SMALL WARS/ 21ST CENTURY

Marine Corps Combat Development Command
Quantico, VA, 22134

2005

FOREWORD

Since the *Small Wars Manual* was published in 1940, world events have dramatically reshaped the strategic landscape. The rise and fall of great powers, the introduction of nuclear power and weaponry, and a host of technological changes have significantly influenced the characteristics and conduct of conflict. The last half century has also produced numerous additional examples of the particular type of war the Marines have called Small Wars. It should not be surprising, therefore, that we need to update our thinking on small wars, although the *Small Wars Manual* retains much of its utility, particularly when viewed in its historical context. This addendum seeks to add to our classic manual. *Small Wars/21st Century* redefines small wars, describes what has changed since World War II, and identifies ways to plan, prepare for, and conduct future small wars. In addressing this changing character of warfare, importantly, this work also remains mindful of warfare's unchanging nature – a contest of human wills shaped by chance, uncertainty and chaos.

Although we cannot predict tomorrow's challenges with great fidelity, we can discern important trends and confront challenges that clarify our need for fresh thinking. Traditional and irregular adversaries will continue to generate a wide range of complex and ambiguous challenges. Their structure and operating style will not be readily reduced to a simple template. Nor will future adversaries array themselves in convenient linear formations nor contemplate set piece traditional operations against us. They will exploit the modern technologies of a global economy, and present us with asymmetric modes of operations and unanticipated tactics. Their principal approach will be to avoid predictability and seek advantage in unexpected ways and directions of attack. In order to adapt faster than any potential adversaries, the Marine Corps must extend our legacy warfighting excellence in this new century:

The Marine Corps has a long and successful legacy in Small Wars. Over the years, Marines in every clime and place have proven that our Corps is ready and able to meet adaptive opponents who care little for international law or distinctions between combatants and innocent civilians. This enemy is ruthless and we must resolutely apply ourselves with all the professionalism and discipline we have shown in the past. The challenge before us is to successfully meet tomorrow's uncertain security through continuous learning and adaptation. The emerging security environment demands we sharpen our focus on this increasingly likely form of warfare and adapt to its new characteristics.

One way to think about Small Wars is in terms of *frequency* and *amplitude*.[1] In this metaphor, frequency is basically about the rate at which events occur within a conflict, not the number of conflicts themselves. Amplitude is about the degree of power employed by a system. Conventional wars are high frequency conflicts because many individual events such as battles, sorties, engagements occur at a great rate. They are also high amplitude because of the large amount of combat power and destructiveness that is employed. However, amplitude is not entirely related to the amount of destruction caused. It could come from the psychological impact generated by a well-publicized attack from an expected source, that produces an inordinate reaction or serious consequences.

On the other hand, Small Wars are a form of low frequency warfare because significant events are separated by long periods of time. Their protracted nature is seductive, until the calm is punctured by a sudden ambush or strike. In the 21st Century, the amplitude of Small Wars may be distinct and much higher. The intersection of both great emotional drives and advanced technology could produce a rising number of disruptive attacks, both here and abroad. The events

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[1] Robert R. Leonhard, *Fighting By Minutes: Time and the Art of War*, New York: Greenwood, 1994.

of September 11, 2001 serve as a possible signpost of the increasingly dangerous character of future warfare. The unique aspects of *Small Wars/21st Century* are related to their high amplitude potential. Increasingly, the political, security, and economic consequences of this mode of war will be high. They are the converse of past wars, and the emergence of low frequency/high amplitude war has serious implications for our doctrine, training, education and materiel requirements.

I enjoin all Marines to read this *Small Wars/21st Century*. In so doing, you will be better equipped to ensure our nation's security in a volatile and changing world.

M.W. Hagee
General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commandant of the Marine Corps

PREFACE

"Small wars involve a wide range of activities including diplomacy, contacts with the civil population and warfare of the most difficult kind. The situation is often uncertain and the orders are sometimes indefinite,"[2]

The purpose of this work is to assist those charged with conducting Small Wars by examining the strategic and operational aspects of this increasingly likely form of warfare. This volume focuses on our strategic and operational approach to such wars, while subsequent efforts at the Marine Corps Combat Development Command will address the more detailed and faster-paced range of tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), on this subject.

