The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters

Volume 38
Number 4 *Parameters Winter 2008*

Article 9

11-1-2008

COIN in the Real World

David R. Haines

Recommended Citation
David R. Haines, "COIN in the Real World," *Parameters* 38, no. 4 (2008), doi:10.55540/0031-1723.2452.

COIN in the Real World

DAVID R. HAINES

The nations most likely to be affected by insurgencies, those without extensive resources, refined organization, or a responsible political environment, need a more realistic counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy than that articulated in classic and contemporary counterinsurgency theory. The former authors wrote exclusively from a colonial perspective,[1] while the latter write overwhelmingly on the experiences of foreign powers abroad.[2] The officials and security forces of affected nations intuitively emphasize the same themes found in theory: intergovernmental coordination and cooperation, rule of law, prioritizing political vice security-based solutions, and establishing a stable electoral state. These themes are often difficult to translate into reality because nations suffer from fundamental flaws that make implementing the "best" practices and solutions virtually impossible. A successful counterinsurgency strategy cannot be deferred until a nation rectifies its flaws; it needs to operate within the existing framework. This article will explore the specific impediments to planning and implementing a successful COIN strategy in these nations and conclude with recommendations for more realistic COIN policies.

Most insurgencies are combated by nations such as India and Thailand, each of whom is currently waging, without external assistance, counterinsurgencies within their borders. Typical COIN operations take place in post-colonial or multiethnic countries with long histories of insurgency outside the North American and Western European geopolitical arenas. These nations are sufficiently large and influential, or they have reputations for treating insurgents with enough respect to meet conventional human rights standards, to deflect any international protest as to how their counterinsurgency is conducted. This status ensures that the nation cannot be

"saved" by international interference, nor would it find it necessary to invite a more influential nation to assist its efforts. These countries are cooperative members of international organizations and generally make an effort to adhere, or appear to adhere, to the basic tenets of international behavior. They usually do not shun cooperation and participation with regional or international organizations, finding it expedient to join global causes and adhere to global norms. These governments want to be a part of the greater international society, though they are rarely capable of a leadership role.

Counterinsurgency literature is almost always produced by nations that possess a fair amount of wealth and strong institutions. The authors come from places that are invariably democracies with strict human rights standards and which rarely face insurgencies within their own borders. The middle-power nations that are most likely to conduct counterinsurgency campaigns, however, have uncooperative and ineffective governmental institutions. They often are characterized by limited resources and relaxed human rights standards. Middle-power nations can be overly belligerent, internally uncoordinated, and poorly governed. Their flaws overlap and reinforce, rendering proper planning and adherence difficult, while efficient resolution is nearly impossible. The flaws are produced by deficiencies in government, and because these deficiencies contribute to multiple omissions and violations, it is far easier to examine problems in structure, rather than identifying the roots of specific defects. Such defects are generally found in one of three areas: basic institutional weakness, state structure, and excessive influence by an elite.

Prominent Examples

Thailand and India are regularly cited in this article as prime examples of nations suffering these defects. India is facing a decades-long Maoist insurgency that stretches across more than a dozen states and has resulted in more than 500 deaths annually since 2003. Unknown insurgents in the southern reaches of Thailand have been fighting the government since 2004 over cultural dominance of the Malay Muslim provinces. The former

---

Lieutenant David R. Haines, USMC, is a 2006 graduate of the United States Naval Academy with a bachelor of science in ocean engineering. He received a master's of philosophy in international relations from Cambridge University in 2007.

---

insurgency has a defined organization and a stated goal, the overthrow of the Indian government, while the latter is a leaderless rebellion with unknown objectives. There are few insurgencies worldwide which do not resemble one of these two examples in terms of aim, structure, or methodology. Both governments have exercised a number of strategies to combat these active insurgencies.

Institutional Weakness

Successful counterinsurgency depends on the presence of capable government institutions. The latest US theory outlined in Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, for instance, places significant emphasis on the value of capable institutions, but such concepts have little relevance for many governments. Since the manual is written for use by forces of a host government, the authors assume that resources necessary to develop a capable institution will be available, even if the embattled government is unable or unwilling to provide them.[3] In reality, many medium-powered nations simply do not have the institutions (or money and personnel) essential to execute a contemporary counterinsurgency strategy.

