

# By, With and Through: The Intelligence Driven Endeavor

## The Critical Importance of Intelligence and Advisorship in Countering Insurgencies and Terrorism (March 2009)

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**Abstract.** This paper is an examination of the essential need to combine intelligence and advisorship for Host Nation forces countering insurgency and terrorism. Successful Counter-Insurgency and Counter-Terror (COIN/CT) cannot be realized in the long term without effective Intel practices and effective advisorship. This analysis is a view point providing two specific areas of emphasis for Global War on Terror (GWOT) operations and how to focus on these necessities for military success in the fight against insurgency and terror.

GWOT remains a great concern to America and the fight against terror and insurgency in the Middle East. Many worry over what direction to take in Afghanistan and Iraq for countering terror and countering insurgency. How can we influence and change this region that has never quite been tamed, never quite got a hold of itself, much less had anyone else control them? How do we educate the region to understand the truth in US and Western intent? Many Muslims are not convinced of the true and righteous objectives of the West in our military actions and remain bound in false and bizarre beliefs of conspiracy and imperial domination. What actions can combat both terror/insurgency and combat the regional fear of America's necessity of involvement in global imperatives? The US and Europe do not wish to enslave and exploit countries of the Middle East in an Imperial fashion of old. The West does not wish pain and suffering across the countries of the Islamic World. The answer is to simply build intelligence ability in the host nations. The US already possesses impressive intelligence assets and operators who get the right information to the user. The host nation forces need to be embraced and 'schooled' on this process. The US State Department maintains that, "Defeating the terrorist enemy requires sound policies, concerted U.S. Government effort, and international cooperation." (DOS) Furthermore, this means that "the primary mission of the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism (S/CT)," and most any Counter Terror (CT) organization, has the innate mission of forging "partnerships with non-state actors, multilateral organizations, and foreign governments to advance the counterterrorism objectives and national security of the United States." (DOS) It does not always work out that what is good for the State Department is also good for the Department of Defense (DOD), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and other policy implementing organizations of the Federal Government. In this case of COIN/CT doctrine partnerships with host nations and other anti-insurgency personalities, the alignment of action across agencies and abilities, as an unity of effort makes good sense. Federal forces must combine efforts in COIN/CT. The hard lessons learned about COIN/CT over the last decade have, at least, united US priorities in its security, collection and actioning agencies. COIN and CT cannot exist without intelligence. Intelligence collection, processing, dissemination, targeting and actioning, all within an environment of de-confliction and coordination is a vital implement of COIN/CT. Plainly stated, all players, US, allied or otherwise, need to have robust, coordinated intelligence and

be able to further develop their intelligence capability to be effective in the fight of the GWOT.

It is not enough for US intelligence and US targeting to be merely effective against insurgent and terror organizations, we must train the indigenous forces to be effective in these areas as well. It is not enough for the super power to be able to action in the realms of intelligence and interdiction alone. The lessons of insurgency in Vietnam showed us that it is imperative that the host nation in an insurgency be enabled, empowered and willing to achieve cognitive results in irregular and unconventional warfare. We must enable host nation forces to be as self-sufficient as possible and have the general intelligence abilities of the US in order to combat insurgency and terrorism in the long term. More so, the abilities of host nation organizations, when properly trained are more effective in intelligence and exploitation than US force due to their indigenous and enabling 'local' understanding of the activities inside their sphere of control. The key to COIN/CT operations is the continuous collection, processing and dissemination of intelligence. The key to lasting effects of COIN/CT is teaching Host Nation forces intelligence and direct action on that intelligence through US advisors.

Accurate, timely and well-actioned intelligence for COIN and CT operations is not only significant it is paramount to success. COIN and CT are irregular forms of warfare but by no means new nor incomprehensible. Not all guerrillas are terrorists but all terrorist are guerrillas. Insurgency and terrorism share many similarities. For the purpose of this writing we will consider them in unison although that is not entirely accurate. Lumping counter-terror and counter-insurgency together for the purpose of better understanding intelligence and advisorship makes sense as long as we remember to separate them when focusing on the direct action and analysis of organizations outside of Iraq and Afghanistan. Both COIN and CT are very 'Intel-centric' operations. For British forces involved in COIN in Northern Ireland "...the problem of defeating the enemy consists very largely of finding him..." and "...the two major problems were a lack of up-to-date intelligence on the one hand and the absence of a central organization to direct and coordinate the intelligence-gathering effort." (Bamford, p. 586)

Ability in intelligence mitigates the innate strengths of insurgency. These are the strengths that come to the insurgent by the very nature of this form of warfare. Some of these strengths are: knowledge, intelligence operations, motivation, focused responsibility, variety of available Tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) and enduring hardships. (HQDA, FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency, pp. 2-25) .

