective for interpreting such claims. The American historian Brian Linn observed that 'Despite decades of personal experience to the contrary, army officers have consistently underestimated the difficulty of unconventional warfare, military occupation and pacification.'[133] While there is no comparable study of Australian military strategic culture, similar misconceptions have existed within the Australian Army in recent decades. A strong predilection exists in modern Western military organisations towards regarding successful conventional warfare as the acme of military art. All other forms of conflict, despite contemporary events demonstrating otherwise, are viewed as requiring less application. This in turn leads to the idea that existing strategic policy to deal with 'conventional war' is sufficient, as it can be adapted to the imagined lesser difficulties of other forms of war. Lieutenant General John Kiszely, Commandant of the United Kingdom's Defence Academy, identifies the problem with this view:

> Those tempted to fight small wars as if they were big wars might have noted Callwell's warning that 'the conduct of small wars is in certain respects an art by itself, diverging widely from what is adapted to the conditions of regular warfare.'[134]

Inadequate policy presents other risks too. There is the possibility that without policy to guide appropriate action Australia may miss opportunities to be proactive in averting emerging situations. A weakly developed strategic policy understanding of the nature of insurgency can lead to failures of conceptualisation that in turn can limit prospects for a rapid or effective response to new insurgency challenges. Following from the example of the East Timor intervention in 1999 it should not be a large leap of imagination to picture Australia's leading a counterinsurgency campaign without a larger ally's direct involvement. The American experience of dealing with the emergence of the Iraqi insurgency post-2003 suggests the difficulty in creating strategic policy for counterinsurgency and implementing it 'on the run'.

Conclusion

Counterinsurgency presents an important and enduring policy problem for Australia. The development and implementation of strategic policy has not adequately reflected this problem. Australian governments have occasionally recognised the need to do something about counterinsurgency but have not responded in a sustained or comprehensive strategic manner.

Box 6

Bougainville

Between 1988 and 1997, the province of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea (PNG) was the scene of a complicated and destructive insurgency, known as the Crisis, which pitted separatist elements of the indigenous population against the PNG Government and its supporters in the province. The splintering of the secessionist movement into sub-factions, and atrocities on all sides, further complicated hostilities.

The Bougainville conflict was largely the result of extreme dissatisfaction within the island's populace at the operations of a large copper mine in central Bougainville. Run by a subsidiary of the Australian multi-national Conzinc Rio Tinto Australia (CRA), the Panguna mine was the cause of considerable environmental degradation in the late 1970s and 1980s. Further, the mine's operators and their sponsors within the PNG Government were accused of denying local people the economic benefits of the enterprise.

This anger came to a head with the formation of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) in 1988, a declaration of independence and the subsequent establishment of the Bougainville Interim Government (BIG) in 1990. In

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the ensuing conflict, at least 8,000 Bougainvilleans lost their lives through violence and disease, while a further 50,000 were displaced. Hostilities ceased with the Burnham Truce in 1997. A key element of the truce was the deployment of an unarmed multinational military and civilian force to monitor the peace.

Australia led the 1998-2003 Peace Monitoring Group (PMG) and provided the bulk of its personnel and resources, although, due to initial local mistrust of Australia, New Zealand took the lead in most aspects of the six-month Truce Monitoring Group (TMG) that preceded it. Unusually, both the TMG and the PMG were unarmed as a condition of the Burnham Truce and subsequent accords, so these contributions were made up of military and civilian observers tasked with monitoring the terms of the ceasefire arrangements and undertaking information operations to sustain the peace, along with logistical support teams providing transport, supply, engineering and medical functions.

The Bougainvillean peace process was sponsored by New Zealand and supported by Australia and other regional neighbours. It showed respect for the cultural and societal values of Bougainville and the rest of Melanesia. This deliberate approach helped to reduce the resentment that had fed the insurgency. Additionally, the fact that TMG/PMG personnel were unarmed showed an understanding that it was in no one's interest to inject yet another armed force into a multi-factional conflict. Agreeing to this condition conveyed respect for local sovereignty — and undermined the appeal of a macho culture that had developed during the conflict that ran counter to the traditional matriarchal one. The TMG/PMG also made a conscious effort to adopt local customs of dialogue and reconciliation.

The Bougainvillean experience highlights the value of a strong sense of cross-cultural awareness and understanding,

something that is essential to any foreign military forces in their efforts to effectively address insurgency in unfamiliar societies or host nations. The peace processes agreed at Burnham also highlighted the vital role of compromise and reconciliation in the resolution of insurgency conflict.

Chapter 4

Defeating the Hydra: a strategic approach

Victorious warriors win first and then go to war, while defeated warriors go to war first and then seek to win.
– Attributed to Sun-Tzu

The first thing that must be apparent when contemplating the sort of action which a government facing insurgency should take, is that there can be no such thing as a purely military solution because insurgency is not primarily a military activity.
– General Sir Frank Kitson[135]

Introduction

Defeating an insurgency is not impossible. As Colin Gray has noted, we do know how to do counterinsurgency — it is not a mystery — although ignoring this knowledge all too frequently produces unfortunate results.[136] The aim of this chapter is to identify 'best practice' in counterinsurgency policy approaches and contrast it with the contemporary situation. This will inform policy recommendations.

An important clarification should be made regarding those recommendations. It seems highly likely that the established trend

of Australia's aiding other nations with their counterinsurgency endeavours will continue. Accordingly, the policy approaches discussed take into account the likelihood of Australia's providing counterinsurgency support to another nation, either within a coalition or unilaterally. Australia's current and future security thus requires substantial intellectual and strategic engagement with the art of small wars, as well as the science of developing national capabilities for their prevention.

The chapter begins with a close examination of what is required from policy. Strategy is identified as the necessary element to address the gap between policy aspirations and desired effects. The ways and means of counterinsurgency strategy will then be analysed.

Policy is king

The primacy of policy

Policy is king, but often is ignorant of the nature and character of war.
– Colin S. Gray.[137]

The Clausewitizian idea that war is a political act is never more correct than with respect to insurgencies. At the heart of these conflicts are passionate, violent arguments about the political structure, activities and direction of the state. Counterinsurgency requires a

> *… political scheme that directs and integrates an entire array of initiatives, actions, and programs in the areas of security, political transition, security-sector reform, reconstruction, economic development, governmental capacity development, diplomacy, and the rule of law.*[138]

This is clearly the domain of policy, but rather than representing any single portfolio or issue, the complexities mandate a comprehensive approach. Heightening the policy difficulty, as pointed out by Gray, is the intermixing of the nature and character of war among the more

mundane social policy issues associated with counterinsurgency. It is exceptionally rare today to find policymakers with a sound grasp both of war and social policy.

Those who maintained the British Empire from the 17th to 20th centuries understood that:

> *The conduct of small wars is in fact in certain respects an art by itself, diverging widely from what is adapted to the conditions of regular warfare, but not so widely that there are not in all its branches points which permit comparisons to be established.*[139]

This highlights two important aspects regarding policy. The first one is that defence and security policy for conventional wars will not suffice for the conduct of counterinsurgency warfare, despite some areas of overlap. The second point is that while defence and security policy alone is not sufficient for successful counterinsurgency, it is tied up in the policy mix required. While politics can permeate all military action,

> *'… in conflicts like Iraq and Afghanistan war and policy are even more deeply intertwined.'*[140]

Unfortunately, the wrong tool, that is the military instrument, is often the primary response to insurgency.[141] This has serious policy ramifications.

The wrong tool for the right job

We know from our understanding of insurgency that the need for state control, combined with the use of violence by insurgents, will often require the use of military force by the counterinsurgent state. Equally though, the decisive object of the struggle — the population's willing compliance with the state's political agenda — is not an object that military means is well suited to, or perhaps even capable of, attaining. Any response to insurgency that deliberately[142] relies upon military policy primacy is grievously flawed. The defeat of military capability will not result in the capitulation of an insurgency, which after all draws its strength from its popular objective.[143]

The ideal role of military security policy in a counterinsurgency campaign is to create a sufficiently secure and stable environment to maximise the potential for dealing with other vital policy aspects of the problem. The activity of US-led forces in Iraq during the surge of 2006-2008 provides a strong example. The role of armed force often will be 'very limited, if essential.'[144]

With the Australian experience in mind, an important side observation is warranted about the nature of the military instrument employed. As a senior Australian Army officer has recently noted, counterinsurgency is not a task that can or should be left only to Special Forces.[145] While Special Forces have great utility in a wide range of tasks in counterinsurgency, they are simply unable to provide the scale of persistent presence necessary to secure or control a target population. A larger number of more conventional forces could better undertake that task. Just as solely military policy approaches are inadequate, approaches that default to Special Forces as the primary military capability employed are similarly unlikely to produce the enduring effects required. Perhaps one of the reasons that both are misemployed arises from misconceptions about the policy problem being confronted.

The problem of 'unknown' knowns
One major challenge to sound counterinsurgency policy is simply recognising a need for it. The situation resembles former US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's 'unknown knowns.'[146] Characterising the early years of both the current Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns was denial at the highest levels of government (including by Rumsfeld) of the nature of those wars.[147] States cannot hope to develop and implement counterinsurgency policies when they do not acknowledge the type of policy problem they have. This is neither a new phenomenon, nor one unique to the US and its current allies. Bruce Hoffman highlights Algeria as an earlier example of the failure to identify a budding insurgency:

> 'Ordinary banditry,' said a high-ranking government official in Algiers … By the time the insurrection was finally recognized for what it was, only drastic political and military

> action would have reversed the tide, and slowly in any case.[148]

The failure to acknowledge insurgency is just one 'unknown known' to plague policy development. A related one is poor collective memory — the failure to recognise that the policy questions and required approaches confronted today echo those faced before. The US and its allies may have gone into Afghanistan and Iraq without much in the way of counterinsurgency policy, yet the US already had sound national policy direction in this area more than 40 years ago.[149] It may be argued that, had the direction and intent of McGeorge Bundy's draft of *National Security Action Memorandum No. 182, Counterinsurgency doctrine*, been understood and applied in the early stages of either contemporary conflict, fewer grievous policy errors would have been made. That said, having policy without acting upon it does not solve the issue at hand. A fine line often exists between effective policy and rhetoric.

Rhetorical warfare and strategic policy struggles
The long years since the attacks of 9/11, and the subsequent involvement of many nations in new counterinsurgency campaigns, have produced a proliferation of policy pronouncements. Yet there remains a strong sense that many of these are little more than rhetoric, leading some credible observers to such comments as 'what we have now is not a real strategy — its business as usual'[150] and 'my government has not taken steps to demonstrate that it views this war as it says it does.'[151] While some attempts to address this disconnect have occurred,[152] there remains reason to believe that rhetoric continues to triumph over practical policy. Part of the problem is that the complexities of the issues at hand are easier to describe than address.

