

The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters

Volume 34
Number 1 *Parameters Spring 2004*

Article 11

3-1-2004

Relearning Counterinsurgency Warfare

Robert R. Tomes

Follow this and additional works at: <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters>

Recommended Citation

Robert R. Tomes, "Relearning Counterinsurgency Warfare," *Parameters* 34, no. 1 (2004), doi:10.55540/0031-1723.2193.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by USAWC Press. It has been accepted for inclusion in The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters by an authorized editor of USAWC Press.

Relearning Counterinsurgency Warfare

ROBERT R. TOMES

© 2004 Robert R. Tomes

Thirty years after the signing of the January 1973 Paris peace agreement ending the Vietnam War, the United States finds itself leading a broad coalition of military forces engaged in peacemaking, nation-building, and now counterinsurgency warfare in Iraq. A turning point appeared in mid-October 2003 when US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's memo on the future of Iraqi operations surfaced. His musings about whether US forces were ready for protracted guerrilla warfare sparked widespread debate about US planning for counterinsurgency operations.

Little attention has been paid to the theory and practice of counterinsurgency warfare in mainstream strategic studies journals. Discussions of the so-called revolution in military affairs (RMA) and RMA-associated technologies for battlefield surveillance and precision targeting dominated defense planning discourse in the 1990s. Nation-building and peacekeeping discussions rarely addressed counterinsurgency warfare, perhaps because nation-building operations during the 1990s did not confront a determined, violent insurgency. Meanwhile, with knowledge about counterinsurgency warfare waning among policymakers, resurgent terrorism scholarship and counterterrorism policy initiatives avoided the issue of a strategic terrorist campaign to destabilize nation-building. More recently, vague historical references and misplaced analogies to Vietnam have muddled discussions of the Iraqi counterinsurgency effort.

Lessons and insights from past low-intensity wars deserve revisiting. They provide perspective as well as context for what may be a defining period for the American war on terrorism. What lessons from past counterin-

surgencies can inform current efforts? What theoretical and operational issues are available to aid Coalition activities?

This exploration of why counterinsurgencies fail avoids the American experience in Vietnam, a subject that continues to evoke images and arguments that could possibly overshadow the central purpose—that is, discussing the lessons of previous counterinsurgencies and their applicability to US strategy in Iraq. Avoiding the US experience in Vietnam also shifts attention to historical cases that may be more applicable to Iraq than was the US war in Southeast Asia.

Revisiting Modern War

Those seeking historical insights into counterinsurgency warfare will find Roger Trinquier's classic *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency* disturbingly current. First published in 1961 and one of the best-selling post-World War II books in France, Trinquier influenced a generation of counterinsurgency scholarship. He succeeded in describing the true face of what current observers also label "modern war." Nearly 40 years later, for example, Mark Bowden subtitled his bestseller *Black Hawk Down*, the story of a US Special Forces operation in Somalia gone awry, *A Story of Modern War*.¹ Despite important differences between Somalia and the colonial independence conflicts Trinquier participated in, ongoing operations in Afghanistan and Iraq reflect many of the nonlinear, unconventional elements of what Trinquier labeled modern war to distinguish between armored battles between nation-states and counterinsurgencies pitting nation-builders against organizations using terrorist tactics.

Trinquier was introduced to counterinsurgency warfare in Indochina before being assigned to Algeria in 1957 as a Lieutenant Colonel with the French 10th Parachute Division. Decades of service conditioned his views. Algeria inspired his writings on modern war, including a penetrating testimony to the central tenet of counterinsurgency: winning the allegiance of the indigenous population. A systematic approach is needed. Counterinsurgencies require "an interlocking system of actions—political, economic, psychological, military—that aims at the [insurgents' intended] overthrow of the established authority in a country and its replacement by another regime."²

Robert Tomes is Senior Advisor to the NGA Technical Director, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), a doctoral candidate at the University of Maryland, and a member of the Council for Emerging National Security Affairs. His work has appeared in *Policy Review*, *National Security Studies Quarterly*, and the *Naval War College Review*, and is forthcoming in *Joint Force Quarterly*, *Armed Forces and Society*, and *Defence Studies*.