An ineffective government is both an incubator of revolution and an impediment to a successful counterinsurgency.[4] Inept institutions will deepen public mistrust and fail in attempts to dissipate latent hostility directed toward the government. Without capable institutions it is difficult for grievances in socially, ethnically, and religiously diverse states "to be expressed through legitimate channels and to be moderated and aggregated within the political system."[5] Regions affected by insurgencies in India and Thailand are often considered "punishment posts" and dumping grounds for incompetent or corrupt officials.[6] In India, the signs of failed institutions are common; many state police agencies have rudimentary weapons, and unfortified stations are used to house undermanned forces.[7] The lack of capable public administration provides not just a cause around which insurgents can rally the local populace, but fosters an environment in which the insurgent is capable of actually replacing the government by establishing parallel agencies and services. Responsibility for myriad shortcomings of failing institutions falls not on just a few individuals; instead, the sources often include the long-standing political culture of the government in power; acceptance of corruption; provision for minimal governmental and

Many nations simply cannot implement the counterinsurgency principles devised by resource-rich and organizationally strong countries.

legal oversight; lack of proper training for civilian and military leaders; and officials placing their own interests above those of the populace.

Tolerance of corruption is often a result of its presence at the highest levels of government or deficient oversight in local bureaucracies. Corruption takes many forms: for example, payment from low-level to higher officials to achieve promotions; from businessmen to officials to obtain government contracts; between candidates or special interests and political parties to buy votes and legislation; or from revolutionary groups to officials to minimize persecution, or vice versa. Although the practice of corruption is generally disparaged, it can sometimes be helpful. Carefully assembled patronage networks in southern Thailand helped minimize governance problems during the 1990s. Links between the military and smugglers helped keep violence to a minimum, and informants were often paid with money skimmed from local development projects; these informants provided valuable inside information regarding possible dissident activity.[8] The Thai case illustrates that beneficial corruption strikes a tenuous and difficult balance; violence was severely exacerbated when police began competing with the military for a portion of the illegal funding.

Development funds in India are often siphoned off as money traverses its way through the bureaucracy. Funds which do reach their intended destination are greatly reduced compared to the amount originally allocated. Clearly, this loss hampers the ability of the state to restore legitimacy and defeat the insurgency. Extensive networks often based on illegal mining and foresting activities exist between rebels, government officials, and security forces, adding to the insurgency's resources and power base. Local competition for these illegal funds threatens cooperation between various governmental departments and is disruptive to COIN initiatives.[9] Corruption during any insurgency reduces cooperation, effectiveness, and responsiveness, decreasing the impact of development

programs while providing insurgents with additional funding. Whenever possible, every effort should be made to implement programs at the lowest level of government, so corruption is minimized and any diverted funds still remain in the local economy.

Pandering and concession to insurgent causes by politicians are problematic in many states. Politicians often condone insurgent actions or attempt to use them for their own political gain. In Andhra Pradesh, India, a candidate for Chief Minister declared himself an ally of insurgents in a 1983 election. He even campaigned using the theme that they were "true patriots, who have been misunderstood by ruling classes." The same official lifted a ban on left-wing extremism a decade later in hopes of associating himself with the movement's political popularity.[10] His actions proved to be quite effective due to widespread support for the insurgents.

Pandering is a matter of minimizing the government's response to insurgent threats, either to acquire time for political enhancements or to reduce threats to officials' personal security. Prior to 2004, the Congress Party in Andhra Pradesh pledged to hold discussions with rebels if its candidates were elected. The party's pledge was a tacit agreement that while talks or negotiations were ongoing, the officials would halt counterinsurgency operations, thereby providing a recovery period for the insurgents. The insurgents also announced their ceasefire and permitted officials to campaign in the insurgent-held areas. The rebels effectively used the suspension of counterinsurgency operations and the resulting ceasefire to recruit and consolidate their position by moving openly among the population.[11] The Congress Party did not actively support the Maoist insurgents' ideals, but did indicate it would minimize any counterinsurgency operations in return for electoral support.