If the insurgents are indigenous they gain a tremendous advantage in knowledge. They will know the area, the people and every minute detail therein. Their entire life has been spent learning their battlefield. This knowledge allows insurgents to "...typically blend into the population" as in the case of the Provincial Irish Republican Army (PIRA) in Northern Ireland. The PIRA embodied this idea of indigenous 'knowledge' making them "...more difficult to find than to neutralize." (Jackson, p. 74)

Motivation for insurgents can be from religious fanaticism but it also it can stem from a situation created by insurgency leadership and of the individual insurgent. That situation is when the insurgent feels that they cannot stop their participation in the insurgency even if they wanted to. Loss of face (respect) or loss of life at the hands of the counter-insurgent or the hands of their own create this condition. They become trapped in their role. With no way out insurgents and terrorists become locked in their fanaticism and confined to their commitments. This phenomenon strengthens the insurgent movement to continue even in overwhelming situations.

The nature of insurgency is an unlawful and illegal coalition of guerrillas bent on the destruction of a ruling government. Insurgents have the ability to function outside of legal and social confines as a result of their belief that those exact limitations are illegitimate and the very symbol of their enemy. This “focused responsibility” operationally “frees their efforts.” (HQDA, FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency, pp. 2-25) This means that the counter-insurgent force must play by the rules of law while the insurgent does not have to and does not need to recognize the law, any law. This is where Geneva Convention rights, the rights of prisoners of war and the intangible prosecution of terrorist acts becomes muddled.

TTPs for the insurgent are a great strength in their unconventional application of force. New TTPs can be formed from internal operational experience or outside assistance. TTP development and evolution is not only an insurgent organizational and effectiveness strength but an essential ability for success to the movement. An insurgency possesses more flexibility than a military or political organization and can adapt TTPs faster than bureaucratic leviathan. Attacks must produce results and must cause casualties. Because insurgency and terrorism are “...psychological act[s] that communicate through violence or the threat of violence. Terrorist strategies [and TTPs] will be aimed at publically causing damage...” (TRADOC, pp. 2-4) These TTPs facilitate the destruction which brings about the perceptions of populace through the media that an insurgency also needs. A terrorist operation will often have the goal of manipulating popular perception, and will achieve this by controlling or dictating media coverage. This control need not be over, as terrorists analyze and exploit the dynamics of major media outlets in the presence of the news cycle. (Hoffman, pp. 136-142)

Flexibility of TTPs and the modification of fundamental principles in insurgency were masterfully illustrated in Mao Tse Tung’s long fight for China. Mao, in a visionary move, altered the Soviet insurgency model from proletariat based to peasantry based as popular support. He realized that the insurgency “...basically derives from the masses and is supported by them, it can neither exist nor flourish if it separates itself from their sympathies and cooperation.” (Mao Tse-Tung, p. 44) We will see later in this writing how flexible TTPs and the flexibility in guerrilla warfare theory and principles lend itself to the population and how those links to the population are a two way street road-marked by good intelligence practice.

Enduring hardships is a general trait of insurgents and is mostly based on social and regional background. It may strengthen the insurgency and be well worth considering but it is most likely much lower in scale when compared to other strengthening factors of insurgency. Although listed in the Army COIN manual as a principle of insurgency, enduring hardships is a dubious and arguable trait of some insurgents and is only a peripheral factor.