As military theory, Trinquier's "modern war" parallels a prominent theme in post-Cold War military thought, one documented by Israeli military historian Martin Van Creveld's 1991 book, *The Transformation of War*.³ Trinquier preceded Van Creveld and other post-Cold War military theorists in arguing that nuclear weapons would lead to a decline in traditional armored warfare and a rise in modern warfare in its many variants: guerrilla warfare, insurgency, terrorism, and subversion. As do current military analysts, Trinquier approached the problem of countering modern warfare by assessing differences between linear clashes of armies and the tactics, goals, methods, and norms of the insurgent or guerrilla.

Pitting a traditional combined armed force trained and equipped to defeat similar military organizations against insurgents "reminds one of a pile driver attempting to crush a fly, indefatigably persisting in repeating its efforts."⁴ In Indochina, for example, the French "tried to drive the Vietminh into a classic pitched battle, the only kind [they] knew how to fight, in hope that superiority in material would allow an easy victory."⁵ The only way to avoid similar pitfalls, according to Trinquier, is to fight the "specially adapted organization" that is common to almost all subversive, violent movements seeking to overthrow the status quo.⁶ In October 2003 it appeared the United States was creating its own special organization to combat Iraqi insurgents: Task Force 121, a new joint strike unit reportedly composed of American Special Forces units and Army Rangers.⁷

Presumably steeped in counterinsurgency warfare, Task Force 121 and other units operating against Iraqi resistance have learned the lessons of past modern wars. They will not simply sweep towns. This won't defeat an organized insurgency. Instead, the enemy's organization must be targeted to defeat the clandestine organization attempting to impose its will on the Iraqi people. Four elements typically encompass an insurgency: cell-networks that maintain secrecy; terror used to foster insecurity among the population and drive them to the movement for protection; multifaceted attempts to cultivate support in the general population, often by undermining the new regime; and attacks against the government. Only by identifying and destroying the infrastructure of the subversive organization can the fledgling government persevere. Stated another way, just as the traditional war is not fought with the individual soldier or platoon in mind but rather the state's capacity and will to continue hostilities, modern war seeks to destroy the organization as a whole and not simply its violent arm or peripheral organs.

After comparing the relative resources of the insurgent and government forces, Trinquier concludes "that the guerrilla's greatest advantages are his perfect knowledge of an area (which he himself has chosen) and its potential, and the support given him by the inhabitants."⁸ To turn this defeat into a victory, the

“The ultimate goal is to separate the fish from the sea, leaving it exposed to the state’s spear.”

counterinsurgent must recognize that “this total dependence upon terrain and population is also the guerrilla’s weak point.”⁹ Toward this end, he suggests three simple principles: separate the guerrilla from the population that supports him; occupy the zones that the guerrillas previously operated from, making them dangerous for him and turning the people against the guerrilla movement; and coordinate actions over a wide area and for a long enough time that the guerrilla is denied access to the population centers that could support him.

This requires an extremely capable intelligence infrastructure endowed with human sources and deep cultural knowledge. Indeed, intelligence is key. As the Commander of the US Army’s 1st Armored Division in Iraq, Major General Martin Dempsey, observed in November 2003, “Fundamentally, here in Baghdad we do two things: We’re either fighting for intelligence or we’re fighting based on that intelligence.”¹⁰ Despite unparalleled improvements in military intelligence, the United States does not seem to have the depth and breadth required in human intelligence (humint) and cultural intelligence arenas. Arabic linguists are lacking. Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence Stephen Cambone, discussing intelligence shortcomings documented in an internal report, might have understated the problem, admitting, “We’re a little short on the humint side; there’s no denying it.”¹¹ For Trinquier, intelligence was one of several crucial enablers for defeating an insurgent. Others included a secure area to operate from, sources in the general population and government, maintaining the initiative, and careful management of propaganda.