Another problem is that the policy issues associated with counterinsurgency touch upon the long-standing preoccupations, preferences and stakes of the Western strategic policy communities involved. This could be characterised as 'the wars we have versus the wars we like'. Since the Cold War, Western strategic policy has tended to stay focused on 'conventional' warfare. Sir Lawrence Freedman has written about lesser contingencies being 'resented as a distraction from the main business of preparing for a major war' and emphasised

that policymakers and strategists are wary of small wars.[153] While this preference has its logic — such conflicts are rarely wars of necessity or survival for Western nations — it is highly illogical to ignore the real and present risks that insurgencies can and do represent. This tension continues to weaken counterinsurgency policy. The recent vigorous debate on this in the US has not, so far, had a credible echo among allies.[154]

No one is seriously advocating that the US (or Australia) abandon its prowess in 'conventional warfare' to specialise overwhelmingly in counterinsurgency. This would be a false choice. But that is not to say that there is no dilemma. As a recent report from a US military think tank observed:

> There are real risks both in changing too little and in changing too much. And to avert failure in Iraq or Afghanistan may require a real sacrifice in meeting future challenges elsewhere that cannot be avoided by ignoring conventional threats or by insisting on balance. The tradeoffs are real, they are not artificial, and the dilemmas they create cannot be ducked.[155]

The force structure choice confronting the US (and many of its allies) is not between a force optimised for either 'conventional' or 'counterinsurgency and stabilisation' warfare, but rather how to reconcile within one force structure the ability to handle both demands with the resources available. Robert M. Gates, the current US Secretary of Defense, is acutely aware of this challenge.[156] However, action has proven difficult even for those inclined towards it. In the years since Gates became Defense Secretary there was no deliberate re-prioritisation of funding until the Defense Budget of April 2009. Nate Freier sums up the danger that Gates and the Obama Administration may see with the status quo:

> America will not be well served by a national security structure designed to defeat Goliath while most vulnerable to a sea of very capable Davids.[157]

While Australian rhetoric about the nature of current and future threats has developed considerably since September 11 2001, our strategy and capabilities have not evolved commensurately. Several Australian government publications have described the trend towards 'war among the people',[158] but little change has been evident in the linear development of Australia's defence and security capabilities.[159] Australia's commitments to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan are the latest in a lengthy record of national engagement with counterinsurgency. Yet Australian strategic policies, doctrine, force structures and security culture have remained largely rooted in a paradigm of preparing for 'conventional' wars. Alan Dupont's observation that ADF missions in recent years 'bear little resemblance to the kinds of wars anticipated or deemed worthy of serious consideration by a generation of Australian defence planners'[160] is accurate and echoes the trend described elswhere in this paper.

Since the 1970s, Australian national security planners have sought to justify their primary focus on conventional warfare with the premise that capabilities optimised for 'high level' conventional war could readily adapt (or 'step down') to conduct 'low level' conflicts successfully. This is essentially supposition, rather than fact demonstrable by historical example. It could, for instance, be usefully evaluated against the difficulties experienced in Iraq by the United States, arguably the world's most competent exponent of modern conventional warfare. General George Casey, the current US Army Chief of Staff, and former Commander in Iraq, has pointedly said:

> I used to believe if we soldiers could do conventional war we could do anything. That's not true. In conventional battle we manoeuvre to avoid the civilian population. In future wars we have to prevail among the people. That changes everything.[161]

The recent experience in Iraq and Afghanistan is not anomalous, either in terms of the type of campaign that is likely[162] or the inadequacy of conventional defence and security policy. A counterinsurgency campaign cannot be concluded using policies and capabilities optimised

for conventional warfare; indeed, such an approach practically guarantees strategic failure. There is a place for conventional thinking or capabilities in counterinsurgency activity. Indeed, many tactical level activities conducted by counterinsurgents are indistinguishable from those conducted in conventional warfare. However, these must be balanced with the other measures required by the nature of counterinsurgency. This balancing of ways and means to achieve the desired counterinsurgency effect is the realm of strategy.

Box 7

Timor-Leste

Australia's major military intervention in Timor-Leste began after outbreaks of violence against the civilian population by pro-Indonesian militias following the 1999 vote in favour of independence. Australia led the International Force East Timor (INTERFET) under a United Nations mandate. The intervention signified the reversal of a nearly 25-year Australian policy of supporting East Timorese integration into Indonesia. It was the largest Australian military deployment since the Vietnam War and the first time Australia led a major regional peacekeeping and stabilisation force.

The operation initially aimed to re-establish order and protect East Timorese civilians. It then sought to provide an umbrella of security under which national reconstruction and reconciliation could take place as Timor-Leste made the transition towards independence under UN administration. Although Timor-Leste continues to suffer from a wide range of economic and social problems, the Australian-led international effort there in 1999-2000 is regarded as a major foreign policy and humanitarian achievement.

There have been two subsequent 'surge' deployments to

Timor-Leste, one in 2006 and another in 2008, that dealt with upsurges in political unrest surrounding parliamentary elections and a military mutiny. Australia still maintains troops in the country at the request of the Timor-Leste Government to assist with security and stabilisation.

Although Australia's deployments to Timor-Leste were not strictly counterinsurgency operations, several aspects are directly relevant to counterinsurgency policy. Assisting Australian and international forces during INTERFET was the fact that the overwhelming majority of the East Timorese population did not welcome the presence of the militias. This enabled INTERFET forces to physically isolate the militia insurgents and sustain population protection and control. By observing culturally and socially appropriate behaviour during their interaction with the population, INTERFET troops were able to generate goodwill and translate this into tactical intelligence that assisted in the many successful operations to capture and disperse remaining militia.

At the political level, central to Australia's policy was the importance of host-nation primacy. A key objective of both the initial intervention and the ongoing international presence is to protect democratic processes in Timor-Leste and the stability of the national government. The Australian troops that remain in Timor-Leste operate largely in a support and advisory role to local police and military forces. They remain there at the request of the Timor-Leste Government. Timor-Leste will require ongoing persistence and political will from Australia and the international community to succeed.

Strategy

Strategy is the bridge between policy and fighting, 'where theory and practice meet.'[163] For counterinsurgents, strategy can and should provide

the doctrine that David Galula calls 'the practical answer to the problem of how to channel efforts in a single direction.'[164] The art of strategy, and counterinsurgency strategy in particular, is frequently misunderstood, and poorly developed and executed. Not helping matters is the situation described by Hew Strachan whereby the word 'strategy' has acquired a universality which has robbed it of meaning.[165] Australia and the US have not been immune to this. A notable US counterinsurgency practitioner and teacher[166] said of US efforts in Iraq before the surge that:

> *The coalition lacked more than troops in Iraq. It lacked imagination and insight. Without an operational concept to guide the conduct of the war, Lieutenant General Sanchez and CJTF-7 lacked the link between strategic ends and tactical means that would ensure a successful outcome to the struggle, or even a calculation of the necessary means to wage it.*[167]

This view that strategy is lacking has widespread support. A typical example from the US Army's senior professional journal states that 'While the American military has made great strides in the tactical and operational aspects of counterinsurgency, it still faces challenges in the realm of strategy.'[168]

Strategy, as described by Alan Dupont, remains the most suitable tool to provide the 'road map for prioritising our national security objectives and identifying the most effective instruments and policies for achieving these objectives.'[169] That it can do this in counterinsurgency conflict is reinforced by views as diverse as those of a Harvard University human rights academic and scholar, and a former Australian Army officer who worked as a counterinsurgency adviser to the US Secretary of State.[170] Despite this imperative, the development of suitable strategy remains fraught with problems.

A large part of the reason for this within the Australian context is that much of the nation's policy community treats the word 'strategy' as synonymous with 'capability acquisition'. This mistake occurs in official documents[171] and wider commentary, such as public discussion of procurements and costs associated with the 2009 Defence White Paper. Debate over capability acquisition is not strategy. Neither is analysis of Department of Defence spending, nor commentary about defence industry policy. Strategy is the outcome of describing what you want to achieve within the context of how you will do it, including with what instruments.

Strategy, as described by the German strategist Von Moltke the Elder, 'is based on, and may include, the development, intellectual mastery, and utilization of all of the state's resources for the purpose of implementing its policy in war.'[172] This paper has explained why such a tool is vital to the complexities of a counterinsurgency campaign.

Importantly, two types of strategy are required to help states prosecute these conflicts. The first is obvious, and would be the strategy to account for the specifics of a given counterinsurgency campaign. This requires a strategy 'tailored to the specific characteristics of the challenge it confronts.'[173]

The second form of strategy required is more akin to 'Grand' strategy: somewhat generic and with potentially wider utility. This strategy is about 'a war' rather than 'the war'. Such strategy for Australia would not only detail 'how' to conduct counterinsurgency but also 'when'[174] and 'why'. It should inform Australia's general approach to the issue of counterinsurgency, while acknowledging that the political factors and perceptions of the day will also be drivers of particular approaches. Such strategy should detail the legitimate interests that Australia has in the resolution of such conflicts (the 'why').

Most significantly, such grand counterinsurgency strategy would detail the manner in which the country would seek to achieve its aims and describe the means that it employs to do so — the 'how'. To be effective this would require far more precision and specificity than the buzzwords and generalisations of much contemporary policy. In doing so, it would provide the critical architecture for the state to develop the comprehensive capabilities needed to achieve its declared objectives. Such a grand counterinsurgency strategy would be a vital enabler of the campaign-specific strategy, as it would direct development of the state's ways and means of conducting insurgency.

Ways

The 'way' of a strategy drives the means required, an issue that will be explored in more detail presently. But more fundamentally, it can be a key determinant of strategic success. In Australia's circumstance, five ways to inform counterinsurgency strategy have particular utility:

- Population focus;
- An indirect approach;
- Pre-emption;
- Information activities; and
- Adaptive measures.

This section will briefly examine each of these. In doing so it will become apparent that, rather than each being a stand-alone theme, they are complementary, and together inform a 'method of thought' to guide the conduct of counterinsurgency.

Population focus
While there are no universal solutions to insurgency, an approach consistently associated with counterinsurgency success has been to focus on the population rather than the enemy. From Malaya to Iraq, the record demonstrates that when the counterinsurgent establishes the correct focus on the target population, providing control, security and support, the initiative shifts from insurgency to state. The reasons for this come from the nature of insurgency and are relatively straightforward. Without the population, the insurgent has neither an audience to mobilise nor the necessary support for sustaining long-term subversive activities. The Maoist description of the guerrilla as the fish and the population as the sea aptly reinforces the value of a population focus. By securing the population and addressing the right narrative to it, the counterinsurgent creates two effects: it 'drains the sea', leaving the insurgent 'fish' easier to detect and with reduced support; and inoculates the population against the insurgency's message. A focus on the population is distinctly different to the way in which states normally conduct conventional war.

An indirect approach
The indirect approach to strategy draws on the thinking of strategists Liddell Hart and Beaufre, who after witnessing the shocking toll of industrial-age warfare sought alternative approaches. Liddell Hart believed that the perfection of strategy would be to produce a decision without serious fighting,[175] while Beaufre wrote in 1965:

> *… the game of strategy can, like music, be played in two 'keys'. The major key is direct strategy in which force is the essential factor. The minor is indirect strategy, in which force recedes into the background and its place is taken by psychology and planning.*[176]

The indirect approach does not recoil from using violence, recognising that it is inevitable in war. However, rather than default to or solely rely upon the use of violence, it aims to find alternative ways of meeting the objective, and even considers it conceivable that victory can be attained without an emphasis on violence and its associated costs. Given the nature of insurgency and counterinsurgency warfare, the desirability of such an approach should be obvious.

Insurgents certainly adopt indirect methods to fight, survive and succeed. Their battle is equally in three places: the physical space where contested populations dwell; the culture and social milieu of that population; and the virtual space of an information war using a wide spectrum of media. The indirect approach also helps the counterinsurgent negate this key aspect of insurgent behaviour. Rather than just attacking insurgents directly (physically), the indirect approach seeks to isolate their ideas and influence through techniques such as rendering their objectives irrelevant or unattractive to the target population or protecting the population from their influence through control measures. Clearly in favour of the indirect approach, the British counterinsurgency theorist and leader Kitson advocated officers being

> *… taught how to put a campaign together using a combination of civil and military measures to achieve a single government*

aim [and] teaching them the value of non-military ways of harming the enemy. [177]

A contemporary regional example of the indirect approach is the United States' engagement in the Southern Philippines as part of Operation Enduring Freedom — Philippines (OEF-P). This has proven to be an example of a successful, sustainable and relatively low-profile activity that has been politically acceptable to both the United States and the government of the Philippines.[178] While the activity in the Southern Philippines is in response to the presence of an active insurgency, there are elements of it that clearly seek to prevent wider hostilities within that society or the region. This suggests the benefits of a pre-emptive approach.