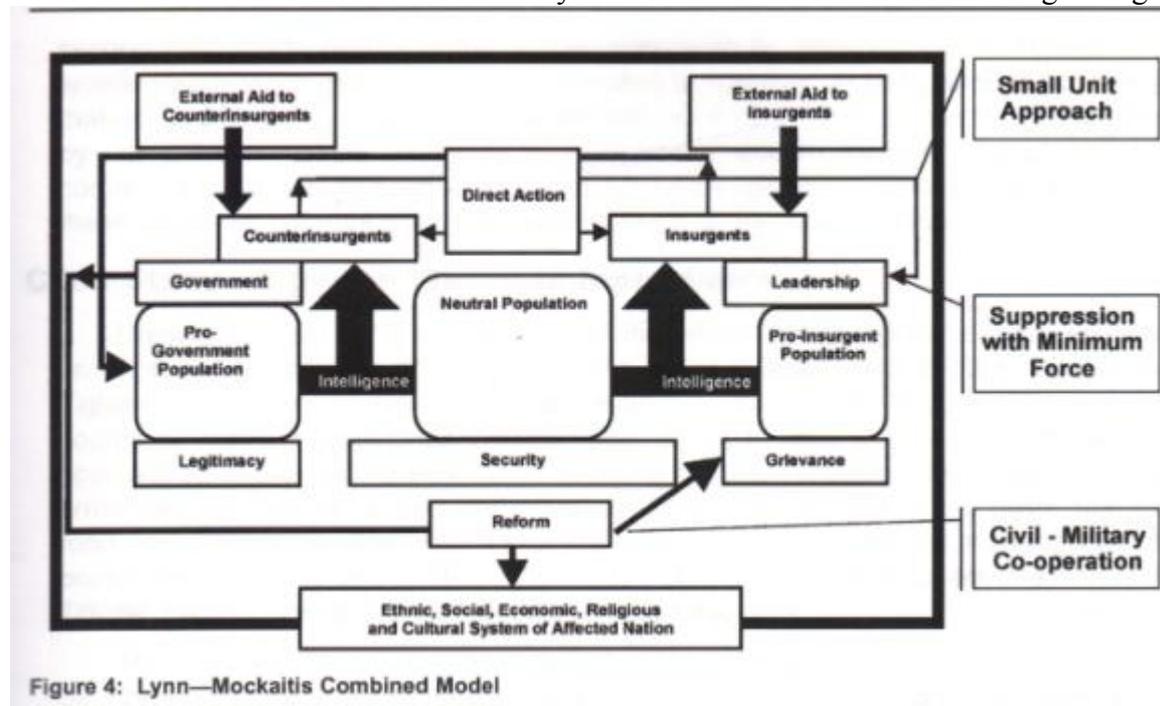
One of the most important strengths of the insurgency is their own intelligence operation ability. They have an advantage in “building networks and infrastructure within the government and population.” (HQDA, FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency, pp. 2-25) It is essential that they do so, that they exploit their intelligence operation building ability. These networks and contacts provide the insurgent with effective targeting and feedback on public opinion, TTPs and overall progress of the movement. The terrorist needs Intel. The insurgent needs to understand his operational environment to be able to target their enemy. They must understand as much as they can about locations, movement, players and systems to be able to have an effect on them. An insurgency cannot propagate if it does not embrace and effects based methodology of operations.

That which is critical for the insurgency is therefore critical for the counter-insurgency. Effective conduct of intelligence operations (and counter-intelligence) by the counter-insurgent is arguably the most important ability in COIN forces to win against an insurgents asymmetric advantage. The British Chief of General Staff, when visiting Northern Ireland in 1971, determined that the principle weakness of the Army in the counter-insurgency fight was intelligence gathering. (Jackson, p. 75) His determination for British forces is quite applicable for any forces combating insurgency. If the intelligence apparatus is broken or ineffective then the military force has no eyes and cannot be a threat to the enemy forces.

Collecting intelligence effectively is not enough. The right Intel has to make it to the right user in order for it to have any value at all. In the Second Lebanon War, Israel failed "...to assemble the intelligence picture that was required by the IDF's ground forces...[and became] more serious due to the failure to distribute the available information to its consumers." (Bar-Joseph, p. 591)

Clausewitz coined the term 'Fog of War' which is a moniker for the confusion and unknowing in conflict. Anyone who has been in combat knows that when the bullets start flying and the chaos ensues that Intelligence gathering clears this fog in small illuminating steps. "By intelligence we mean every sort of information about the enemy..." (Carl von Clausewitz, p. 136) Intelligence is a tool for battlefield clarity and in the non-contiguous, asymmetrical fight the necessity for intelligence is elevated even more so.

The question then becomes how does a leviathan of democracy and military power focus and make effective its actions upon and against the terrorist and the insurgent? The elephant need not be afraid of the mouse but recognize him for what he is. The giant can only undue himself by believing his enemy is more powerful than he actually is. Intelligence and education dispel this misguided way of thinking. A comprehensive and understandable mode to clear the air can be found in the Lynn-Mockaitis model of understanding Insurgency.