It is the intent of this study to accomplish what the celebrated British veteran T. E. Lawrence exhorted Liddell Hart to do in his study of military strategy, to "… strike a blow for hard work and thinking … to preach for more study of books and history, a greater seriousness in military art."[3] Lawrence's efforts helping the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, captured in his classic *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, was shaped by his years of study of the military classics and tours in foreign cultures. Our own Small Wars Manual was a serious study in military art, synthesizing numerous conflicts from British and French history, as well as our own participation in conflicts in Haiti and Nicaragua in the

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[2] U.S. Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1940, p. 1-17.

[3] David Garnett, ed., *The Letters of T.E. Lawrence* , London: Jonathan Cape, 1927, pp. 768-9.

last century. This addendum to the *Small Wars Manual* continues the Corps' legacy in the serious study and thinking about this portion of the conflict spectrum. Like its predecessor, it is built upon a solid foundation of military history and the work of many professionals.

This work is not about large-scale conventional or nuclear war; rather, it is about that area of conflict where violent military actions take place, but where the terms of engagement are more complex and subtle than in traditional, state-on-state warfare between conventional military forces. Small wars seldom provide such clarity, suffused as they are with politics, ethnic violence, or religious fervor. The prosecution of small wars requires judgments in shades of gray, not black and white, and this fundamental aspect drives the manner in which the warfighter plans and conducts them. It is much easier to prosecute a war when unconditional surrender is the goal, and the enemy is well defined - conditions rarely pertaining to small wars. Military institutions that are not prepared to take Small Wars seriously, with its own unique rule sets and characteristics, invite defeat or at least suffer a series of expensive disappointments.[4]

While the basics of irregular warfare, terrorism and guerilla warfare are well founded in the annals of history, "the plentitude of actual violence contrasts sharply with a dearth of profound theory."[5] The lack of a theoretical framework is compounded by the proclivity of Western militaries to ignore this portion of the conflict spectrum. Our expeditionary culture and heritage has never allowed us to indulge in complacency about the complexities of Small Wars and the wide range of expeditionary missions that are inherent in our role as the Nation's premier force-in-readiness.

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[4] Colin Gray, *Modern Strategy*, Oxford, 1997, p. 279.

[5] *Ibid*., p. 283.

While the emphasis on primarily conventional conflict was understandable in the last half century, the need to recapture the essential elements of Small Wars is now acute. Small Wars require the application of combined arms in a broader sense—mixing kinetic forms of violence with purposeful but indirect forms of influence. They also place a premium on intelligence collection and greater cultural awareness than conventional conflicts. Historically, the successful prosecution of small wars has required greater freedom of action at lower tactical levels, enabling subordinate commanders to compress decision cycles, seize the initiative, and exploit fleeting opportunities. Tactical innovation is necessary for irregular wars against elusive foes that disperse and seek refuge in dense or complex terrain.

At the center of our efforts to increase our readiness and agility for irregular forms of combat is the individual Marine. Operating in a complex battlespace against an adaptive foe, the expeditionary Marine warrior of the 21st Century will be called upon to make decisions more rapidly, to be technologically agile, and to ruthlessly exploit opportunities across an expanded range of operational environments. This Marine, imbued with an aggressive warrior ethos, must be armed with modern capabilities and the training that will enable him to prevail against both traditional and non-traditional foes. Foremost, he must be intellectually prepared to prevail.

Success in future Small Wars will be built on the same cornerstone of the Corps that always relied upon-- the individual **Marine.** He or she will be the best equipped, best trained, best educated and most feared warrior on the planet. The equipment and training provided this warrior focuses on sustaining an indomitable ***will***. It is the *will* of the individual Marine, which has always been,

and will always continue to be, the reason for our collective warfighting excellence.

This work should be read in conjunction with MCDP 1 *Warfighting*. Whereas *Warfighting* examines the Marine Corps' fundamental maneuver warfare philosophy, *Small Wars/21st Century* expounds on the nature of Small Wars. MCDP 1 makes it clear that maneuver warfare is appropriate across the conflict spectrum. A maneuver warfare mindset is essential for translating the strategic and operational perspectives into meaningful action. Maneuver warfare is as applicable to small wars, as it is to any other conflict, where applying commander's intent, dealing with ambiguity, creating opportunities to exploit by deception and ingenuity, empowering subordinates through mission orders, and developing an informed fingertip feel of the conflict are essential components of success.

This work does not supercede the seminal *Small Wars Manual* of 1940, which continues to provide useful insights and historical perspectives into the nature and conduct of small wars. But it does build upon it to provide an authoritative framework for which future Marines can plan for and successfully conduct what Kipling called the "Savage Wars of Peace." This manual provides general guidance rather than narrow prescriptions for rote memory or blind adherence. Such an approach is antithetical to our understanding of war, and completely inconsistent with the varied nature of Small Wars. This manual is the basis for approaching such contingencies and requires thorough study and professional judgment in application.