Pre-emption

The Australian counterinsurgency expert Ted Serong was correct in his bleak assessment that the 'The only good counter-insurgency operation is one that never had to start.'[179] Given, however, that counterinsurgency is by definition a reactive activity, one cannot conduct it without an insurgency. Following on from the idea of an indirect approach, and informed by Serong's observation, an ideal strategic approach would be to conduct actions to inoculate a society or a state against the development or maturation of an insurgency. An appropriate title for this form of activity might be 'anti-insurgency'. This approach assumes that the best defence against an insurgency is to ensure that the legitimacy (the trust the people place in their government) is developed and maintained. One way to do this is through assisting states of potential concern with the necessary skills and resources to be able to satisfy the reasonable needs of their people. This requires institution building and adoption of a long-term whole of society approach, but need not necessarily go as far as accepting responsibility for 'nation building' in another state. Indeed, if the supported government is to portray the necessary legitimacy and effectiveness for 'anti-insurgency' to work, it is a key requirement that it is seen to be acting in partnership with others with legitimate interests in its stability, rather than as a client or satellite state.

Two issues can arise here that require careful monitoring. Leadership or the élites of a state have a vested interest in the maintenance of the existing system. They may be unwilling to undertake necessary reforms or developments that may be detrimental to their immediate interests if they believe the situation with the insurgency is manageable. They may also seek to maintain the situation, either because it is directly enriching them in some way or because they wish to keep receiving the external support and attention that it brings, as has been alleged about some elements within Pakistan.

The idea of providing assistance to states struggling with issues that can be the precursor to insurgency is not new — it has been happening for decades through extant development assistance programs, albeit not under an overt security guise. Australia's 2006 Aid White Paper stated that:

> *Generating broad-based growth will be critical to shoring up democracy and stability in the region. Difficult economic prospects and weak governance may see the risks of instability increase and, among other consequences, allow transnational crime and terrorist networks to flourish, further undermining development and efforts to reduce poverty.*[180]

The Australian defence establishment also appears to have anticipated such a requirement:

> *Whether in a leadership role or as a major contributor to coalition activities, Australia will support a regional security environment that promotes economic and political stability. States in South East Asia will continue to look to Australia to help them build capacity to meet their own security needs and to assist them in responding to events beyond their individual abilities.*[181]

The 2009 Defence White Paper also discusses possible activity for the ADF in such an approach within the region.[182] Australia is not

alone in holding views such as these. A 2005 report from the UK Prime Minister's strategy unit endorsed a preventive approach to issues of stability,[183] while in the United States even senior retired military figures have argued the need to change that country's pattern of forward engagement over the long term.[184]

The success or otherwise of such measures in Australia's case probably hinges on two issues. The first is securing necessary agreement with the nation/s identified as possibly benefitting from such support. This will require serious diplomacy, but is not necessarily a significant departure from the present situation with the Australian aid program, where a fundamental tenet is that Australia's assistance be jointly agreed and implemented with its developing country partners.[185] The second issue relates to Australia's Defence Co-operation Program (DCP).[186]

An effective Australian anti-insurgency program will need to be nested with the scope and range of DCP activities. Key to this will be ensuring that such activities enhance regional stability, without embroiling Australia in events it cannot control or local actions it does not endorse.[187] The development of a pre-emptive program of anti-insurgency will allow testing of what Des Ball has referred to as the presumption that cooperative defence activities make Australia safer.[188] For example, in some nations, the actions of the military can have negative effects within society, serving as a powerful stimulant to insurgent ideals. It would, of course, be self-defeating if the DCP were to assist in the development of foreign military capabilities in such ways that they furthered activities that provoked insurgent responses.

Box 8

The Solomon Islands

While retaining the formal institutions of a Westminster-style democracy, from 1998-2003 Solomon Islands degenerated into a dysfunctional and essentially failed state. Pervasive corruption, widespread inter-ethnic and gang violence and the subjugation of the political system to private ends by various ethnic and criminal groups meant the government was losing legitimacy and ability to function effectively. The police force was factionalised and corrupt. Crime in the capital, Honiara, had halted commerce and normal daily activity.

The Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands (RAMSI) represented a very significant evolution in Australia's regional security policy. Despite a long-standing reluctance to intervene directly in Pacific Island affairs (with the notable exception of Bougainville) Australia in 2003 undertook to lead a regional peacekeeping mission to restore law and order, and provide ongoing security for national reconstruction and development. Importantly, the operation was carried out under the 'Bitekawa Declaration' of the Pacific Islands Forum, which encouraged member-states to provide assistance to each other should such aid be requested. This came in the form of a formal request for assistance to the Australian Government from the Governor-General of Solomon Islands. It reinforced the idea of rectitude and legitimacy with respect to the intervention.

Despite being relatively small in scale, the RAMSI intervention represented a considerable advance in the practice of interventions. It suggests some key lessons for counterinsurgency policy. First, it involved a comprehensive approach. The military component was critical

early on, but was quickly scaled back to provide support to a much larger police contingent and security for RAMSI's civilian programs. The intervention was lead by a senior DFAT official with extensive regional experience. RAMSI was designed as primarily an inter-agency civilian program encompassing assistance across the full spectrum of political and economic life, particularly good governance, economic development and reinforcing the rule of law.

In order to achieve the knowledge and skills transfer necessary for an independent state, RAMSI has required the persistence typical of counterinsurgency efforts worldwide. Australia has never before taken overall responsibility for rehabilitating a neighbouring state, and there are few examples of other nations doing so with much success. Although the intervention has notched up some considerable successes, it remains unclear whether it is really within Australia's power to achieve stability in the end. Nevertheless, a firm commitment is still in place across the political spectrum, despite the annual cost to the Australian taxpayer of approximately A$ 236 million per year (or more than A$1bn so far).

Information activities

> … the guerrilla fighter, whatever his slogans or his cause, and his secret weapon, above and beyond any question of strategy or tactics or techniques of irregular warfare, is nothing more than the ability to inspire this state of mind in others.
> – Robert Taber[189]

A vital component of any pre-emptive approach to counterinsurgency strategy will be the ability to generate appropriate information activities. Taber's quote reinforces the analysis in chapter two, regarding the enduring importance of the narrative in such conflicts. This is the province of information activities: the development, transmission and evaluation of messages to shape and influence the minds of key audiences. Complementary to both the indirect approach and pre-emption, information activities are a vital way in which these conflicts are fought. Unfortunately, this is generally poorly understood, and just as poorly conducted. From David Galula's lament about the French campaign in Algiers — 'If there was a field in which we were definitely and infinitely more stupid than our opponents, it was propaganda'[190] — to General David Petraeus in Iraq — 'We've done a terrible job of IO [Information Operations]. IO means US Congress and press support'[191] — the criticality and difficulty of information activities are widely acknowledged.

Remarks by the former Australian Defence Minister Joel Fitzgibbon show that the Australian Government is well aware of the importance of information activities within the counterinsurgency campaign:

> You meet with success in campaigns like that being waged in Afghanistan when you've convinced the overwhelming majority that life under the democratic and economic model we are offering is better than that being promoted by the insurgents.[192]

This requires the development of an effective information campaign and supporting tools. The earlier quote from General Petraeus highlights that spreading the message needs to go even further. As crucial as the role of information activities in theatre in support of the host nation, the home front is vital: strategic communications are vital in maintaining domestic public support for sustaining counterinsurgency campaigns. Polling conducted by the Lowy Institute in 2008 found a direct correlation between public confidence that Australia had clear aims in Afghanistan with support for Australian military involvement there.[193] The public can become fully aware of the campaign's aims only through effective communication strategies.

In regard to the comprehensive conduct of such activities, Australia's

report card is at best mixed. A newspaper opinion piece in late 2008 about the war in Afghanistan noted that '… the government has done little to arrest the worrying fall in public support, much less build a compelling case for a significant troop increase.'[194]

The idea that effort is required to win the narrative battle is not totally alien to Australian Government policy and practice. For example, in May 2006, the Australian Government announced the third successive cross-portfolio counter-terrorism package for its efforts in Southeast Asia, totalling $92.6 million over four years. A key element of that package is working with regional partners to counter terrorist propaganda, and to challenge and contest violent ideology that has radicalised groups and individuals.[195]

Overall, Australia's situation with information activities echoes an assessment offered by a student at the United States' Army War College of the situation in the US, '… a key element of national power that is under applied, misunderstood, and under resourced.'[196] Further adaptation is necessary before Australia can fully embrace strategic information activities as a key way of prosecuting counterinsurgency conflict.

Adaptive measures

Adaptation is critical in counterinsurgency. Insurgents adapt to survive and advance their cause. Because of their flexible structures, they generally do so far more quickly than their state opponents, whose efforts are often ponderous and constrained by institutional process. Retired US General John Galvin describes another hindrance to adaptation by nations with a 'conventional Western' view of conflict:

> we tend to invent for ourselves a comfortable vision of war… a combat environment that is consistent and predictable … one that fits our plans, our assumptions, our hopes and our preconceived ideas.[197]

The adaptive nature of insurgency conflict defies both this mindset and conventional institutional performance. An awareness of these problems should inform the counterinsurgent's approach. But

acknowledging the need to be adaptive is not the same as being adaptive. Useful counterinsurgency strategy must describe how learning and innovation will occur, including parameters for measuring and assessing institutional performance against these criteria. The only way to be adaptive is to plan for it and develop the means to practise it.

A population focus, an indirect approach, pre-emption, information activities and adaptive measures: these are all the ways that inform effective counterinsurgency. It remains to examine the means.

Means

Some of the means for counterinsurgency are obvious. The use of armed force is one, as identified by Kitson:

> The very fact that a state of insurgency exists implies that violence is involved which will have to be countered to some extent at least by the use of force.[198]

However, even the selection of military means might not be straightforward. The nature of counterinsurgency warfare and the ways used to prosecute it require a range of means that differ from the conventional. Just one aspect — a population focus — generates large requirements for generally scarce assets. These include civil affairs units, human intelligence teams, surveillance capabilities and psychological operations units. Additionally, the task of securing the population requires large numbers of troops, a fact complicated for Western militaries by the trend over recent decades to downsize standing armies and compensate with higher technology, greater lethality and increased mobility.

The requirement for effective intelligence in counterinsurgency is obvious. Not only because the problem of destroying insurgents 'consists very largely of finding them'[199] but also due to the need to understand the insurgency's objective and its rationale, including to develop a suitable counter-narrative. Classical counterinsurgency theory ascribes particular importance to human intelligence, since

insurgency is a political struggle conducted within the complexities of human society. However, no one form of intelligence can satisfactorily meet all the needs of the counterinsurgent. Recent experience in Iraq and Afghanistan reinforces that while timely and sound intelligence is vital, it works best when a wide range of sources, whether human, signals, technical or imagery, is synthesised into operational analysis and strategic assessments.

The use of force and intelligence in counterinsurgency poses potentially less of a problem than do the other necessary means, notably doctrine, education, policing and what could be called 'capability leadership'. Since governments usually default to a military option in response to insurgency, military means tend to attract scrutiny early in a counterinsurgency campaign. Moreover, where military means are found to have shortcomings, the military institutions of most Western states generally have organisational capacity to address the matter relatively quickly. This applies also to most state intelligence organisations, but not necessarily to the other elements of state power required for enabling a comprehensive approach, which will be explored below.