Pandering's usefulness ends as the relevant constituency expands from those individuals directly affected by the violence to a wider audience. When insurgents no longer have influence over a specific segment of the population, there is no political incentive to pander. Under such a circumstance national-level politicians will ideally co-opt the insurgent objectives while at the same time combating their operations.

As with corruption and pandering, pervasive apathy has the ability to erode institutions. Apathetic officials shirk their developmental and administrative duties, two key elements in any successful counterinsurgency strategy. Officials may refuse to travel from secure areas to rural offices for

safety reasons, limiting their ability to confirm if reported accomplishments are legitimate. If a senior official cannot verify actions at lower levels, junior bureaucrats have little motivation to complete program objectives. Even if one level is not itself apathetic, negligent oversight permits subordinates to engage in apathetic or illegal behavior without fear of consequence. This apathetic behavior is most rampant when officials are charged with the responsibility for interdepartmental reviews.

When oversight is lacking, professionals, administrators, and contractors often refuse to perform their duties, citing concerns related to safety or pay. This pervasive absenteeism occurs throughout rural India, especially in the insurgent-infested remote tribal forest regions.[12] The absence of government officials is the most obvious symptom of official neglect and enhances recruitment by insurgents. The lackadaisical attitude of a government agency's employees affects more than just the individual development projects for which they are responsible. Villages without roads will struggle to get other projects completed. To defeat an insurgency, governments need coherent, simultaneous efforts executed by linked departments which share a clear aim based on their articulated counterinsurgency strategy. Contrary to this necessity, departments in India do not work together; some do not work at all. Even when security forces are active, apathy from other departments can doom counterinsurgency efforts. In the state of Orissa, Indian police authorities have made vain attempts to engage uncooperative agencies, even going so far as to compile lists of required development projects and prioritizing them on behalf of villagers—tasks that should be the domain of a human services agency. One superintendent of police distributed medicine and blankets paid for out of his salary; his wife, a doctor, accompanied him providing medical treatment.[13]

A political culture which emphasizes electoral victory and popular support at the expense of goal accomplishment endangers successful COIN operations by encouraging the belligerents to apply their strategies for political gain. In counterinsurgency, with a multitude of tactics and strategies to choose from, the potential for decisions based on political considerations is high. Should the political approach fail to resolve the insurgency, the opportunity then arises for criticism and negative influences related to public opinion from insurgent organizations or sympathetic opposition parties. Claims that the government is being too easy or too harsh on insurgent groups may force politicians to adjust their stance to counteract declining

electoral support. Politicians might decide to use the counterinsurgency to actively solicit public support. Former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra of Thailand recognized the appeal of his hard-line policies among rural voters.[14] Conversely, the West Bengal government in India has refused to ban Naxalite organizations due to fear of a backlash from leftists if it attempts to do anything more than merely deal with obvious violations of the law.[15]

Theoretical studies along with empirical evidence indicate that politicians in such an environment usually are forced to take belligerent action, with the chosen response often depending on the degree of impact the insurgency has on the relevant constituency. Michael Colaresi's studies on rivalry examine how certain country dyads with a history of conflict create incentives for decisionmaking during an escalating crisis.[16] Nations consistently opposed to one another's goals and values are classified as rivals. One country's mistrust of a rival nation often requires that threats by the opponent be met with force. Leaders who do not meet that expected threshold, who opt to cooperate too much in the view of the electorate or power brokers, may be removed from office.[17] Likewise, an insurgency creates natural, instantaneous rivalries between the central government and the insurgent forces. The broader public often displays signs of mistrust and feels threatened by that portion of the population wishing to overthrow the government. Frequent conflict between opponents often results in overt and permanent antagonism on the part of the public toward insurgent organizations and their members. For example, the majority of people in Turkey and Thailand have negative perceptions of those minority groups that are associated with insurgent movements, regardless of how actively antagonistic those groups may be.