A critical step in any counterinsurgency campaign is the creation of a “tight organization” to counter the enemy’s organizational advantages. Created from the bottom up, based on a full appreciation for the tactical situation, a successful counterinsurgency organization must depart from its standard operational approach to warfare. For example, campaign planning should include a system to account for every citizen, coordination with the political effort to designate a hierarchical network of groups headed by pro-government chiefs, and a system to monitor the activities of guerrilla sympathizers. This entails a census, the issuing of photo-identification cards, and a countrywide intelligence system. The ultimate goal is to separate the fish from the sea, leaving it exposed to the state’s spear.

In Iraq it is clearly difficult to weed out insurgents while protecting the Coalition's ability to win the trust of the Iraqi people and downplay its image as an occupying force. Whenever the commoner feels threatened or afraid, the guerrilla has the upper hand. Protecting basic liberties must be balanced with weeding out subversive elements and threats to stability. Some means and methods are historically ineffective. Routine patrols, isolated ambushes, large-scale sweeps, and even outposts tend to be wasted activities. Of these, outposts are useful when they keep roads and lines of communication open. But none of these activities establishes lines of battle. In previous counterinsurgencies, success required long occupation, something requiring a degree of political will that the current Coalition in Iraq may not have.

Trinquier suggests an organizational structure to wage this counter-guerrilla campaign and elaborates a "gridding" system that divides territory into sectors in which methods are applied to sweep them clear of subversive elements. Again, the use of a census is important, as is the recording of vehicles, animals, and any other assets that may be exploited by the anti-government forces. During these operations entire towns are to be detained and interrogated, a process that should yield valuable intelligence but may also alienate the population. At times, warns Trinquier, it is vital to take the war to the enemy by going beyond one's borders. Allowing safe havens for subversive elements may negate the successes of previous operations.

Relearning the Theory and Practice of Counterinsurgency Warfare

Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice, penned by David Galula in 1964, provides a systematic discussion of how to defeat the insurgent—and the pitfalls along the way.¹² Bernard Fall, author of the acclaimed *Street Without Joy*, considered Galula's work the best "how-to" guide to counterinsurgency warfare. Experience in China, Greece, Southeast Asia, and Algeria as a French military officer and attaché led Galula to consider the "need for a compass," and prompted him to "define the laws of counterinsurgency warfare, to deduce from them its principles, and to outline the corresponding strategy and tactics."¹³

A simple theoretical construct underlies the theory and practice of counterinsurgency warfare. It is the essence of what today's theorists and strategists term asymmetric warfare: although an asymmetric distribution of resources and abilities actually favors counterinsurgent forces, they are often inappropriately wielded. The conflict is asymmetric because there is a "disproportion of strength between the opponents at the outset, and from the difference in essence between their assets and liabilities."¹⁴ At the conceptual level, the insurgent is endowed with the "ideological power of a cause on which to base his

Component	Insurgent	Counterinsurgent
Resource asymmetry	Limited resources/power	Preponderance of resources/power
Objective = population	Solicit government oppression	Show that insurgency is destabilizing
Political nature of war	Wage war for minds of population	Wage war for same, and to keep legitimacy
Gradual transition to war	Use time to develop cause	Always in reactive mode
Protracted nature of war	Disperse; use limited violence widely	Maintain vigilance; sustain will
Cost	High return for investment	Sustained operations carry high political/economic burden
Role of ideology	Sole asset at beginning is cause or idea	Defeat root of cause or idea

Figure 1. Galula's differences between insurgents and counterinsurgents.

actions” and the counterinsurgent laden with a “heavy liability—he is responsible for maintaining order throughout the country” without undermining the ideals on which the new government is making its pleas for support.¹⁵

Figure 1, above, shows the differences that Galula saw between insurgents and counterinsurgents. Exploring the practical implications of those dyadic relationships is the underlying theme of Galula's writings, which reinforce the image of counterinsurgency as one “where most of the rules applicable to one side do not work for the other.”¹⁶

This is a critical point for discussions of Iraqi counterinsurgency operations. Press accounts too frequently criticize an apparent inability of US forces to defeat insurgents without addressing the more complex, diverging objectives of the Coalition. Part of the Coalition's sociological mission is instantiating important concepts into the Iraqi collective conscious, including mercy, restraint, proportional force, and just war.