Doctrine

> *Clearly, more than any other kind of warfare, counterinsurgency must respect the principle of a single direction.*
> – David Galula[200]

Doctrine is vital to counterinsurgency strategy. It codifies strategy's 'method of thought' and communicates it in a useable fashion to those who need it to inform planning and actions. The term 'doctrine' is routinely associated with strictly military publications and information management, yet it is just as relevant to wider state endeavours such as counterinsurgency. Yet while certain militaries have developed or renewed extensive doctrine related to counterinsurgency in recent years,[201] this has not typically been mirrored at a whole-of-government level. In January 2009, over half a decade after the United States

found itself involved with counterinsurgency operations again, the US Government published a 'whole-of-government' guide to counterinsurgency.[202] The United Kingdom Ministry of Defence has developed a doctrinal concept for a comprehensive approach to the issue,[203] but the necessary legislative measures for its funding and use have not been enacted. At the time of writing this paper, Australia does not have any similar whole-of-government doctrine for a comprehensive approach to counterinsurgency.

The absence of such doctrine ultimately restricts the effectiveness of any attempts at a comprehensive counterinsurgency approach. Sarah Sewall sums up this failing and provides a link to its relationship with capacity and capability:

> *It has become vogue to cite a lack of interagency cooperation and civilian capacity in Iraq and beyond. Yet the prior failing is conceptual. It is difficult to codify process or build capacity in the absence of a universal doctrinal framework.*[204]

Developing capability leadership

Successful implementation of a comprehensive approach to counterinsurgency requires development of appropriate capability leadership. The term 'capability leadership' refers to that which leads, directs, manages or implements a specific function of the state. It will not suffice to leave this leadership always to military personnel during counterinsurgency. The military generally does not have the skills, knowledge and attributes to carry out these functions as well as the other agencies that routinely execute these capabilities. What the military do bring to the problem — willingness and ability to work in dangerous, non-permissive environments — is often an inadequate substitute. However, a classic problem arises: not only is there an absence of doctrine to integrate and direct counterinsurgency at the national level, [205] but the capabilities most suited to being decisive in the problem ironically '… are the ones least engaged in the current efforts' to frame counterinsurgency doctrine and policy.[206]

Eliot Cohen has suggested two reasons for this. [207] The first relates to

lack of understanding of the challenge. Some of this connects back to the absence of a doctrine to inform understanding. The second relates to the willingness of the military to shoulder the task. When the default response is to defer issues of counterinsurgency to the military, the military's cultural impulse is to 'get on with it'. Rightly or wrongly, this gives other government agencies — including those possibly more suited to some aspects of the task — a reason or excuse for avoiding responsibility.

This is an issue germane to counterinsurgency but also wider security concerns. Allan Gyngell's assertion that 'the security debate is getting wider and more complex and that the participants in it need to be much more diverse'[208] highlights the equally important broader imperative to develop whole-of-government capability leadership across the spectrum of security issues. A key means in developing capability leadership is education.

Education

Preparation plays a crucial role in shaping operations: 'The way that a military force conducts war very much depends on how it prepares for war.'[209] Under a comprehensive approach to counterinsurgency, such preparations need to involve actors in addition to the military. Education is an important means of preparation, but it is vital that it goes beyond that routinely offered to capability leaders within their specialisation. It must inculcate the use of whole-of-government capabilities within the policy, strategic and doctrinal framework for counterinsurgency. This is not particularly difficult if suitable doctrine and educational facilities are available:

> *The theory of counterinsurgency warfare can be taught like that of any other type of war, and of course, the counterinsurgent must see that it is taught to the entire personnel of his military and civilian forces.* [210]

Where difficulty can arise is with recognition of the need to make such education universal, and the commitment to its resourcing and funding. There are some signs that Australia is beginning to recognise this. The direction issued by the prime minister in the December 2008

National Security Statement[211] for the establishment of an executive development program in national security is a welcome start. However, the necessary education must begin far earlier in people's careers than at the executive level. The creation of the Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence[212] may also offer a vehicle to develop some aspects of this further, but the centre would require greater resources if it is to act in any meaningful way. The adoption of a comprehensive approach requires suitable education for personnel across the various hierarchical levels. Developing the right approach to delivering this education requires further thought and innovation. One hint of what might be possible is a proposal for Defence Academy attendance by personnel from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Federal Police (AFP), Australian Customs and other key government agencies with security responsibilities.[213]

Policing

Ignoring policing as a primary means of counterinsurgency is one of the most significant oversights in contemporary counterinsurgency practice. George Orwell wrote:

> *What holds society together is not the policeman but the goodwill of common men, and yet that goodwill is powerless unless the policeman is there to back it up.*[214]

Counterinsurgency is about stabilising a society, and the generic tool that a normal state has for this purpose is its police force. An effective police force is an essential prerequisite for stabilisation. It is an unfortunate fact that the level of violence generated by insurgency often exceeds the ability of police forces to cope — indeed police are frequently targets of this violence. The military thus often supplants the police as the prime security force actor, given its greater capabilities in non-permissive environments. This is understandable. It becomes a serious problem, however, when more attention goes into the indefinite use of military means rather than trying to normalise the situation by bringing the police to the forefront at the earliest instance possible.

Exacerbating this confusion of suitable means is the fact that today's most notable counterinsurgency practitioner, the United States, lacks a culture of the right kind of policing for counterinsurgency.[215] Here Australia has an advantage in the character of the AFP, described by one US scholar as 'indispensable' in such efforts as stabilising Solomon Islands. The development of the AFP international deployment group (IDG)[216] has been a major step forward in the potential means available to Australia to combat insurgency. However, this capability is yet to feature significantly in either Afghanistan or Iraq.

Box 9

Iraq

The post-invasion campaign in Iraq reinforces the enduring requirements of counterinsurgency warfare. Coalition Forces and the Iraqi population suffered substantial losses for several years due to poor understanding and preparation, outdated institutional biases and inadequate strategy. Since the 'surge' of US troops in 2007 and the development and introduction of effective counterinsurgency policies by the Iraqi Government and Coalition Forces, the security situation in Iraq, although still fragile, has improved remarkably.

Although Australian forces were by no means at the forefront of the counterinsurgency effort, their contribution is noteworthy. The majority of the Australian forces, first in al-Muthanna province and later at Talil, were largely in an 'over watch' role, providing guidance, support and mentoring to Iraqi forces that they helped to train. At the operational level, many Australian service personnel served embedded in various Coalition Force units, primarily in staff roles. A far smaller group was involved in advising and teaching American and Iraq forces about counterinsurgency directly

through the MNF-I Counterinsurgency Center. In many ways, the Australian experience in Iraq was typical of the many before it: relatively small numbers of troops acting in support of a wider coalition activity and strategy.

Adaptations in strategy were central in turning the tide of the Iraq counterinsurgency effort. The five American divisions in Iraq in 2003 were unprepared for a protracted insurgency. They were still largely organised to fight large-scale mechanised conventional war. The failure of conventional combat tactics to suppress the insurgency gradually led American units to change tack. US forces began patrols with Iraqi forces, and used interaction and dialogue with community leaders to collect intelligence on insurgent activity. After securing the population, greater civil military affairs effort brought previously disengaged and hostile local people into the political process. US commanders began to emphasise using firepower as sparingly as possible and generally being more socially and culturally sensitive.

Throughout the 'surge', coalition forces steadily placed greater emphasis on isolating the insurgents and suppressing their operations. This provided breathing space in which the Iraqi Security Forces could be developed and Iraqi political control over national security and reconstruction could progress.

The marginalisation of al-Qaeda in Iraq's influence over the Sunni insurgency highlights the vitality of compromise and cost effectiveness in countering insurgent movements. In what is referred to as the 'Sunni Awakening', the counterinsurgents were able to come to an arrangement with Sunni communities and tribes whereby they would work with the GOI and MNF-I against al-Qaeda in exchange for a greater political role and direct economic support. Ultimately, Iraq provides two salutary lessons: that policy, strategy and capability optimised for conventional warfare are an inadequate basis for conducting counterinsurgency; and adaptation is the key to success.

Host nation and indigenous troops

The success of the surge in improving the situation in Iraq reaffirms that providing security where people live should be a precursor to any other endeavour in counterinsurgency. More or better submarines, jets, diplomacy and aid simply cannot provide the security that land forces (military and police) can in the face of a physical threat from an insurgency. However, as already discussed, such commitments are labour intensive. They may either be beyond the capability of some militaries or beyond the political will of some states.

The bottom line is that there is no escaping the numbers game for troops in counterinsurgency, particularly when it comes to pacification. This highlights the need to develop suitable troops within a host nation, which in turn requires advisors and mentoring capabilities to train locals. To paraphrase Steve Metz and Ray Millen, the key to success for Australia in contemporary counterinsurgency is not just becoming better at counterinsurgency but '… to become skilled at helping local security and intelligence forces become effective at it.'[217] In short:

> *The use of indigenous forces to prosecute counterinsurgency can provide a significant increase in the quantity of troops on the ground and yield an exponential improvement in actionable intelligence about the insurgency and its infrastructure.*[218]

David Kilcullen notes a secondary effect of recruiting indigenous forces:

> *… the act of recruiting these personnel has an enormous effect on the enemy's recruiting base and available personnel … while putting all these fighters' families and local communities into the ledger on the government side.*[219]

The development and use of indigenous militias, while requiring sensitive negotiations if undertaken in a host nation, can provide benefits greatly exceeding immediate physical security, since militias are primarily a political institution, 'part of a strategy of local rule and state building.'[220] Negotiating with local actors to raise such forces, and their subsequent commitment to act with, not against, the government, reinforces the legitimacy of the state, thus denying an important insurgent objective.

While the obvious manifestation of using host nation and indigenous forces is tactical — their presence on the ground — the decision to employ these means is strategic. History shows that building security forces in a foreign state does not always have purely positive consequences. However, near-term exigencies in Iraq and Afghanistan will require the United States to continue such action, and it will undoubtedly seek help in this from allies.[221] This factor, combined with the inherent desirability of the strategic ways discussed in this chapter, suggests the need for Australia to continue to improve its means to develop foreign counterinsurgency forces.

Conclusion

Australia, like its principal allies and regional friends, has a demonstrable and enduring problem with engagement in insurgency-related conflict. While this problem is neither existential nor urgent, it is costly and persistent, and worthy of attention. The policy problems of insurgency-related conflict for Australia predate Federation and continue today. Even the most cautious assessment of Australia's future strategic environment should conclude that they will exist in the future.

Counterinsurgency succeeds when suitable policy and strategy are developed and implemented. Australia has not developed suitable policy or strategy to support its ongoing involvement with counterinsurgency. The reasons for this are manifold but not compelling. An understanding of the strategic policy environment in Australia helps to understand how this situation has developed. Australia's strategic policy community has been focused on conventional military questions and has had difficulty escaping its fascination with capability acquisitions.

The historical summaries throughout this paper reveal that Australia's long experience of insurgency-related conflict offers a series of compelling lessons that can help to inform improved policy and strategy.

Australia's circumstances and future prospects underscore the need for such improvements to be pursued. Failure to do so could harm Australia's interests in several ways. It may affect Australia's interests in the event that it is required to take unilateral action against an insurgency. Of equal concern, it could ultimately detract from Australia's ability to exercise a security leadership role with respect to many of the problems endemic to the region. In a sense, there is even a risk of compromise to Australian sovereignty, through continually ceding to coalition partners the responsibility for strategic thinking in the counterinsurgency efforts in which Australia chooses to become involved.

It is time for Australian defence and security policy to confront the Hydra. Australia should worry a little less about the small policy problems it has with big wars, and address some of the big problems that it has with small wars.

Policy recommendations

Australian Defence White Papers must identify a framework to inform national policy relating to the conduct of counterinsurgency.

Distinct *policy* is needed for the conduct of small wars. Australia's Defence White Papers must address the policy requirements of Australia's ongoing problem with counterinsurgency.