Belligerent strategies, however, are widely derided in counter-insurgency literature as being counterproductive, especially with regard to the government's ability to win a political victory. Thailand's hard-line response to its insurgency was widely popular among the rural population outside the south, and Prime Minister Thaksin repeatedly espoused nationalism in an attempt to enhance support for the government.[18] Attempts to implement a political solution were not only short-lived, but drastically overshadowed by wide support for the exercise of belligerent strategies. The July 2005 state of emergency, which prompted scathing criticism from liberal segments of Thai society, garnered support from 75 percent of the

populace.[19] In fact, that November the Defense Minister assured the public that offensive action would continue. Even the post-Thaksin coup government that began with a lenient policy toward the insurgency later switched to more drastic measures, possibly due to the fact that "any concessions deemed too appeasing to the local Muslims could be political suicide for any government in Bangkok."[20]

State Structure

One of the key themes in counterinsurgency literature is cooperation between government bodies.[21] To initiate a successful counterinsurgency plan requires an official with the authority to coordinate all the relevant sources of a government's power. The primacy of such an individual or a supporting council may occasionally be constrained by constitutional provisions or political considerations. This has certainly been the case in India. It may also result in imprudent strategic and tactical decisions, as happened in Thailand. Centralized decisionmaking is not necessarily synonymous with coordinated decisionmaking.

Prime Minister Thaksin's nearly dictatorial power had the potential to make him an ideal counterinsurgency executive. He had absolute control regarding government finances, components of the security forces, and many of the relevant ministries within the government. His policies, however, were often misguided and counterproductive. Without doubt, it is asking a great deal of an executive to execute a complicated counterinsurgency strategy while attending to a state's domestic and international affairs, but the Prime Minister showed no willingness to share responsibility with any one person or agency.

India, on the other hand, is constrained by its constitutional structure when attempting to counter internal violence. Federal programs and initiatives often suffer from two types of threats: those conflicts taking place within a particular province or those that are regional. If the insurgency is in a single province, then the local government can take the appropriate measures to resolve the crisis, sometimes with limited assistance from the central government. If the province fails to contain the insurgency, or if the populace of the province is sympathetic to the insurgents' cause, then strong intervention by the central government is often required. Insurgencies spread across two or more states, like the Maoist insurgency in India, are

a more complex challenge in light of the nation's constitutional strictures. The central Indian government cannot take action to impose coordination between states, because the constitution divides responsibilities among governmental departments. Internal security is reserved for the states, unless "the Government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution."[22] That situation, known as "President's Rule," is unthinkable for a large state like Andhra Pradesh; even more so for multiple large states simultaneously, especially if the insurgency remains a relatively minor problem that does not threaten state governments. The central government can only cajole, plead, and make recommendations to the states involved; it cannot force any of them to take specific action.

States also change tactics based on the degree of neglect or lack of engagement other states may demonstrate with regard to mutual problems associated with the insurgency. The state police chief in Chhattisgarh, India, blamed Andhra Pradesh's policy of vacillation for the problems in his state, while the police chief in Jharkhand said insurgent activities were the result of West Bengal and Bihar not conducting offensive operations.[23] If one state is successful in driving the insurgents out or underground through the exercise of its security strategy, leaders often flee to an adjoining state that may not be as prepared, permitting the insurgency to continue while its leadership reestablishes support in the original state. Informal intelligence links between local security agencies can alleviate this issue to a degree. In fact, no formal system of coordination exists in India, even between neighboring districts in various states.[24]

Elites

Elites are individuals and groups that dominate the political, social, and economic aspects of a state or nation; a competition often harnessing national fervor and public opinion. An insurgent group is a favorite target for nationalistic attacks. This strategy permits organizations or individuals to represent themselves as saviors or protectors of the state. The combination of competing elites and mass movements organized around nationalist principles and an insurgency is a perfect breeding ground for aggressive policies and escalating conflict. Even after discounting any tendency on the part of elites to exercise nationalist fervor in their attempt to consolidate power, it remains apparent that any competition for influence severely hampers a government's ability to conduct a counterinsurgency campaign.

Typical COIN operations take place in post-colonial or multiethnic countries with long histories of insurgency.