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WHAT'S A SMALL WAR?

Small wars are conceived in uncertainty, are conducted often with precarious responsibility, under indeterminate orders lacking specific instructions.[6]

Introduction

Our predecessors recognized that the conduct of Small Wars was unique, and that the hard won lessons of the 1920s and 1930s needed to be institutionalized and passed on to a new generation of Marines. They also realized that the Marine Corps must prepare differently, both physically and mentally, for this form of warfare, even as our institution was redefining its mission and capabilities for the demands of amphibious warfare. They did not believe their work was incompatible with the Corps' evolving nature, they knew the Corps would continue to serve as an expeditionary force without peer. But they warned that the Corps past experiences with Small Wars should not be taken for granted since that "experience was gained against poorly organized and equipped native regulars" instead of future opponents who could be as well armed as they were. This warning was prescient then and given our recent combat experiences, just as valid today. As we learned on September 11, 2001, complacency against modern irregular threats is not warranted. New challenges posed by modern terrorism with catastrophic capabilities, transnational threats with disruptive intentions, and the dynamic security requirements of the post-Cold War world pose additional

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[6] *Small Wars Manual*, p. 1-6.

challenges. In attempting to discern the nature of this changing security environment and to develop appropriate courses of action, we need to avoid assuming that past success conveys an automatic ticket to success in the future.

But is it just a question of back to the future? Or, is conflict in the new millennium fundamentally different? The short answer is "yes" to both questions. While many small wars fundamentals remain unchanged, there are significant threats and challenges that are without precedent. It is the intent of this work to examine these emerging threats and convert the challenges they present into opportunities for improving our capabilities to provide for the national defense. That is why the *Small Wars Manual* of 1940 remains a relevant work worthy of our attention. Thus, this volume does not supercede the original, but builds upon its solid foundation to examine those important new characteristics arising from the historically unprecedented threats of the 21st century.

Small Wars Defined

We must start by defining our terms. What is war and its derivative - small war? Our definition and understanding of the nature of war is well defined in Marine doctrine as found in *MCDP- 1 Warfighting*. War is a violent clash of wills between or among organized groups for political purposes characterized by the use or threat of force. The nature of Small Wars does not alter this fundamental understanding and its Clausewitzian essence.

However, the 1940 version of *Small Wars* defined its subject as follows:

> **"…small wars are operations undertaken under executive authority, wherein military force is combined with diplomatic pressure in the internal or external affairs of another state whose government is unstable, inadequate, or unsatisfactory for the preservation of life and of such interests as are determined by the foreign policy of our Nation."** *SWM* 1940

This definition contains elements consistent with the historical context of its era. It defines Small Wars as operations short of a formal declaration of war, within the context of a single state or existing government whose instability runs counter to U.S. national interests. It also narrows the application of national power to the combination of military force and diplomatic pressure.

Unlike conventional wars, however, in small wars the means available to compel one's adversary into compliance varies across a broader range of means from economic sanctions or pure diplomacy, reinforced by the credible threat of force, to large-scale conventional combat operations. This latter form of conventional conflict can evolve to long term stability and support operations necessitating a wide range of post-conflict reconstruction aid and governance tasks. Furthermore, the participants in Small Wars can include many parties, not all of which fit a nice Westphalian or nation-state mold.

Accordingly, a new definition is offered"

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This definition captures the broadened mission range of Small Wars, the potential participation of non-state entities on either side of the conflict, and the protracted nature of these contingencies. In this regard, it should be noted that some forms of Small Wars are extremely difficult to resolve in short order, and require extraordinary patience and endurance. Instead of days or months, it is more accurate to measure this form of conflict in years and decades. The increased

likelihood of protracted operations in small wars contrasts sharply with warfighting concepts that anticipate smaller, lighter, technologically empowered forces conducting rapid and decisive operations. Persistence may very well be more important than speed in small wars, where resolve and the tangible commitment of boots on the ground are more important commodities than raw firepower.

This definition also captures the unique combination of both violent means and non-kinetic or psychological "weapons" to the problem at hand. The essential problems at the root of most Small Wars are resolved in the political and psychological domain. It is for this reason that conflicts of this type are called "wars of ideas" or "wars of opinion." Physical seizure of cities and the destruction of military formations and materiel may be requisite steps, but in the end, the political cause and its underlying cultural or ideological element must be resolved. Thus, military force and informational tools must be employed with an integrated approach at the operational and tactical level.