The examination of existing policy across government conducted in this paper has established that existing policies are inadequate and that many are stove-piped by portfolio or theme. Policy must address the issues arising from counterinsurgency in a comprehensive manner, informed by these principles:

- It must have a declaratory element;
- It needs to be sensitive to regional and alliance expectations and concerns;
- It should be as politically bipartisan as possible. The consistency of message and the development of comprehensive capabilities cannot be fully effective if subject to the electoral cycle;
- It should be inclusive across government agencies and even beyond government. Effective Australian counterinsurgency policy requires the maturity to embrace the full range of relevant actors, many from outside traditional defence and security

portfolio areas; and

- It must explain how Australia will develop, implement and coordinate its involvement in counterinsurgency.

At all stages of the policy development, awareness must be maintained of the fine line between effective counterinsurgency policy and rhetoric. The difference between the two is not always apparent until tested in conflict.

Underpinning Australian counterinsurgency policy should be a framework of five principles: a population focus, an indirect approach, pre-emption, information activities and the use of adaptive measures. Such a policy framework will inform development of counterinsurgency strategy for Australia's circumstances.

Development of whole-of-government counterinsurgency doctrine.

Counterinsurgency doctrine is not merely a matter for the army or other armed forces. Counterinsurgency is not set apart from the normal practices of government; it is fought on all fronts: political, economic, cultural, social, administrative and military.[222] Australia requires a whole-of-government counterinsurgency doctrine to suitably inform policymakers and decision takers. The United States provides an example of an approach that may be taken.[223] Such doctrine will provide a basis for education of practitioners; assist with the prioritisation of resources, support planning and the identification of suitable means with which to approach an insurgency problem. Importantly, the doctrine would serve as a consistent point of departure for the development of campaign and problem specific strategies.

Australia's whole-of-government counterinsurgency doctrine should not only deal with current commitments but be anticipatory of the requirements of possible future conflicts. The example of the United States in Iraq shows that developing counterinsurgency policy on the run is fraught with risk and cost.

Identification, training, education and deployment of a cadre from across relevant government departments to enable a true whole-of-government approach to counterinsurgency.

Just as counterinsurgency doctrine and policy is not solely a matter for the armed services, neither should the conduct of counterinsurgency activity within an operational theatre be one that only utilises military actors. While the Australian Defence Force has the ability to undertake activities that may routinely be the responsibility of other government agencies, this is not ideal.

Put bluntly, military personnel are not the best people for the wide range of governance and development activities necessary in a counterinsurgency campaign. It would be foolish to request a Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) public servant to render safe an improvised explosive device. Yet Australia routinely uses military officers in counterinsurgency campaigns to exercise development and governance responsibilities better associated with the roles and tasks of departments like FaHCSIA. Both examples of misemployment can lead to failure.

If Australia is to meet the requirements of a comprehensive approach to counterinsurgency, it must plan to employ the most appropriate people for the various tasks. This will require mobilisation of the personnel resources of a wide range of government departments. Implicit in this recommendation is the requirement to prepare Australian government public servants for the possibility of employment alongside Australian Defence Force, Coalition and Afghan National Government organisations in Afghanistan.

Creation of a national counterinsurgency centre of excellence focused on whole-of-government, regional and coalition approaches.

The means required to conduct counterinsurgency vary greatly from those of conventional conflict. It has been explained that the comprehensive approach requires a range of actors, tools and processes

from outside traditional defence and security portfolio interests. The practical difficulties of this task should not be underestimated. Powerful institutional interests and cultural predispositions within various agencies will need to be overcome. The development of the government's National Security Committee of Cabinet (NSCC) and the appointment of an NSA are acknowledged as important steps in achieving this.

Identified as critical to the development of comprehensive counterinsurgency means are:

- Suitable whole-of-government counterinsurgency *doctrine* to codify the national strategic approach and inform all relevant actors;
- Sustained counterinsurgency *education* at multiple levels; and
- A system of identifying, assigning and developing *capability leadership*, informed by doctrine and education.

Achievement of these should be the task of an Australian *National Counterinsurgency Centre of Excellence*. The centre should be directed by the office of the National Security Adviser and financed within the portfolio budget of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. The aim of the National Counterinsurgency Centre of Excellence would be to contribute to the integration of WOG outputs through education and training in order to create a comprehensive national effect. This outcome would meet Australia's specific counterinsurgency requirements and address other far broader outcomes with respect to regional and coalition approaches.

The National Counterinsurgency Centre of Excellence would have the remit to develop the range of Australian security actors (public servants, police, defence and selected private sector entities) involved in whole-of-government security activities. This would be done through education and training at appropriate stages of their development or in response to selected contingencies. The centre would also support regional and coalition efforts through the conduct of training and education for overseas personnel, and provision of an Australian partner for existing overseas centres.

The National Counterinsurgency Centre of Excellence could ultimately combine with the Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence and the Defence Department's Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies to form a virtual *National Security College*. Ideally, attendance at such a National Security College would eventually become a prerequisite for key appointments working within the whole-of-government security sector.

Development of more robust strategic mechanisms through the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to support decisions made about counterinsurgency by the National Security Committee of Cabinet and higher political decision-makers.

The requirement for policy, doctrine, education and training to inform a whole of government approach has been established. This requirement applies equally to the nation's political leadership. Crucial to the success of any counterinsurgency endeavours will be the decisions made by Australia's elected leaders and the subsequent guidance they receive as the consequences of their decisions play out. Whether these decisions are adequate or even appropriate will reflect both the level of understanding of the leaders involved, and the quality of the advice and decision support tools they have available. The development of appropriately robust support mechanisms will be a key enabler of the Australian leadership with respect to counterinsurgency. Implicit in this is the requirement for senior public servants and advisors to be suitably prepared by an organisation such as the proposed *National Counterinsurgency Centre of Excellence*.

Australia must further develop the defence capabilities required for successful counterinsurgency campaigning.

This paper has not focused on the military means for the conduct of counterinsurgency. The reason for this is that much of this is of tactical and operational rather than strategic significance, and the aim has been to identify a strategic approach. However, some of the key strategic enablers of a comprehensive approach are the preserve of defence forces.

Regarding personnel, any defence force that has to deal with counterinsurgency is well advised to maintain a cadre of military experts in the long lead-time skills of psychological operations, civil affairs and unconventional warfare.[224]

The relatively small size of the ADF means that certain capabilities which have a disproportionate effect in counterinsurgency are relatively few in number or otherwise limited. Infantry battalions, suitably trained indigenous forces and police provide the essential security backbone of any counterinsurgency campaign. However, their effectiveness in counterinsurgency operations is severely constrained without adequate support in the following key areas: human intelligence, psychological operations, civil military operations, surveillance capabilities, information operations, military police and engineers, biometrics and unconventional warfare.

The current Defence White Paper makes much of the acquisition of capabilities to fight conventional warfare. But it is not assured that some of these capabilities will be useful in the counterinsurgency wars that, as the present monograph has outlined, are an enduring feature of Australia's defence and security environment. For Australia successfully to prosecute a counterinsurgency campaign in its own right, act as a lead nation in a coalition, or offer sustainable contributions to coalition counterinsurgency campaigns, it is an imperative that the critical enabling capabilities identified receive further attention and development.

Australia must improve upon its ability to assist friendly foreign counterinsurgency forces.

This should be done through development of the capability to train, mentor and, if necessary, lead indigenous counterinsurgency forces. Such a capability will have utility far beyond the current fight in Afghanistan. It will assist Australia with an indirect approach to counterinsurgency.

Such an approach will help mitigate the political risks associated with Australian Defence Force commitments should pre-emptive measures fail to prevent insurgency in a friendly nation where maintenance of the status quo is an Australian national security interest.

Investment in such capability need not be capital or equipment intensive. It will require investment in doctrine, education and people — 'a new way of thinking rather than new things.'[225] A suitable departure point for the development of such a capability would be to review the development of such capabilities within Australia's principal allies — the US and the UK. US doctrine on International Security Force assistance as advocated by the Joint Combined International Security Force Center is of interest in this regard.

While the ADF will be a significant player in developing and deploying such capability it is neither desirable nor appropriate that it is the policy owner. It has been established that appropriate counterinsurgency forces consist of actors from across the whole range of government endeavours — military, police and civil service. Leaving policy solely with Defence suggests two risks: the marginalisation of such activity against other competing defence priorities; and the isolation of it from other government departments. While the ADF will need to address its contribution, overall coordination and advocacy must reside with a Commonwealth agency that can work across departmental boundaries at the appropriate level.

The Australian Federal Police must have a greater role in Australia's counterinsurgency campaigns.

This paper has established that an effective police force is an essential pre-requisite for stabilising a society affected by insurgency. The proper use of police by counterinsurgents offers security to the population, develops intelligence, and reinforces the appearance of normalcy and control that is crucial to the state's narrative, and emphasises the rule of law.

The investment made in the development of the Federal Police's IDG over the last half decade has given Australia a unique capability among its principal allies with respect to deployable police. The capability that has been developed is highly suitable for the task of mentoring and developing indigenous police capabilities within the framework of a counterinsurgency campaign.

Successful counterinsurgency campaigning requires coordination

and sharing of information between military and police intelligence agencies. A key task for the Federal Police within a counterinsurgency campaign should be to assist the host nation in the development and operation of effective criminal intelligence systems.

The commitment of the IDG within Australia's contemporary counterinsurgency effort in Afghanistan, and previously in Iraq, has been relatively insignificant compared to the size and cost of the group. An opportunity exists for police to have a substantial impact in achieving the aims of Australia's current commitment to Afghanistan if an appropriate commitment is made.

Greater involvement by the AFP in counterinsurgency campaigning would be a practical demonstration of an appropriate and more comprehensive approach to counterinsurgency by the Australian Government.

Notes

[1] The term 'small wars' has little or nothing to do with the size, scale or duration of a conflict. It has its origins in the historical prejudices of professional militaries and their predilection to regard conflict fought against other professional soldiers as 'real' war. The diminutive 'small' was used to denote that other manifestations of conflict that, if not beneath them, were at least not as worthy of their professional attentions. Although common, this attitude was not universal, and some soldiers did pay attention. One example was the 19th century British soldier, Colonel Charles Callwell, who defined small wars as '… operations of regular armies against irregular, or comparatively speaking irregular, forces.' See C.E. (Charles Edward) Callwell, *Small wars: their principles and practice*, 3rd ed. Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, p 21.

[2] Ian F.W. Beckett, *Insurgency in Iraq: an historical perspective*. Carlisle, PA, Strategic Studies Institute, 2005, p 1. See also: Thomas R. Mockaitis, *British counterinsurgency in the post-imperial era*. Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 1995, p 142. Beckett notes that of 98 conflicts examined occurring during the period 1990 to 1996, only seven of them involved 'conventional' state-on-state conflict. The remaining 91 conflicts were intrastate in nature, typified by insurgency conflict and the practice of guerrilla warfare.

[3] War is generally regarded as being conducted at three levels: strategic, operational and tactical. The strategic level comprises the national strategic and military strategic. At the national strategic level the government defines

national objectives, and plans and coordinates the whole of government approach to achieve the national strategic end state. The operational level is the link between the strategic and tactical. The operational level plans and conducts campaigns and operations to achieve military strategic objectives (which are derived from the national strategic end state). The tactical level concerns the planning and conduct of battles and engagements – it is at the 'face' of the fight. Further reading about these constructs, particularly the strategic level, is accessible in: John M. Collins, *Grand strategy principles and practices*. Annapolis, Naval Institute Press, 1973; Edward Luttwak, *Strategy: the logic of war and peace*, Revised and enlarged edition. Cambridge, MA, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001 and *The makers of modern strategy, from Machiavelli to the nuclear age*, edited by Peter Paret. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1986.