Fragile preemptive reforms and measures designed to restore a state's legitimacy can be easily undermined by influential elites. Attempts at peacemaking are especially subject to negative influences. In Indonesia, the first ceasefire between the Free Aceh Movement and the government collapsed partly because the military, an elite, refused to accept the tenets dictated by the government.[25] The military, in fact, had previously shot two civil society members who offered to mediate peace talks.[26] In another example, Unionist politicians in Northern Ireland were prevented from engaging in reconciliation discussions with nationalists by political pressure from the Reverend Ian Paisley and other Protestant hard-liners.[27]

Thailand has suffered from elite disunity within its government, and criticism by elite outsiders. The government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was marred by internal disorder on matters related to the strategy for countering the insurgency. While debate within any administration is to be expected, Prime Minister Thaksin had the habit of following one course, and then rapidly switching to another. At one point he tasked Deputy Prime Minister Chaturon Chaising with finding a peaceful solution to the insurgency. Chaturon's largely conciliatory seven-step plan was endorsed by members of the local security forces and government officials, to include the regional army commander responsible for the southern provinces. The plan was then excoriated at the national level, with the Defense Minister maintaining that Deputy Prime Minister Chaturon was a dangerous liberal and that the affected people were satisfied with martial law.[28] Officials could not even agree on the sources or factions comprising the insurgency. The Prime Minister dismissed young insurgents as "drug addicts," while his Defense Minister and security advisers insisted there must be significant foreign involvement.[29]

Governments are often influenced by the military hierarchy, or threatened by military officers who have generated popular support. National leaders are reluctant to challenge these military figures and often attempt

to ensure that the generals will owe their power, prestige, and position to the executive. They accomplish this by establishing networks of patronage, either through monetary incentives or the promotion process. Executives may interfere in military affairs by rapidly reassigning high-ranking officers or forcing their retirement, so that more "loyal" officers might replace them. This practice is often used by the government to overcome potential disagreements related to the conduct of COIN strategy. Executives who feel vulnerable to coups often attempt to appease senior members of the military by reducing oversight. Placating the military in this fashion is a dangerous tactic, especially during a counterinsurgency, as the use of repressive tactics in Thailand bears witness. A similar situation occurred in Indonesia when then-President Abdurrahman Wahid granted the military the "privilege" of cracking down on dissents in Aceh.[30]

Such an approach can damage the overall counterinsurgency campaign in a number of ways. First, such methods are a distraction and often lead to a waste of resources. In the early 1960s, before his overthrow and eventual execution, President Ngo Dinh Diem spent vast amounts of time and energy promoting and demoting various generals in an effort to maintain control in South Vietnam.[31] A second problem with this elitist strategy is that it can create a hostile working environment where security forces compete with the civilian administration or each other for favor. Third, undue military influence, especially the use of force to overthrow the government, undermines the government's legitimacy with the local populace. A fourth problem with this approach is that the military members of the nation are less likely to accept any political resolution to the insurgency. Perhaps the best example of a military focus on law and order comes from a Thai officer in the 4th Army who said in 2007 that he was "just buying time until a political solution comes up."[32]

Recommendations

It is well known that many nations simply cannot implement the counterinsurgency principles devised by resource-rich and organizationally strong countries or host-nations. Flaws and lacunae are to be expected with regard to less-empowered nations, along with a lower-level of ability in the execution of government responsibilities. The preceding discussion has highlighted how specific flaws cause deficiencies in essential aspects of

counterinsurgency strategies. Either the problems in middle-power nations should be prioritized and solved on a basis of the problems' effects or the counterinsurgency principles should be rewritten to account for these challenges. A counterinsurgency strategy that ends latent hostility and yet ignores uncooperative, dysfunctional principals and institutions seems improbable. Still, having just reviewed the various problems and pitfalls, it is an opportune time to attempt to encourage a counterinsurgency strategy which takes those problems into account and tries to resolve insurgencies in the best manner possible, even if they fall short of long-term peace.

Containment

Containment is a good option, sometimes the only option, for many nations constrained by resources and faced with a small insurgency in a less important region of the country. If the state wishes to retain control over the area being contained, doing so often requires saturating the region with security forces. Otherwise the national government can choose to isolate the region with security forces and let it govern itself. That second option is feasible only with regard to ideological movements if they are in an isolated area or linked closely to a specific ethnic or religious group within a region. Collection and analysis of intelligence is a critical requirement to achieve any form of stable containment. In an active counterinsurgency campaign intelligence provides the state the ability to identify and neutralize insurgents. When containment is the chosen strategy, intelligence provides the government the capability to monitor any expansion of hostilities, the size of the insurgency, and its degree of influence on the local populace. Ignoring these threats can result in the insurgency expanding beyond the region of origin, often without the government's knowledge. Containment and monitoring of insurgent activities permits the government to choose when and if it will act to eliminate the threat according to a cost/benefit analysis. A government may even try to contain an insurgency by intentionally entering into extended negotiations that dampen the threat through enforced inactivity.