Finally, this definition captures a broader set of policy tools available to the nation's political leadership. While the Department of Defense and the State Department may play the critical roles, there is a need for assistance from various other agencies to fulfill major law enforcement, judiciary, financial and support functions. In contrast to large-scale conventional wars, diplomatic and political imperatives maintain a clearly ascendant role over the military, thus demanding especially close coordination amongst all relevant governmental agencies. These contributions play more of an essential part in Small Wars than in traditional military conflicts and must be harnessed toward a common purpose.

Today's military provides the violent physical means necessary to compel an opponent to our will, and thereby extend politics with other means. Military force has always been an invaluable tool to establish the necessary security

conditions for translating military success into desired political objectives. But today's military forces provide a wider range of policy options than traditional Armies and Navies, being capable of a broad spectrum of actions to include engagement activities, information operations, humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and conventional combat operations. Small wars are thus an extension of warfare by additional means, providing political leaders with a range of military options beyond just physical violence with which to further political objectives.

One need only review a sample of major operations of the 1990s to appreciate this increased range of operations: peace and stability operations in Bosnia, Macedonia, and Kosovo; counter-drug operations in Latin America and along the U.S. - Mexican border; assistance in de-mining operations in Cambodia and Laos; and humanitarian assistance in areas as diverse as Somalia, Bangladesh, and Rwanda; domestic security missions after 9/11, counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan, all these missions bracketed by major combat operations against Iraq in 1990 and 2003. This range and frequency of military operations is unprecedented in our history.

Small wars are most often waged between asymmetrically empowered adversaries – one larger and more capable, one smaller and less capable when measured in traditional geostrategic or conventional military terms. This is not to say that small wars necessarily involve limited resources and small units. For example, Vietnam can be considered a small war, a conflict in no way "small" in the conventional sense of the term. Paradoxically, small wars can be quite big when measured in terms of size of formations employed, numbers of personnel involved, numbers of casualties sustained, or amounts of resources expended. It is thus the political/diplomatic *context* in which the war is fought that determines whether it is a "small war" and not the size and scope of resources expended, or

the specific tactics employed. Additionally, the political/diplomatic context in which the small war is set determines the conflict's characteristics far more than the theoretical or actual military capabilities possessed by the participants.

Such conflicts are sometimes referred to as low intensity or irregular conflicts. Such terms offer little insights, in that while their day-to-day violence may be low level, this fact provides no solace to the Marine who finds himself in an ambush or a violent urban area. Nor does the term "irregular" capture the uniqueness of conflicts that are not conventional versus conventional forces. Small wars are far more common than state-on-state conventional wars. While the United States was involved in four big wars in the last century, it participated in well over 60 small wars and lesser contingencies. So-called "irregular" and intrastate conflicts are actually quite common. Small wars are the norm, now and probably into the future.

Black and white distinctions may also be misleading. Conventional wars can transition to small wars, and small wars can escalate into full-scale conventional wars when the strategic/diplomatic context changes. This distinction has practical implications and is not just an exercise in academic theory or semantics. If such a hybrid war was anticipated and planned for, military planners might choose to consider the initial conventional combat phase as the shaping phase, rather than the decisive phase. In such a case, the stability phase might then be planned as the decisive phase. In short, if our political objectives can only be accomplished after a successful stability phase, then the stability phase is, de facto, the decisive phase. Recognizing the potential for such radical phase changes from conventional war to small wars should enable planners to better anticipate force requirements and to construct more agile strategic plans.

While the interests of great powers are not immediately at stake, although it is certainly possible that a small war unsuccessfully prosecuted could lead to a more

serious situation where survival or vital interests do become involved. Certainly, the long-term nature of such conflicts can produce cumulative costs and casualties associated with short traditional wars. Thus, small wars must not be viewed as somehow less important or even less deadly than big wars. Any activity that entails the use or credible threat of force must be handled with the utmost seriousness of purpose and resolve.

Significantly, because of the asymmetry between the opponents, the "lesser" power will of necessity adapt to ensure the conflict is not conducted in a manner where mass, scale, and superior economic output can easily defeat it. Adversaries will avoid fighting on terms that would subject them to submission by overwhelming force - the prototypical American way of fighting conventional wars - or by a rapid precision strike campaign. Thus, small wars are potentially long wars, making pre-determined exit strategies and rigid timetables unrealistic and counterproductive.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT'S NEW ABOUT SMALL WARS?