One cannot understand the theory and practice of counterinsurgency warfare without understanding the socio-political-economic intricacies of the “cause” which insurgents use to mobilize support. Without a cause, the insurgency cannot persuade the population to join or assist in the campaign. Qualities of causes include: a large part of the population must be able to identify with the cause; the counterinsurgent cannot be able to use the same cause or espouse it; the essential social mobilization base remains the same while the cause changes over time as the insurgency adapts. With the right cause, the insurgent can mobilize recruits. Combined with an intermixing of attacks on those aiding the new regime, a successful cause increases insurgent power while blunting the counterinsurgency's intelligence capabilities. Over time,

as the new regime appears powerless to prevent terrorism and restore stability, the mobilization potential of the cause increases when propaganda arms of the insurgency identify the new regime as the root of instability.

Arguably, the Iraqi counterinsurgency has entered this stage. Arab media may in fact be aiding the insurgency. Reports of staggering numbers of new Iraqi satellite television dishes suggest that foreign media broadcasts, many of them colored with anti-American bias, are competing with Coalition media services in the battle to shape Iraqi perceptions.

Causes are not static. They change as the insurgency adapts. The basic “strategic criteria” of a cause—and the necessary ingredient of any “best cause” at any moment in the struggle—is that it “can attract the largest number of supporters and repel the minimum of opponents.”¹⁷ Once a problem is selected, the insurgent attempts to exacerbate the problem in order to increase the chasm between the government and the people. Political, social, economic, racial, religious, or even artificially created issues can be folded into a cause. In the case of the artificial or concocted cause, the insurgent must work to make the underlying premise appear to be fact. This is possible through “efficient propaganda” or other means to “turn an artificial problem into a real one.”¹⁸ Mistakes made in the process of waging a counterinsurgency war often reinforce an insurgent’s propaganda. For example, accidental shootings, deaths during interrogations, misdirected raids, and inappropriate behavior by new police organizations fuel insurgent claims that the new regime is corrupt or unable to protect the population.

The ability to switch causes and manipulate them to the detriment of the government is based on a fundamental characteristic of the war where “idealism and a sense of ethics weigh in favor of a consistent stand [but] tactics pull toward opportunism.”¹⁹ An asymmetric resource distribution leaves the insurgent few options in his fight against the government institutions opposing him. As the war widens and the population is forced to take sides, the insurgency need not devote as much time and effort in cultivating the cause. By this time, the war has engulfed the country and exposed the weaknesses of the government as well as providing evidence as to the growing power of the movement. The coming months in Afghanistan and Iraq will see insurgency movements adapting their mobilization strategies as they intensify attacks meant to reinforce the argument that new, American-backed regimes cannot protect the population.

What can be done? How can US military planners attack the intangible, political elements of the insurgency? Galula offers several routes to making “a body politic resistant to infection.”²⁰ First is continuously reassessing the nature, scope, and degree of problems around the country. Anticipating problems and proactively addressing them leaves the insurgent without

causes to exploit. Second, increase solidarity for the regime. Bring additional propaganda efforts to bear, including Arabic television broadcasts, that promote the new regime as something worth supporting and defending. Third, counterinsurgency leadership must maintain a high level of vigilance and support against the movement. Many times insurgencies will take strategic pauses to adapt, regroup, and develop new mobilization strategies. Too often a new regime will interpret this as victory and focus resources on regime-building. Counterinsurgencies are protracted struggles. Fourth, as Trinquier argued, intelligence and deep knowledge of the enemy are critical. Bringing new sources and methods to bear throughout the effort must be a priority. Too often, commanders consider their intelligence capabilities and tools as fixed resources across the insurgency. Today, there are countless remote sensing, information fusion, and surveillance capabilities available for incorporation into the toolbox. Many are ideally suited to the urban fight and can bolster human intelligence assets.