The costs associated with a strategy of containment are minimal, particularly if the insurgency is short-term in nature. A relatively small annual expenditure to support containment operations may be cheaper than devoting the resources necessary to underwrite development programs in a neglected province. Containment is often the preferred option if the

government realizes it may never be capable of assimilating the insurgent population or addressing their grievances.

Acceptability

Affected nations should strive to balance the acceptability, legality, and effectiveness of COIN tactics. In institutionally weak nations, however, legal tactics might be clearly counterproductive despite being morally and socially acceptable. Martial law in Thailand permitted the military to make arrests without warrants and conduct unannounced raids, even on religious schools and mosques.[33] Even illegal actions such as torture, kidnapping, and arbitrary arrests were widely accepted by the majority of Thais even though such steps exacerbated problems in the rebel strongholds in the south. There was not even a national reaction to the acquittal of a number of officers tried for their roles in incidents of abuse. Conversely, many of the legally permissible tactics used by the British in colonial conflicts were abandoned during "The Troubles" in Northern Ireland after it became clear that these measures were both counterproductive and politically unfeasible.[34]

In Andhra Pradesh, on the other hand, police have managed to balance acceptability, effectiveness, and legality. The police obtained intelligence that allowed them to identify individual Maoists, and then used "encounter killings" to eliminate insurgents. The broader population, which is usually sensitive to incidents of police brutality, remained silent mainly due to the fact that it was disenchanted with the Maoist violence and the ineffectiveness of the Indian justice system. In this particular case the police received passive support from the general populace.[35]

There is a fine line between utility of force and excessive force. Staying within effective parameters while operating in an extralegal environment, and relying on the passive acceptance of the population, is a tricky endeavor. Perhaps, though, it is not too much of an exaggeration to assert that while effectiveness and acceptance are requirements, legality is not a necessity.

The standard for acceptance cannot be left to the whims of people, which often do not place progress against insurgents ahead of national honor. On the other hand, security forces cannot rely entirely on the emotions and desires of the local population, especially if the locals' sympathy lies in support of the insurgents' cause.

Delegating

Governments should not maintain the responsibility for the execution of a COIN strategy at the national level, but place it at a level where the affected population is most likely to be impacted. The reality of such a situation is that the government is less likely to pursue a belligerent solution against a population on whom it depends for support. Consider the race riots in Gujarat, India, in 2002. Tension existed between Hindus and Muslims everywhere in India, and yet the only place violence erupted was Gujarat, where the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party had enough of a majority to ignore the minority of Muslim voters.[36] In other provinces Muslims were still a minority group, but the governments could not risk alienating Muslim voters. Governments exercising authority over a significant minority will be motivated to solve security challenges in a manner that ensures the minority's political support in the future. If the affected group is a significant minority, then the group is well-positioned to tell the government the rationale for the insurgency and what, if anything, can be done to counter it.

At the national level government may choose to ignore the insurgency altogether. Also, by delegating responsibility to lower-level officials, the national leadership can deflect potential criticism regarding the insurgency from opposition politicians, the society at large, and the media. Responsibility for counterinsurgency should never be given to a level of government in which the upset group constitutes a majority of the population; the entire region could sympathize and the provincial government may turn on the national government, resulting in a civil war.

Minimizing Media

Many governments with active insurgencies are able to restrict or at least influence their nation's press. Although the government should permit enough media coverage to allow some oversight by civilian and governmental leaders, it should otherwise minimize coverage as a mechanism for granting advantage to those executing the COIN strategy. Minimal media coverage means less public outcry related to possible incidents, whether that incident be a massacre or an unwise political concession to the insurgents. Any significant outcry may force the government into making imprudent or hasty changes in an attempt to compensate for its error. Minimizing media coverage also reduces the exposure of insurgents and their cause.