4   While the author agrees with Carl von Clausewitz's dictum that 'war is the extension of policy via other means', there are profound differences to how the 'political' act of war plays out with respect to the differing nature of conventional and small wars. In conventional war the decision to go to war and the political objective sought are determined by a state's leadership based on problems with interstate relations. Attainment of the objectives becomes a matter of applying sufficient coercive force to defeat the enemy, hopefully before domestic political opinion turns. It is a largely a 'soldier's' war. Commonly with small wars, and inevitably with insurgencies, it is an element of the governed population that decides to initiate conflict because of dissatisfaction with internal political issues. The intrastate political battle, rather than any external military fight, has primacy from the beginning and hence shapes the conflict. Insurgents either do not acknowledge the validity of the state, or are inspired by a vision of an alternative state form. They are neither compelled nor confined by state strictures and, unlike conventional military opposition, seek a domestic political or social rather than a military outcome. This is why insurgency is commonly referred to as a 'people's' war. Clearly then, while both forms of conflict have a political character, that of insurgency conflict is of a nature peculiarly organic to the host state and population. Examination of these ideas can be found in: Julian Paget, *Counter-insurgency campaigning*. London, Faber and Faber, 1967; Robert Taber, *War of the flea: the classic*

study of guerrilla warfare, Dulles, VA, Brassey's Inc., 2002 and Headquarters Department of the Army, *FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency.* Washington, DC, United States Government, 2006.

5   Perhaps the definitive example of this is that offered by the US involvement in Vietnam between 1964 and 1974. The US military rarely suffered any significant military defeat at the tactical level and never at the operational level, yet US strategy was ultimately flawed. This idea is summed up by the apocryphal story offered by Harry G. Summer in his book *On strategy: a critical analysis of the Vietnam War.* Summer relates an exchange between a US Colonel and a Vietnamese Colonel in Hanoi after the war: 'You know you never defeated us on the battlefield,' said the American colonel. The North Vietnamese colonel pondered this remark a moment. 'That may be so,' he replied, 'but it is also irrelevant.'

6   There are many texts detailing the similarity of experiences of other nations with counterinsurgency, often describing conflicts that Australia played a supporting role in. A UK example is Mockaitis, *British counterinsurgency in the post-imperial era.* Max Boot provides a comprehensive US example in: *The savage wars of peace, small wars and the rise of American power,* New York, Basic Books, 2002.

7   This term was suggested by the Lowy Institute's Andrew Shearer. The author believes that it is an appropriate term to describe the historically baseless assertions from some quarters that Australians are somehow inherently superior at counterinsurgency.

8   Thomas R. Mockaitis, *British counterinsurgency, 1919-60*, edited by Michael Dockrill. Studies in Military and Strategic History. London, Macmillan, in association with King's College London, 1990, p 1.

9   There are extensive critiques of these terms. The Chichele Professor of War at Oxford University and Strategist, Hew Strachan, has observed that conceptually the term ' remains devoid of strategic insight or political context.' See: Hew Strachan, Making strategy: civil-military relations after Iraq. *Survival* 48 (3) 2006, p 59. Similarly, Sir Lawrence Freedman has written: 'A general "war on terror" lacks political context. Terrorism may be a state of mind, but it is not a state, nor even a political movement.' See: Lawrence Freedman, *The transformation of strategic affairs*. Adelphi Papers 379, 2006. London, Routledge, 2006, p 45.

[10]   An example of this might be seen in then US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's frequent denial of the terms 'guerilla warfare' and 'insurgency' with regard to developments in Iraq during the northern summer and fall of 2003.

[11]   Colonel David Benest, British Army, in a discussion with the author, London, 5 September 2006.

[12]   Michael Howard, A long war? *Survival* 48 (4) 2006, p 8.

[13]   Australian Army, *Land Warfare Doctrine LWD 3-0-1 Counterinsurgency*. Canberra, Department of Defence, 2008, para 2.1.

[14]   Ibid., para 3.3.

[15]   A French Army officer and counterinsurgent highlighted the importance of terrorism to insurgents, describing it as '… the basic weapon that permits our enemies to fight effectively with fewer resources and even to defeat a traditional army.' See: Roger Trinquier, *Modern warfare: a French view of counterinsurgency*. PSI Classics of the Counterinsurgency Era. Westport, CT, Praeger Security International, 2006, p 15.

[16]   Colin S. Gray, *Irregular enemies and the essence of strategy: can the American way of war adapt?* Carlisle, PA, Strategic Studies Institute, 2006, p 19.

[17]   The NSS does give the perception that the Rudd Government has retreated from the relative primacy that the Howard Government afforded the issue of terrorism in the list of national security concerns. See: Kevin Rudd. The First National Security Statement to the Parliament, Address by the Prime Minister of Australia, The Hon. Kevin Rudd MP. Parliament House, Canberra, 4 December 2008. This is reinforced by the tone of the recently released Defence White Paper. See: Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific century: Force 2030*. Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 2009. Notwithstanding this, the NSS commits the government to another white paper on terrorism, only two years since the last one was published, which was: Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Protecting Australia against terrorism 2006*. Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 2006.

[18]   Bruce Bennett, Christopher Twomey and Gregory F. Treverton, *What are asymmetric strategies?* Documented Briefing Document Number: DB-246-OSD. Santa Monica, RAND Corporation, 1999.

[19]   Hew Strachan explores this idea further in: Strachan, Making strategy: civil-military relations after Iraq, p 71.

[20]   For readers interested in further understanding of asymmetry, Metz and Johnson's 2001 book is recommended. See: Steven Metz and Douglas V. Johnson II, *Asymmetry and U.S military strategy: definition, background, and strategic concepts.* Strategic Studies Institute, United States Army War College, 2001.

[21]   Andrew J. Bacevich, Fear and folly: learning from mistakes in Iraq. *The Futurist* 40 (6) 2006, p 23.

[22]   Colin S. Gray, *Fighting talk: forty maxims on peace, war and strategy.* Westport, CT, Praeger Security International, 2007.

[23]   The French counterinsurgency theorist David Galula provides an early example of this approach in his *Counterinsurgency warfare: theory and practice.* See: David Galula, *Counterinsurgency warfare: theory and practice.* PSI Classics of the Counterinsurgency Era. Westport, CT, Praeger Security International, 2006, Ch. 3. A later indicative example of this taxonomic approach can be seen in chapters 2 and 3 of Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency & terrorism: from revolution to apocalypse*, First ed. Washington, DC, Potomac Books, 2005. The current US Army and Marine Corps doctrine also dabbles in taxonomic classifications. See: Headquarters Department of the Army, *FM 3-24*, pp 1-5 to 1-8.

[24]   Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla warfare: a historical and critical study.* New Brunswick, NJ, Transaction Publishers, 1998, p 389.

[25]   Examples of these relatively common contemporary claims can be found in publications such as: Thomas X. Hammes, *The sling and the stone, on war in the 21st century.* St Paul, MN, Zenith Press, 2004 or D.J. Kilcullen, Countering global insurgency. *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28 (4) 2005.

[26]   Callwell, *Small wars* and Charles W. Gwynn, *Imperial policing*, 2nd ed. London, Macmillan and Co, 1939.

[27]   For the purposes of this paper 'conventional' war will be defined as *violent conflict between two or more sovereign states primarily undertaken utilising regular armed forces.*

[28]   Galula, *Counterinsurgency warfare*, p 1.

[29]   *The counter-insurgent state: guerilla warfare and state building in the twentieth century,* edited by Paul B. Rich and Richard Stubbs. Basingstoke, Macmillan Press, 1997, p 7.

30   Frank Kitson, *Bunch of five*. London, Faber and Faber, 1977, p 282.

31   Galula, *Counterinsurgency warfare*.

32   The US Army in its Operations Field Manual (FM 3.0) provides a useful definition of irregular warfare as 'a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over a population'.

33   William Colby with James McCargar, *Lost victory, a firsthand account of America's sixteen-year involvement in Vietnam.* Chicago, Contemporary Books, 1989, p 184.

34   Kurt M. Campbell and Richard Weitz, *Non-Military strategies for countering islamist terrorism: lessons learned from past counterinsurgencies* (paper presented at the National Security in the 21st Century Conference, The Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International affairs, Princeton University, September 29-30, 2005), p 3.

35   One theory about why this variation occurs comes from the academic Jeremy Weinstein. His study noted that '… *rebel groups that emerge in environments rich in natural resources or with the external support of an outside patron tend to commit high levels of indiscriminate violence; movements that arise in resource-poor contexts perpetrate far fewer abuses and employ violence selectively and strategically.*' See: Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside rebellion: the politics of insurgent violence*, edited by Margaret Levi, Paperback ed. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p 7.

36   David Galula, *Pacification in Algeria 1956-1958*, 2006, with a new foreword by Bruce Hoffman. Santa Monica, RAND Corporation, 2006, p 246.

37   Susan L. Carruthers, *Winning hearts and minds: British Governments, the media and colonial counter-insurgency, 1944-60.* London, Leicester University Press, 1995, p 3.

38   It is acknowledged that this distinction is problematic in authoritarian states where *any* act of dissent is most likely to be regarded as illegitimate.

39   This is strongly put in: Sir Robert Thompson, *Defeating communist insurgency.* St. Petersburg, FL, Hailer Publishing, 2005. David Galula also is similarly emphatic about the utility of this. See: Galula, *Pacification in Algeria 1956-1958*.

40   Ted Robert Gurr referred to this as the idea of 'relative deprivation'. He suggested that the true nature of a person's circumstance with respect to need was actually not as important a factor in incitement to rebel as their perception of it. See: Ted Robert Gurr, *Why men rebel*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1970.

41   Taber, *War of the flea: the classic study of guerrilla warfare,* p 154.

42   The 'centre of gravity' in this respect is best understood as that which underpins the resilience and strength of the organisation.

43   Josef Joffe, Power failure, why force doesn't buy order. *American Interest* II (6) 2007, p 48.

44   Ayman al Zawahiri, July 2005, quoted in: Marc Lynch, al-Qaeda's media strategies. *National Interest* 83 (Spring 2006) 2006, p 50.

45   The 'Awakening' is a term used to describe the rejection of AQI and its particular brand of wahabiism, combined with a form of reconciliation with the Government of Iraq by the Sunni Tribes. This phenomenon began in the western parts of Al Anbar province in very late 2005 and has since spread to most Sunni areas of Iraq.

46   This is brought out in several contemporary narratives. See: Linda Robinson, *Tell me how this ends, General David Petraeus and the search for a way out of Iraq*, 1st ed. Philadelphia, Public Affairs, a member of the Perseus Books Group, 2008 and Bing West, *The strongest tribe, war, politics and the endgame in Iraq*. New York, Random House, 2008 passim.

47   Kitson, *Bunch of Five*, p 282.

48   This is the recurring theme throughout: Rupert Smith, *The utility of force: the art of war in the modern world*. London, Allen Lane, 2005.

49   International Crisis Group, *Taliban propaganda: winning the war of words.* Asia Reports 158. Kabul, Brussels, International Crisis Group, 24 July 2008.

50   One possible definition of information operations is 'The deliberate coordination of information (and the effect that receiving of having that information creates) to influence the decision-making and actions of a target audience'.

51   Taber, *War of the flea: the classic study of guerrilla warfare*, p 23.

52   Freedman, *The transformation of strategic affairs*, p 20.

53   The author gratefully acknowledges the significance of several wide ranging discussions with Brigadier General McGill Alexander (now retired) of the South African National Defence force during 2006 and 2007 in shaping his views with respect to the notion of rectitude in counterinsurgency.