The Lynn-Mockaitis model of COIN (Breede, p. 27) is the most up to date and comprehensive counter-insurgency "map" and process graphic yet formulated. The Lynn-Mockaitis model proposes a defeat of insurgency by adhering to the principle of Mockaitis

(focus on the insurgents and leadership, civil-military cooperation and small unit actions in targeting) expanded by the Lynn model creating "...the synergy between the strategic *de jure* power and the tactical *de facto* power required to defeat an insurgency... That synergy is enabled through intelligence." (Breede, p. 28) Critical to the Lynn-Mockaitis model is the intelligence ability of both insurgent and counter-insurgent, good intelligence practice. The reality of counter-insurgency is that the Host nation government must be able to conduct direct action against the leadership and the body of the insurgent force without displacing or causing unacceptable collateral casualties. Security can only be had by crushing the insurgent but if the populace is crushed as well in the process then the environment remains ripe for the insurgency in the avenues of recruiting, support and operations. Intelligence is the beginning of disabling that ability of the insurgent. Other programs, such as Civil Military Operations (CMO) bring the populace closer to a government that shows genuine benevolence by providing necessities for the better of the community. CMO is a boon to intelligence as medical or civil assistance to the population yields vast amounts of information against the insurgent.

A solution to enabling host nation intelligence ability should be the "...mandatory training for all Iraqi [et.al] intelligence personnel. Give the S2 personnel a certain badge [a distinguishable qualifier]... [enabling and elevating] their status and...force[ing] their commanders and others to listen to their analysis." (Erwin) This type of training is basic or advanced in nature based on the experience and ability of the host nation force to be trained. French strategy in intelligence destroyed the initial advantage for COIN in Algeria. Intelligence techniques such as torture blunted their success in collection and ultimately, the war. "Intelligence is the principle source of information on guerrillas, and intelligence has to come from the population, but the population will not talk unless it feels safe, and it does not feel safe until the insurgent power has been broken." (Galula, p. 50) The population does not feel safe if the host nation or legitimate government is so over-the-top in their COIN that they are terrorizing the population themselves. The French empowered the insurgency and robbed the populace of the 'safe feeling' required to gain intelligence by the excessive aggression, torture and offending emotional approach to COIN in Algeria.

Advisorship is significant because it is a "by, with and through" force multiplier of host nation forces. "The concept of 'winning hearts and minds' does not mean that 'soft power' can alone win and that the war can be summed up by being described as just a popularity contest. The reality is that politics and other unconventional military methods (non-kinetic action) and force (kinetic action) are inextricably linked in a dynamic, symbiotic relationship, and both are necessary to win." (Kerry, p. x) Some of the most effective operations in the Vietnam War were the utilization of advisors to thwart enemy operations and resupply along the frontier fringe of South Vietnam. Small teams of US Army Special Forces lived with their indigenous peoples and gave them the training to elevate their operational and tactical abilities from small players to significant influencers of the conflict.

An advisor is an enabler. They develop host nation ability and awareness of both kinetic and non-kinetic COIN. Non SOF advisors are referred to as Transition Teams (TTs). There are as many different kinds of advisor TTs as there are missions and levels of the host nation. Combat Advisors are embedded with their host nation partners, which means they fight, eat, sleep and live with their host nation counterparts. Advisors personify and bring a tangible humanity to military operations. US advisors act as ambassadors and represent the good intentions of the West by promoting and increasing the military ability of the host nation in fighting insurgency and terrorism. They train fight and sometimes die with the forces that truly make a difference in long term operations for COIN/CT.

Non-kinetic action includes intelligence collection but it also includes advisory assets. True, advisors can assist host nation units in applying direct action, the kinetic force, but they are truly force multipliers in the more non-kinetic realm. Non-kinetic force multipliers directed at host nation forces provide ability and an education to counter-insurgency by legitimizing and elevating the host nation's ability. Some of the biggest mistakes involving non-kinetic operations are rooted in the fallacy that nation-building and Civil Affairs supersede and overpower combat operations and security. Much lip service is paid to security but CA/CMO projects continue in insecure areas and benefit the enemy more than indigenous people. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO)