Intelligence tools, furthermore, must be attuned to geographic conditions, which remain a factor in the ability of the regime to defeat the insurgent. This is an area where US forces should be seeking out and applying new capabilities. Geospatial intelligence capabilities, including integration of demographic information, play an overriding role in insurgency warfare. Insurgents tend to use geography against the new government, including the exploitation of active borders to receive outside support.

A confluence of military and nonmilitary operations defeats the insurgent. This requires an organization vested with the power to coordinate political, social, economic, and military elements. This was, presumably, the goal of a recent US National Security Council decision to reorganize the management of Iraq operations. For Galula, counterinsurgency efforts require unified command, a single source of direction. This means a “tight” organization, to borrow from Trinquier, directing “the operation from the beginning to the end.”²¹ The military, moreover, cannot be allowed a free hand in the overall direction of the war. At the operational level, “It is better to entrust civilian tasks to civilians.”²² That is, “military action is secondary to the political one, its primary purpose being to afford the political power enough freedom to work safely with the population.”²³

Galula’s discussion of command and control problems, which must be settled prior to engaging the enemy, exposes structural and conceptual elements of the counterinsurgency process. Once the decision to engage the enemy has been made and an area selected for operations, a systematic process is initiated in the first, and each consecutive, area where the insurgent is active. The first step involves selecting an area to win back from the enemy. Sufficient troops are massed in the area and moved into contact with the enemy in

order to destroy or expel them. “This operation is not an end in itself, for guerrillas, like the heads of the legendary hydra, have the special ability to grow again if not all destroyed at the same time. The real purpose of the operation,” Galula continues, “is to prepare the stage for the further development of the counterinsurgent action.”²⁴

After an area has been cleared of guerrillas, the “over-all operation is finally broken down into several small-scale ones” and “all of the forces work on what is left of the guerrillas after the . . . earlier sweeps.”²⁵ This is predominantly a military activity. As such, there is likely to be some destruction of physical structures, crops, and damage to other local assets. As a result, the insurgent is likely to initiate a propaganda campaign using damaged assets as evidence that the government is unconcerned with, perhaps even antagonistic to, the local peasants or villagers. No easy solution exists for this problem. Preventative steps are concerned mainly with limiting the destruction and imposing constraints on the use of force. “Any damage done should be immediately compensated without red tape.”²⁶

Counterinsurgents direct propaganda operations at the population with a limited goal of obtaining their neutrality. The underlying message? “Stay neutral and peace will return soon to the area. Help the insurgent, and we will be obliged to carry on more military operations and thus inflict more destruction.”²⁷

The construction of barracks and other housing should be avoided and the troops forced to live like the population. Psychologically, if the troops live in their own housing which is distinct from that of the locals, they will develop a cognitive distance from the population. Similarly, if the troops live in housing that differs from the locals’ housing, they will appear to be outsiders and thus make it more difficult for the people to accept them. This is currently a problem for Coalition forces in Iraq. As insurgents succeeded in attacks, Coalition forces moved into more isolated, secure billeting. Although this is prudent in the short term, in the long run it reinforces the perception of US forces as an occupying power.

Low-intensity Operations

A decade after Trinquier’s book was published in France, Frank Kitson’s *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency and Peace-keeping* rolled off the press across the English Channel. By then, Britain had participated—usually with unsatisfactory performance—in more than 30 low-intensity conflicts that involved elements of subversion.²⁸ Kitson’s book, notes military historian General Sir Michael Carver, was “written for the soldier of today to help him prepare for the operations of tomorrow,” an observation that still holds true in the 2000s.²⁹ Of course, no one, including

Kitson, would claim that military engagements during counterinsurgency conflicts are really “low-intensity.” All combat is intense.