54   Colby, *Lost victory, a firsthand account of America's sixteen-year involvement in Vietnam*, p 249.

55   Jeremy Weinstein's work describes how the phenomena of 'warlordism' in insurgency conflict both develops partly as a result of this enrichment, and also sustains itself by using some of the accrued economic benefits as an incentive to motivate participation. Weinstein builds on a significant body of work done by Paul Collier that analysed the 'greed' dimension of intrastate wars. See: Weinstein, *Inside rebellion: the politics of insurgent violence*, p 8 and pp 342-343.

56   As opposed to those coerced into fighting for the insurgency, or seeking financial gain through participation.

57   Galula, *Pacification in Algeria 1956-1958*, p 246.

58   Examples of this can be seen with the FARC in Colombia, the NPA in the Northern Philippines and possibly GAM in Aceh.

59   The idea of compromise is further examined in the introduction to: *Counterinsurgency in modern warfare,* edited by Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian. Oxford, Osprey Publishing, 2008.

60   Brian Michael Jenkins, *An urban strategy for guerillas and governments*. RAND Papers Document Number: P-4670/1. Santa Monica, RAND Corporation, 1972.

61   Anthony James Joes, *Resisting rebellion: the history and politics of counterinsurgency.* Lexington, KY, University of Kentucky Press, 2004, p 8.

62   Originally known as 'Concerned Local Citizens', the renaming of this group as SOI is an example of the level of 'focus' that is routinely sought in an adequate narrative.

63   Michael O'Hanlon, O'Hanlon: Lessons of the surge. *The Washington Times,* Tuesday, November 4 2008.

64   Indeed, even when the tide of violence and hostile rhetoric was running high, the UK Government pragmatically made considerable efforts to maintain dialogue (albeit covertly) with the outlawed Republicans. See: Richard Iron, Britain's longest war: Northern Island 1967-2007, in *Counterinsurgency in modern warfare,* edited by Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian. Osprey Publishing Ltd, 2008, p 175.

65   This is simply and clearly described in the introduction to Marston and Malkasian's book, see: *Counterinsurgency in modern warfare,* edited by

    Marston and Malkasian. Current US and Australian Army COIN doctrine also makes much of the adaptive abilities of insurgents. For a readily accessible source see: United States Department of the Army, *The U.S. Army / Marine Corps counterinsurgency field manual: US field manual no. 3-24: Marine Corps warfighting publication no.3-33.5*, University of Chicago edition. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2007.

66   Freedman, *The transformation of strategic affairs*, p 93.

67   Students of Clausewitz will acknowledge the ready association of culture with his examination of the role of the people, chance and passion upon the nature of war. Yet despite these ideas being debated for centuries there is a strong trend in thinking about modern warfare among Western militaries to treat war as problem set that can be best addressed through reductionism and the application of a scientific approach. This is discussed in detail within: Brian McAllister Linn, *The echo of battle: the Army's way of war.* Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2007.

68   Many have suggested this, an indicative work of this nature is Thomas H Johnson and Chris M Mason, No sign until the burst of fire: understanding the Pakistan-Afghanistan frontier. *International Security* 32 (4) 2008.

69   Gray, *Irregular enemies and the essence of strategy: can the American way of war adapt?* p 12.

70   B.H Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd revised ed. New York, Meridian, 1991, p 367.

71   James S. Corum, *Fighting the war on terror: a counterinsurgency strategy.* St Paul, Zenith Press, 2007, p 83. Citing Lieutenant General Thomas Gage.

72   A euphemism created by the US military for a range of military actions short of 'full scale' conventional war. The term has also been used with varying degrees of enthusiasm and application by allied militaries.

73   Galula, *Counterinsurgency warfare*, p 6.

74   The 'hard' figure of US expenditure of $US 830 billion and the figure claimed by Stiglitz $US 3 trillion for the war in Iraq cited previously in chapter two suggest the potentially breathtaking financial costs of counterinsurgency.

75   There is also the potential for damage to reputations domestically and internationally, such as we have seen in some quarters for member states of the 'Coalition of the Willing'.

76   Andrew F. Krepinevich. *The war in Iraq: the nature of insurgency*

[76] *warfare.* Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2004: http://www.csbaonline.org/4Publications/PubLibrary/B.20040602. NatofInsurge/B.20040602.NatofInsurge.pdf, p 2.

[77] Mockaitis, *British counterinsurgency, 1919-60*, p 13.

[78] *The counter-insurgent state*, edited by Rich and Stubbs. p 7.

[79] Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The logic of violence in civil war*, edited by Margaret Levi. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p 12.

[80] James Corum, *Fighting the war on terror: a counterinsurgency strategy*, p 8.

[81] Bruce Hoffman, *Insurgency and counterinsurgency in Iraq*. RAND Occasional Paper. Santa Monica, CA, RAND Corporation, 2004, p 15.

[82] The earliest surviving record of insurgency is on a piece of parchment dating from the 15th century BCE. The reference was found in a Hittite parchment document known as 'The Anastas'. See: Ian F.W. Beckett, *Modern insurgencies and counter-insurgencies, guerrillas and their opponents since 1750.* London, Routledge, 2001, p 1, also: Laqueur, *Guerrilla warfare: a historical and critical study,* p 3.

[83] Rudd. The First National Security Statement to the Parliament, Address by the Prime Minister of Australia, The Hon. Kevin Rudd MP. 4 December 2008.

[84] The deployments shown include both military and police contributions.

[85] The main exceptions to this were the intervention into East Timor in 1999, and the subsequent and ongoing stabilisation activities conducted there in support of variously the UN and the government of Timor-Leste, as well as the RAMSI mission to the Solomons in 2003.

[86] Lieutenant General Peter Leahy, December 2007 Email correspondence with the author. Perhaps the most obvious example of this has been the popular Australian narrative arising from analysis of our participation in the Vietnam War.

[87] The pattern of this, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan, conforms with the Australian tradition of making primarily tactical and operational level contributions. An updated list of the ADF contributions to Iraq (termed Operations Catalyst) and Afghanistan (known as Operation Slipper) and the activities it undertakes in these countries can be found at: http://www. defence.gov.au/opEx/global/index.htm .

[88] Australian Agency for International Development, *Australian aid: promoting growth and stability.* Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 2006, p 10.

[89] These include China, India, Thailand and Myanmar.

[90] Department of Defence, *A defence update 2007.* Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 2007, p 13.

[91] Rudd. The Australia-US alliance and emerging challenges in the Asia-Pacific region. The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, 31 March 2008.

[92] The former Defence Minister said in a major policy speech in the US that: 'We believe it goes to the heart of our own national security at a time when we are all facing a changing strategic environment.' See: Joel Fitzgibbon. Speech by the Minister for Defence to the Brookings Institution The Brookings Institution, Washington DC, 15 July 2008. The current Defence Minister, Senator John Faulkner echoed this commitment in Parliament on 15 June 2009. See: *Hansard, Parliamentary debates, The Senate, questions without notice, Afghanistan,* 2.43 pm, Monday, 15 June. 2009.

[93] Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific century: Force 2030.* p 37.

[94] Ibid., p 22.

[95] For example, the Philippines has a long running communist insurgency in the north and central Philippines and several associated with Moro ethnic and religious concerns in the south. An account of the prospects of resolving the latter can be found in: Malcolm Cook and Kit Collier, *Mindanao: a gamble worth taking.* Lowy Institute Paper 17. Lowy Institute for International Policy, Sydney, 2006.

[96] Sally Neighbour, JI rebounds more dangerous than ever. *The Australian*, 6 March 2007.

[97] Department of Defence, *Joint operations for the 21st century*. Australian Defence Doctrine Publications. Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 2007, p 9.

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[100] United States Senate Armed Services Committee, *Statement of General*

Charles C. Krulak, Commandant of the Marine Corps, United States Marine Corps, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 29 September 1998 concerning posture, 29 September 1998.

101   Freedman, *The transformation of strategic affairs*, p 51.

102   Steven Metz, *Learning from Iraq: counterinsurgency in American strategy*. Carlisle, PA, Strategic Studies Institute, January 2007, p 59.

103   The 2009 Defence White Paper states that defence against such an attack remains Australia's most basic strategic interest. See: Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific century*: *Force 2030*. p 41.

104   Jason Campbell and Jeremy Shapiro, *Afghanistan index: tracking variables of reconstruction & security in post-9/11 Afghanistan*. Washington, DC, The Brookings Institution, 18 November 2008, p 8. Amy Belasco, *The cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and other Global War on Terror operations since 9/11*. Washington, DC, Congressional Research Service, 2008, p 10.

105   Joseph E. Stiglitz and Linda J. Bilmes, *The three trillion dollar war: the true cost of the Iraq conflict*. New York, W. W. Norton & Company Inc, 2008.

106   The figure would obviously be larger if all the accrual costs to the Australian budget that relate to small wars and insurgency could be easily identified, calculated and included. Such a figure could include costs as diverse as those related to maintaining the border watch presence in the Indian Ocean to intercept the refugee arrivals from conflicts zones, engagement in various United Nations peacekeeping or observer missions (such as in the Sudan) and the various Australian Federal Police activities and initiatives in places such as Indonesia and the Philippines.

107   Mark Thomson, *The cost of defence: ASPI defence budget brief 2008-09*. Canberra, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, May 2008, p vii.

108   Once costs associated with the overseas property account (A$ 215 million) are removed. See: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Annual report 2007-2008*. Canberra, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, October 2008, p 425.

109   Allan Gyngell, *Ambition: the emerging foreign policy of the Rudd Government*. Lowy Institute Analysis. Sydney, Lowy Institute for International Policy, December 2008.

110   See: Jillian Broadbent, Wiliam Maley, Brad Orgill, Peter Shergold, Ric Smith and Allan Gyngell, *Australia's diplomatic deficit, reinvesting in our instruments of international policy*. Blue Ribbon Panel Report. Sydney, Lowy Institute for International Policy, March 2009.

111   2008-2009 ODA figure only, the total expenditure for Afghanistan would actually be higher from the addition of other aid program funds.

112   This represents a conservative figure derived from the AusAID website Iraq page (http://www.ausaid.gov.au/country/country.cfm?CountryID = 54777444&Region = AfricaMiddleEast) on 16 Dec 2008.

113   Sources: Department of Defence, *Portfolio Budget Statement 2008-09*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2008, p 29; Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Annual report 2007-2008*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2008, pp 18, 425; Australian Agency for International Development. *East Timor*. Commonwealth of Australia, 2008: http://www.ausaid.gov.au/country/country.cfm?CountryID = 911&Region = EastAsia; Australian Agency for International Development. *Solomon Islands*. Commonwealth of Australia 2008: http://www.ausaid.gov.au/country/country.cfm?CountryID = 16&Region = SouthPacific.

114   This is not an insignificant number of people. In 2007 it was estimated that nearly 900,000 Australian citizens were permanently living overseas, see: Hugh White, *Looking after Australians overseas*. Lowy Institute Policy Brief. Sydney, Lowy Institute for International Policy, October 2007, p 5. The Australian Government recorded 39,144 Australian born citizens departing to live permanently overseas in 2007/2008, and noted that emigration was at its 'highest level ever', see: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *Population flows: Immigration aspects 2007 - 2008 edition*. Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 2009, pp iv and 1.

115   Michael Fullilove, *World wide webs: diasporas and the international system*. Lowy Institute Paper 22. Lowy Institute for International Policy, Sydney 2008, p 101.

116   See: White, *Looking after Australians overseas*.

117   Kevin Rudd. The Australia-US alliance and emerging challenges in the Asia-Pacific region. The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, 31 March 2008.

118   Ibid.

119   Alan Dupont, *Grand strategy, national security and the Australian Defence Force*. Lowy Institute Perspectives. Sydney, Lowy Institute for International Policy, May 2005, p 1.