Limited media coverage will reduce the political impact of the insurgency on national and state governments. Opposition politicians may even try to gain advantage by suggesting new strategies or alternatives. While this type of participation can stimulate a healthy debate, it may also encourage irresponsible short-term solutions for political gain.

Conclusion

The national security interests of the United States coincide with the execution of responsible COIN strategies in other states. Issues and challenges resolved or contained internally will not become global threats.[37] To that end, both US-specific and general COIN theory should reflect a more realistic view of foreign government capabilities. Obviously, the most prominent COIN document, Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, is oriented to US forces, but FM 3-24 places significant emphasis on standards that in reality are difficult for the host government to obtain, especially with regard to the establishment of capable institutions, good governance, and democracy. The reason behind the occasional foreign power success and the underlying assumption supporting the current counterinsurgency doctrine is either that the affected government is capable of implementing such a strategy or the required structure and resources will be provided by first-world nations. The literature makes no allowances for the challenges associated with uncooperative institutions, corruption, the vagaries of constitutional form, wealth disparity, demographic politics, and the effect of national or provincial politics. Winning a counterinsurgency in a region that is resource deficient and institutionally weak is a difficult endeavor. This disparity between theory and practice is well-illustrated by contrasting the American initiatives in Iraq with ongoing efforts in India.

Success stories in Iraq often center on public works programs, which have two positive purposes. The first is to provide basic services to the population, thereby improving the image of the government and American forces. The second is to pay young men more than insurgents can. The plan hinges on the organizational ability of the US military and the resources available. General Peter Chiarelli, former commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq, credited the $18.4 billion of supplemental funding as crucial to reconstruction efforts, although he said $400 million in additional funding was needed for parts of Baghdad alone. The United Nations estimated that repair of the Iraqi infrastructure would require $60 billion.[38] In contrast, the

money distributed by the Indian state of Orissa to combat its insurgency amounted to less than $200 million. Obviously, one has to account for different standards of living and the security environment, but the fact remains that many countries simply do not have the resources in real terms and are less capable in terms of resource management. These nations have problems and challenges that are often ignored by first-world countries operating overseas. These are the same factors that make the execution of a successful COIN strategy difficult when foreign powers finally withdraw from a region. If US-centric and general theory insist on good governance and extensive resources as prerequisites, then advice on developing them must be included in the literature. A more realistic approach may be to write theory that works around or takes advantage of government failings and deficient resources. Those nations that are most likely to face an insurgency need to seek ways to circumvent their corrupt institutions and belligerent tendencies. A responsible COIN strategy needs to be based on reasonable recommendations and expectations, recognizing that total victory is not always possible or even desirable.

NOTES

1. David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Security International, 1964, 2006); Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-keeping* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971); T. E. Lawrence, "The 27 Articles of T. E. Lawrence," *The Arab Bulletin*, 20 August 1917; Andrew Mack, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict," *World Politics*, 27 (January 1975), 175-200; John J. McCuen, *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War: The Strategy of Counter-Insurgency* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966); Julian Paget, *Counter-insurgency Campaigning* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967); Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency* (London: Pall Mall, 1964); Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1966).
2. Larry Cable, "Reinventing the Round Wheel: Insurgency, Counter-Insurgency, and Peacekeeping Post Cold War," *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 4 (Autumn 1993), 228-62; Peter W. Chiarelli and Patrick R. Michaelis, "Winning the Peace: The Requirement for Full-Spectrum Operations," *Military Review*, 85 (July/August 2005), 4-17; Lawrence E. Cline, *Pseudo Operations and Counterinsurgency: Lessons from Other Countries* (Carlisle, Pa: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2005); Dana R. Dillon, "Comparative Counter-insurgency Strategies in the Philippines," *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 6 (Winter 1995), 281-303; Max G. Manwaring, *Shadows of Things Past and Images of the Future: Lessons for the Insurgencies in Our Midst* (Carlisle, Pa.: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2004); Thomas A. Marks, "Evaluating Insurgent/Counterinsurgent Performance," *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 11 (Winter 2000), 21-46; Steven Metz, *Rethinking Insurgency* (Carlisle, Pa.: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2007); John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (2d ed., Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2005); Kalev I. Sepp, "Best Practices in Counterinsurgency," *Military Review*, 85 (May/June 2005), 8-12; *The U.S. Army-Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual: U.S. Army Field Manual No. 3-24, Marine Corps Warfighting Publication No. 3-33.5* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2007).
3. *The U.S. Army-Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, 50.
4. Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1968), 274.