Like Trinquier and Galula, Kitson observes that the realm of counterinsurgency involves combat with an enemy “likely to be employing a combination of political, economic, psychological, and military measures.”³⁰ He also identifies a viable intelligence organization as critical.

Kitson departs from Trinquier and Galula in his discussion of the proper use of force. After warning against abuses, he discusses “military difficulties about using too little force and about delaying its application for too long.”³¹ Kitson advocates fighting fire with fire, stressing “that wars of subversion and counter-subversion are fought, in the last resort, in the minds of the people.”³² The soldier cannot become fixated with engaging the guerrilla, nor can he become desensitized to the power of ideas to influence other men. One only has to recognize the importance of waging war in the mind “for the importance of a good psychological operations organization to become apparent.”³³ And once this becomes apparent, then the importance of intelligence is elevated.

To clarify the use of intelligence, Kitson distinguishes between information needed in “normal” times and “that which it will have to get after subversion has started.”³⁴ He proposes two kinds of intelligence, political and operational. The former is collected and analyzed before, during, and after the subversion rises and falls; the latter is unique to the fight against the enemy organization and “will cease to be required once the enemy is fully defeated, because it is concerned with information about the enemy’s forces and committees which will have ceased to exist by that time.”³⁵

The move from political intelligence gathering to operational intelligence gathering and the guiding of forces into contact with the enemy involves more than merely expanding the intelligence organization. As discussed above, it requires adapting to the enemy and “developing new methods” to deal with problems as they arise.³⁶ In simpler terms this means maintaining flexibility, seizing the initiative whenever possible, and effectively coordinating the military, political, economic, and social aspects of the conflict. The army must be involved in the intelligence gathering and analysis aspects of the counterinsurgency effort from the beginning, Kitson argues, “because in the later stages of the campaign when [the army’s] units are deployed, it will rely very greatly on the information provided by the intelligence organization for the success of its operations.”³⁷ One facet of building a successful intelligence organization is the use of local assets, which becomes especially true when establishing a psychological-operations organization.

How can the new regime’s counterinsurgency forces be educated? First, they must become attuned to the environment, both the cognitive as

well as the physical. Second, commanders must learn to optimize resources for each phase in the campaign, including the integration of civil and military activities. Third, commanders must know how to direct and coordinate all resources under their command. Finally, education and training must reach all levels of the organization.³⁸

Students of ongoing efforts in Iraq will benefit from Kitson's comparison of counterinsurgencies and peacekeeping. Fundamentally, the two share "a surprising similarity in the outward forms of many of the techniques involved."³⁹ Both require the combination and efficient integration of military and nonmilitary resources, although peacekeeping arguably requires greater attention to the political aspects of the operation. While the use of force is typical of a campaign against insurgents, there are advantages in avoiding the use of force in peacekeeping operations and focusing on political means. Kitson suggests that the peacekeeper must develop an image of being an honest broker, which enhances the ability of the peacekeeper to negotiate and if necessary mediate between belligerents. A unique attribute of the peacekeeper's mission is the gathering and employment of intelligence within a different set of ethical guidelines, a product of the "peaceful" nature of the mission. To avoid infringing upon the privacy of the population, Kitson suggests the exploitation of open sources and the development of human contacts on both sides of the conflict. Despite the need to remain neutral, however, Kitson does relate experiences where forces intercepted communications, exposing again the need to deploy intelligence assets with the operational force.

Conclusion

Trinquier, Galula, and Kitson are certainly not the only authors providing useful insights into the nature and conduct of counterinsurgencies. They are, however, among the best sources of insight from a generation of soldiers with experience fighting modern wars. A number of common lessons or themes from the above discussion apply to the current situation in Iraq.