120 The 2009 Defence White Paper expresses this view as: '…we must never put ourselves in a position where the price of our own security is a requirement to put Australian troops at risk in distant theatres of war where we have no direct interests at stake.' See: Department of Defence, Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific century: Force 2030. p 47.

121 Correspondents, Kevin Rudd in Europe for EU and NATO talks on Afghanistan. *The Australian*, 3 April 2008.

122 Department of Defence, Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific century: Force 2030.

123 Jonathan Pearlman and Cynthia Banham, PM's security statement a 'damp squib'. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 December 2008. Also see: Hugh White. Analyst gives PM mixed report card — The World Today. Sydney 2008.

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126 The references in the 2005 update are (italics added by author):
'Our troops are committed to counter-terrorism, *counter-insurgency*, peacekeeping and intelligence operations' — Foreword by Minister Hill.
'Australian forces went to Iraq to uphold Australia's commitment to enforcing longstanding United Nations sanctions against Iraq relating to the proliferation of WMD. They remain in Iraq to support an evolving democracy threatened by *insurgency* and terrorism.' p.2.
Developments in Iraq will be a focus of international attention for some time to come. Allowing the *insurgents* and former regime elements a victory would be a huge setback for the region.' p.9.
'Iraq will need substantial support from the international community to win its struggle against *insurgency* and terrorism.' p. 32
See: Department of Defence, *Australia's national security: a defence update 2005*. Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 2005.

127 Department of Defence, *A defence update 2007*.

128 Ibid., p 31.

129 Ibid., p 16.

130 Ibid.

131 These policy publications include: Australian Agency for International Development, *Aid White Paper 2006*, Australian Agency for International Development, *Counter-Terrorism and Australian Aid*. Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 2003, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Advancing the national interest, Australia's foreign and trade policy white paper*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2003, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Transnational terrorism: the threat to Australia*. Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 2004, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Protecting Australia against terrorism 2006*.

132 Examples where the UK and the US have attempted to being to fashion coordinated policy to address these issues include: George W. Bush, National security presidential directive/ NSPD - 44. Washington, DC, The White House, 2005, United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, *Joint discussion note 4/05 the comprehensive approach*. Joint Discussion Notes. Swindon, Chiefs of Staff, UK Ministry of Defence, January 2006 and United States Department of Defense, *US Department of Defense directive number 3000.05, military support for stability, security, transition, and reconstruction (SSTR)*. US Department of Defense Directives. Washington, DC, The Pentagon, 28 November 2005. Whether such policy is actually being acted on is debatable, and will be examined in subsequent chapters.

133 McAllister Linn, *The echo of battle*, p 237.

134 John Kiszely, Learning about counterinsurgency. *Military Review* 87 (2) 2007, p 6.

135 Kitson, *Bunch of five*, p 283.

136 Gray, *Irregular enemies and the essence of strategy: can the American way of war adapt?*, p 8.

137 Gray, *Fighting talk: forty maxims on peace, war and strategy*.

138 H.R. McMaster, The human element: When gadgetry becomes strategy. *World Affairs* (Winter) 2009.

139 See: Callwell, *Small wars*, p 23.

140 Strachan, Making strategy: civil-military relations after Iraq. p 72.

141 Michael J. Mazarr, The folly of 'Asymmetric War'. *The Washington Quarterly* 31 (3) 2008.

142 Sometimes this is not planned — such as in the case of the inability or incapacity of other agencies to accept or manage the task.

143 Sir Michael Howard cited in: James Corum, *Fighting the war on* terror: *a*

counterinsurgency strategy, p 9.

144 Eliot A. Cohen, *The American counterinsurgency tradition* (paper presented at Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century: Creating a National Framework, Washington, DC, 2006), p 8.

145 Michael G. Krause, *Square pegs for round holes: current approaches to future warfare and the need to adapt*, edited by Scott Hopkins. Land Warfare Studies Centre Working Papers No. 132. Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 2007, p 38.

146 From a much satirised press briefing conducted in Feb 2002. See: Donald Rumsfeld. DoD News Briefing — Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Pentagon, Washington, DC, 12 February 2002.

147 McAllister Linn, *The echo of battle*, p 1.

148 Galula, *Pacification in Algeria 1956-1958*, p v.

149 McGeorge Bundy, *National security action memorandum No. 182, counterinsurgency doctrine*. Washington, DC, United States Government, 24 August 1962.

150 Mitchell M. Zais, U.S. strategy in Iraq. *Military Review* March–April 2007, p 108.

151 Andrew F. Krepinevich. *'From Afghanistan to Iraq: lessons in modern counter-insurgency': transcript of lecture by Dr Andrew F. Krepinevich, Tuesday 18th July 2006*. Global Strategy Forum 2006: http://www.globalstrategyforum.org/upload/upload25.pdf.

152 For example, as recently as 2005 Alan Dupont was critical of the 'stovepiping' of Defence and DFAT White Papers,saying that there was 'no overarching declaration of our national security objectives and a strategy for achieving them'. See: Dupont, *Grand strategy, national security and the Australian Defence Force*, p 1. Some of this concern — the 'overarching declaration' is now covered off by the NSS. See, Rudd. The First National Security Statement to the Parliament, Address by the Prime Minister of Australia, The Hon. Kevin Rudd MP.

153 Freedman, *The transformation of strategic affairs*, p 59.

154 Indicative of the debate is that characterised by Andrew Bacevich as between the 'crusaders' who favour developing greater policy for the conduct of COIN and the 'conservatives' who favour leaving the strategic policy focus on conventional conflicts. See: Andrew J. Bacevich, The Petraeus doctrine.

The Atlantic Monthly October 2008. The Director of the CNAS, Dr John Nagl, is typically associated with the 'crusaders', while Colonel Gian Gentile, an Army Officer on staff at West Point, typifies the arguments made by the conservatives. The enduring nature of this debate is highlighted by a 1967 quote from the UK in: Paget, *Counter-insurgency campaigning*, p 37. 'Since 1945, the British Army has spent some seven times as long engaged in actual counter-insurgency operations as it has on conventional…this ratio has not, however, been reflected in our training.'

155 Stephen Biddle and Jeffrey A. Friedman, *The 2006 Lebanon Campaign and the future of warfare: implications for army and defense policy.* Carlisle, PA, Strategic Studies Institute, 2008, p xvii.

156 See: Robert M. Gates, Beyond guns and steel: reviving the nonmilitary instruments of American power. *Military Review* LXXXVIII (1) 2008; Robert M Gates, Dean Acheson Lecture, U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington, DC, Wednesday, October 15 2008; Robert M Gates, National Defense University, Fort Lesley McNair, Washington, DC, 29 September 2008; Robert M Gates. U.S. global leadership campaign, Washington, DC, Tuesday 15 July 2008.

157 Nathan P. Freier. *'What if?' — A most impertinent question indeed.* [Online newsletter]. Strategic Studies Institute 2006: http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB727.pdf.

158 The most recent examples being the ADF's future joint operating concept and the 2007 Defence Update, see: Department of Defence, *Joint operations for the 21st century*, and Department of Defence, *A defence update 2007*.

159 Indeed, some publications go as far as to imply that such tasking is problematic as it detracts from the ability to do 'other defence tasks.' This seems to imply that these are of lesser value than the unspecified 'other tasks'. See: Department of Defence, *A defence update 2007*, p 37.

160 Dupont, *Grand strategy, national security and the Australian Defence Force*, p 3, Smith, *The utility of force*.

161 Cited in: West, *The strongest tribe, war, politics and the endgame in Iraq,* p 227.

162 Despite Western preferences for conventional war, as the old saying goes, 'the enemy has a vote'. The demonstration effect of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will reinforce two things to any potential enemy: 1. That the US (and its allies) have no peer in the planning and conduct of 'conventional'

warfare; and 2. That supremacy dissipates quickly when presented with insurgency. Even the 2009 Australian Defence White Paper states that intrastate wars will be the most common form of conflict until 2030. See: Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific century: Force 2030*. p 16.

163 Colin S. Gray in the introduction to: Steven Metz, *Iraq and the evolution of American strategy*, Dulles, VA, Potomac Books Inc., 2008, p ix.

164 Galula, *Counterinsurgency warfare*, p 65.

165 Hew Strachan, The lost meaning of strategy. *Survival* 47 (3) 2005, p 34.

166 Colonel, now Professor, Peter Mansoor was the first commander of the US Army / USMC Counterinsurgency Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Prior to that he had commanded a US Brigade in Baghdad. Subsequently he was General David Petraeus' Executive Officer at MNF-I during the surge.

167 Peter R. Mansoor, *Baghdad at sunrise: a brigade commander's war in Iraq*. The Yale Library of Military History. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2008, p 109.

168 Robert M. Chamberlain, With friends like these: grievance, governance, and capacity-building in COIN. *Parameters* XXXVIII (2) 2008, p 89.

169 Dupont, *Grand strategy, national security and the Australian Defence Force*, p 1.

170 D. J Kilcullen. *New paradigms for 21st-century conflict.* Foreign Policy Agenda 12 (5). U.S. Department of State 2007: http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0507/ijpe/ijpe0507.pdf, and: Sarah Sewall, Modernizing U.S. counterinsurgency practice: rethinking risk and developing a national strategy. *Military Review*, September–October 2006.

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173 Campbell and Weitz, *Non-military strategies for countering islamist terrorism: lessons learned from past counterinsurgencies*, p 9.

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H Barry, C.B.E., 1st American edition (English Translation by Faber and Faber Ltd 1965). New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1965, p 134.

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178 Gregory Wilson, Anatomy of a successful COIN operation: OEF-PHILIPPINES and the indirect approach. *Military Review* LXXXVI (November–December 2006, No. 6), p 2.

179 Francis P. Serong, An Australian view of revolutionary warfare. *Conflict Studies* 16 (September) 1971.

180 Australian Agency for International Development, *Aid White Paper 2006*, p ix.

181 Department of Defence, *Joint operations for the 21st century*, p 10.

182 Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific century: Force 2030*. pp 16, 22-23.

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187 Anthony Walsh, *Aiding defence: the nexus between Australia's aid and defence policies.* Masters thesis, Monash University, 2000, p 107.

188 Desmond Ball and Pauline Kerr, *Presumptive engagement: Australia's Asia-Pacific security policy in the 1990s.* St Leonards, Allen & Unwin, 1996, p 92.

189 Taber, *War of the flea: the classic study of guerrilla warfare*, p 6.

190 Galula, *Pacification in Algeria 1956–1958*.

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192 Joel Fitzgibbon. Speech to the National Press Club of Australia. National

Press Club, Canberra, 30 July 2008.

[193] Fergus Hanson, *The Lowy Institute Poll 2008: Australia and the world, public opinion and foreign policy*. The Lowy Institute Poll. Sydney, Lowy Institute for International Policy, 2008, p 12.

[194] Alan Dupont, Defence has battle at home. *The Australian*, 20 November 2008.

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[196] Charles K. Hardy, *Information operations as an element of national power: a practitioner's perspective on why the United States can't get it right.* Carlisle, PA, United States Army War College, 18 March 2005, p 15.

[197] John R. Galvin, Uncomfortable wars: toward a new paradigm. *Parameters* XVI (2) 1986.

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[219] David Kilcullen, *The accidental guerrilla, fighting small wars in the midst of a big one.* New York, Oxford University Press, 2009, p 271.

[220] Kalyvas, *The logic of violence in civil war*, p 107.

[221] A point made emphatically in: Cassidy, The long small war: indigenous forces for counterinsurgency. p 48.

CONFRONTING THE HYDRA

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223 U.S. Government, Government counterinsurgency guide.

224 As recommended in Kitson, *Low intensity operations*, p ix.

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