US Army intelligence officer (and TT member) CPT Mark Erwin believes that "...Iraqi intelligence at the battalion and brigade level is fairly good. Intelligence involves understanding the operational environment which is both the people and the insurgent, and the Iraqis are good at that. They understand the cultural dynamics of their Area of Operations (AO) and they also know how to interact and relate to the people in their AO...the one major downfall to the Iraqi Army intelligence system is that their intelligence does not drive their operations. The Intel shop does a lot of work and analysis but they operate independent of the operations cell." (Erwin) The top two assistance requests the US gave NATO on 3 October 2001 were to "Enhance intelligence sharing cooperation" and "Assist states facing an increased terrorist threat as a result of supporting a campaign against terror." (Bensahel, p. 7) These are the embodiment of kinetic and non-kinetic action (now referred to as lethal and non-lethal) and truly exemplify the virtues of intelligence and advisorship as COIN imperatives. America asked these of their allies above and beyond any other requests because the 'knowing' provided by good intelligence practices and the 'knowing' provided by good intelligence sharing practices will be the crux of success in the GWOT.

Military advisors have long been a tool of the US military in Unconventional Warfare (UW) and Foreign Internal Defense (FID). UW is the formulation, advising and employing guerrilla's forces while FID is the training and advising of counter-guerrilla forces. The terms counter guerrilla and counter-insurgency are virtual synonyms. UW and FID have doctrinally shared in training and employment principles from World War II, through Korea and Vietnam, employed in France, Greece, Central America, Africa and the Middle East, in a variety of specialized units from the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and other Special Operations Forces (SOF).

A combat advisor teaches, coaches, mentors, trains and educates the host nation force. Teaching is the art of developing and explaining skills or knowledge to do a particular job. Coaching allows a counterpart to reach the next level of knowledge in a given area. Mentoring is advice or counsel in how to proceed in specific situations. Important to mentoring is that this is a stage of development where the pupil has a sufficient amount of knowledge in the area, receives recommendation from their mentor but ultimately poses the ownership of the decision. Training is merely an all inclusive term for teaching, coaching and mentoring. Training is the solidification of these events occurring concurrently and being mutually supportive. Education is the relating of concepts and knowledge that will be applied over a broad spectrum of application and over a large time frame. Education, militarily and among civilians in its more generic terminology and enlightenment, prepares the suffering nation to endure, plan, act and succeed against the insurgency. An advisor is a diplomat, a negotiator, a partner, a persuader, a coordinator, a conflict manager, an ambassador and a friend. They use relationships, rapport, pressure, appeal and inspiration to teach, employ, advise and assist COIN forces for the better. The Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I), in their 'School of the Advisor' utilizes their advisor

training curriculum to help "...newly assigned advisors adjust to their role as the coalitions public face at the highest levels of the Iraqi government [all the way down to maneuver elements] by training them on the tremendous challenges associated with relating to Iraqi[s]...respectful of host nation culture, customs, and strategies for influencing those they advise." (Lambert, p. 10)

Thomas Barnett in his book "The Pentagon's New Map" cuts away much of what confuses westerners in understanding the nature of our world. Barnett has a simple 'haves versus have nots' view of the world that simplifies without downplaying the importance of each sides worldview. Subscribers to Thomas P. M. Barnett's theory of globalization and the assimilation of the "disconnected" would champion advisorship as an embrace of the "lesser-included." Advisorship makes allies and brings the third world into the arms of the included. "The future worth creating is the globalization that is truly global...if it takes a Pentagon obsessed with mastering a universe of messy lesser-included...let the real transformation begin." (Barnett, p. 106) Barnett is correct in embracing the disenfranchised in order to soothe areas of conflict. Groups of American ambassadors who are also educators and enablers are a vital approach to such noble and decisive endeavors. We embrace the "lesser-included" when we place military advisor teams inside host nation forces and areas. Advisor teams are an educating force not only in the military sense but also in the tangible human sense as they put a reality and empathetic persona to the American will.

The way America can assist her allies and put the hard pinch on insurgency and terrorism is by teaching intelligence and holding her allies close. This shows the world that there is merit in the US words of solidarity, humanity and compassion inside the force of combat and necessity of violence to eradicate terrorism. Good Intel ability and good advisorship to build the same ability in allied host nation forces equals success in COIN/CT. The friendly and operational embrace of conducting effective targeting and situational understanding of the battlefield with host nation counterparts is effective and vital to fighting the international *Jihad* of GWOT.

It always seems that there is so much confusion among civilian, political and military leadership as to the way to proceed in the fight against terrorism and insurgency. The reality remains that if we hold our allies close through advisorship and build their ability in intelligence and targeting we will not lose and nor will they.

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