All three works discuss the asymmetric relationship between the insurgent and the counterinsurgent. This is true not only in terms of the cause, where the insurgent is likely to have the only dynamic one, but extends to the material realm also. Optimizing available counterinsurgency resources is crucial. Education and reeducation of soldiers is one way of sustaining focus and adapting efforts. During and after combat actions, the political nature of the contest must be reinforced. Because transitioning from a combat soldier to a political one is a delicate process, it is important for troop rotations to be aligned with progress in legitimating new political institutions.

Intelligence is the critical enabler. The tactical use of information, which is the responsibility of the operational commander, is the only way to identify the enemy. Background information must be gathered and analyzed at all times, with operational intelligence used to bring forces into contact with the enemy. The operational intelligence effort must remain flexible, adapting to the situation as it develops, and retain the wherewithal to innovate and seize the initiative away from the enemy. Ground commanders must develop and retain a capacity to actively gather information and avoid situations where they are dependent on other organizations for critical operational intelligence. This aids identification and neutralization of causes and concerns before their exploitation for guerrilla mobilization.

Insurgency causes, their mobilization resource, are not static. The movement will manipulate, even create, causes as the war progresses; initial causes often decline in importance as the struggle escalates. Counterinsurgencies must engage in reform, adaptation, or innovation activities to counter the political appeal of evolving causes. Counter-mobilization is a critical, strategic process in the campaign. In Iraq, we are now seeing the shifting of insurgent mobilization appeals from supporting the old regime to defending against foreign occupation to appealing to local tribal elements seeking preservation of paternal social norms. Counterinsurgency efforts must respond accordingly.

Concurrent with the development of a viable intelligence organization is the need to recognize the interdependence of economic, political, psychological, and military factors. The successful counterinsurgency campaign will have an organization which aggregates these factors into one unified command able to adapt and utilize resources efficiently. The efforts of elements within the organization should not be allowed to “cut across each other,” and the commander should be aware of their actions at all times.

Finally, the counterinsurgent must possess the training, capability, and will to fight on *cognitive terrain*. Toward this end he must develop and deploy psychological operations units, propaganda operations, and social service units that foster the impression that the government is addressing underlying socio-economic problems. Additionally, the insurgent must be exposed as preventing the government from solving these problems.

In discussing success criteria, counterinsurgents need success as early as possible to demonstrate the will, the means, and the ability to defeat the insurgency. Counterinsurgents, moreover, need to avoid negotiations until they are in a position of strength. Potential supporters will flock to the insurgent’s side out of fear of retaliation if the movement considers them disloyal. A negotiated solution to the conflict before the new government possesses a preponderance of power will lead to the undermining of the settlement and the negation of gains.

The above review does not suggest such works can resolve current problems or that concerns can be resolved merely by dusting off and reading counterinsurgency books from the Cold War. However, “studying the past,” to borrow from John Lewis Gaddis, “has a way of introducing humility—a first stage toward gaining detachment—because it suggests the continuity of the problems we confront, and the unoriginality of most of our solutions for them. It is a good way of putting things in perspective, of stepping back to take in a wider view.”⁴⁰

NOTES

1. Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999).
2. Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency*, trans. Daniel Lee, with an introduction by Bernard B. Fall (New York: Praeger, 1964), p. 6.
3. Martin Van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: The Free Press, 1991).
4. Trinquier, p. 4.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
7. Thom Shanker and Eric Schmitt, “Pentagon Says a Covert Force Hunts Hussein,” *The New York Times*, 7 November 2003, p. 1.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Trinquier, p. 63.
10. Cited in Matt Kelley, “U.S. Intelligence Effort Lacking in Specialists,” *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 22 November 2003, p. 1.
11. *Ibid.*
12. David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Praeger, 1964).
13. *Ibid.*, pp. xii-xiii.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
16. *Ibid.*, p. xi.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-keeping* (London: Faber, 1971), p. xi.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*, p. 70.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 78.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 165-67.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 144.
40. John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the End of the Cold War: Implications, Reconstructions, Provocations* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992), p. 3.