5. Ibid., 55.

6. International Crisis Group, "Southern Thailand: Insurgency, Not Jihad," *Asia Report* No. 98, 18 May 2005, 35; and Ajai Sahni, Deputy Director, Institute of Conflict Management, interview with author, 10 July 2008.

7. Sahni, ibid.

8. Duncan McCargo, "Thaksin and the Resurgence of Violence in the Thai South: Network Monarchy Strikes Back?" *Critical Asian Studies*, 38 (March 2006), 40-2.

9. Ranjat Panda, Head of the Water Initiative of Orrissa, interview with author, 24 July 2008.

10. S. R. Ramanujan, "Andhra Pradesh: Peace Talks with PWG?" South Asia Analysis Group, Paper 1061, 21 July 2004.

11. K. Srinivas Reddy, Deputy Editor, *The Hindu*, interview with author, 28-29 July 2008.

12. Ramachandra Guha, "Adivasis, Naxalites, and Indian Democracy," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 11 August 2007, 3306-09.

13. Sanjay Kumar, Superintendent of Police, Sambalpur, interview with author, 23 July 2008.

14. Don Pathan, "Premier Has Wasted Opportunity in South," *The Nation* (Bangkok, Thailand), 14 June 2007.

15. Nihar Nayak, analyst, Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, interview with author, 16 July 2008.

16. Michael Colaresi, "When Doves Cry: International Rivalry, Unreciprocated Cooperation, and Leadership Turnover," *American Journal of Political Science*, 48 (July 2004).

17. Ibid., 557.

18. Francesca Lawe-Davies, "A Silver Lining in Thailand's Coup?" (Singapore: Singapore Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies/Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, 27 September 2006); and Ukrist Pathmanand, "Thaksin's Achilles' Heel: The Failure of Hawkish Approaches in the Thai South," *Critical Asian Studies*, 38 (March 2006), 82.

19. International Crisis Group, "Thailand's Emergency Decree: No Solution," *Asia Report* No. 105, 18 November 2005, 4-6.

20. Pathan, "Premiere Has Wasted Opportunity in South."

21. Thompson, 72; *The U.S. Army-Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, 39.

22. Government of India, Ministry of Law and Justice, "The Constitution of India," http://indiacode.nic.in/coiweb/welcome.html.

23. Gautam Navlakha, "Maoists in India," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 3 June 2006, 2187.

24. Om Shankar Jha, Commander, Central Reserve Police Force, interview with author, 16 July 2008.

25. Edward Aspinall and Harold Crouch, *The Aceh Peace Process: Why It Failed* (Washington: East-West Center Washington, 2003), 19.

26. John Martinkus, *Indonesia's Secret War in Aceh* (Milsons Point, Australia: Random House Australia, 2004), 105.

27. David McKittrick and David McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles: The Story of the Conflict in Northern Ireland* (Chicago: New Amsterdam Books, 2002), 212.

28. Pathmanand, 85.

29. International Crisis Group, "Southern Thailand: Insurgency, Not Jihad," 27.

30. Marcus Mietzner, *The Politics of Military Reform in Post-Suharto Indonesia: Elite Conflict, Nationalism, and Institutional Resistance* (Washington: East-West Center Washington, 2006), 34.

31. Thompson, 58-9.

32. Don Pathan, "Locals Cling to Hopes of a Solution in South," *The Nation* (Bangkok, Thailand), 24 August 2007.

33. McCargo, 56-60.

34. John Newsinger, "From Counter-Insurgency to Internal Security: Northern Ireland, 1969-1992," *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 6 (Spring 1995), 93-4.

35. Reddy, interview.

36. Steven Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Ethnic Riots in India* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004), 155.

37. Steven Metz, "New Challenges and Old Concepts: Understanding 21st Century Insurgency," *Parameters,* 37 (Winter 2007-08), 20-32.

38. Chiarelli and Michaelis, 10, 17.