> *"..there is probably no military organization of the size of the Marine Corps in the world which has had as much practical experience in this kind of combat. With all the practical advantage we enjoyed in those wars, that experience must not lead to an underestimate of the modern irregular"* [7]

Changes to the geostrategic landscape that framed our national security policy since 1947 dramatically increase the relevance of this document. With the dissolution of the Cold War and the monolithic threat that opposed us, the United States stands as a preeminent power with global interests and responsibilities. The threat of communism and strategic nuclear war we faced throughout the Cold War has been replaced by a range of ideological, religious, criminal, and opportunistic threats. Many of these problems have been unleashed by political changes emanating from the end of the Cold War, but have been magnified due to the nature of globalization, which tends to diffuse knowledge and capabilities beyond our capacity to control them.

In contrast to the dangerous but relatively stable bipolar world familiar to most of today's policy makers, the current and projected security environment poses a number of potential flashpoints that could radically alter our conception of national security. In particular, the intersection of radicalism and technology poses unique demands and increases the complexity and dangers we may face in the future.

The current strategic environment, if judged by these historical standards, will be a period when the probability of large-scale conventional warfare is diminished in

[7] *Small Wars Manual*, p. 1-6.

relation to small wars. Released from the artificial constraints imposed during the Cold War era, this more dynamic international environment suggests that smaller states and even non-state actors, empowered by both weapons and information technology, will rise in relative strategic importance.

In some respects, our conventional superiority creates a paradox. Future adversaries are not likely to provide traditional combat formations (brigades, divisions, etc.) for us to target because they know too well that they cannot survive against our overwhelming conventional capabilities. Ironically, the recognition of this fact by our adversaries will ensure the relative advantage we enjoy from our "asymmetric" technological advantages will be substantially diminished. As a case in point, in his war manifesto, bin Laden declared, "that due to the imbalance of power between our armed forces and the enemy forces, a suitable means of fighting must be adopted, i.e., using fast moving light forces that work under complete secrecy. In other words…a guerrilla warfare."[8] Just as our preeminent large-scale conventional and nuclear capabilities of the 20th century pushed warfare after World War II to guerrilla warfare, so the information, sensing, and strike capabilities of the 21st century will push the inevitable conflict of this century toward small wars. In these contests, we may be forced to fight on terms far removed from our traditional way of war where precision firepower and mass production trumped all other capabilities.

Several factors will impact the nature, frequency and character of Small Wars in the 21st Century.

Failed/Failing States

[8] "Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," in Jonuh Alexander and Michael Swetnam, *Usama bin Laden's al-Qaida,* New York: Transnational Publishers, 2001, Appendix 1 A, p. 11.

The strategic importance of failed or failing states has new salience and importance that transcends their previously humanitarian nature. In the aftermath of the tragic events in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001, it is now recognized that the threat of terrorism poses potentially catastrophic consequences to our country. In the past, the weakness of states in terms of fulfilling their governance and public service functions had few direct implications to our own national security. Now state failure poses problems of potentially survival interests to us and to other friends and allies around the globe. In the past, such weak states could pose transnational threats in the form of mass migration, criminal activity such as smuggling, and humanitarian crises. Now, failed and dysfunctional states have become harbor sites and breeding grounds for modern terrorists. Because of the combination of this factor with other destabilizing trends, the existence of such states now poses serious national security problems of a grave nature and endanger the lives and nature of our society.[9]

Urbanization

Numerous demographic and security studies underscore the increased degree of urbanization occurring worldwide, and especially in the developing world. These demographic trends also point to an increase in urban irregular conflicts rather than rural – the opposite of those of the early 20th century. Where political systems are brittle, the combination of population growth and urbanization will foster instability and an increase in challenges to political control and public security.[10]

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[9] The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, Washington, DC, 2002.

[10] National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future with Nongovernmental Experts,* Washington, DC, December 2000, pp. 6, 15.

The classic guerrilla warfare setting is the mountainous hideout, the dense forest, and the wild jungle. These settings offered the cover, protection, and sustenance needed for insurgent forces. These remote and inaccessible settings provided a safe and secure home base. Today, dense urban terrain provides similar safe-haven to the urban guerrilla or terrorist. Small wars in an urban setting is nothing entirely new, as the Easter Rising of 1916 in Dublin or the Casbah in Algiers in 1957 would suggest. However, the frequency and complexity of such operations is undergoing a dramatic change.

Increasingly, the U.S. military will have to conduct operations in complex urban terrain, an environment for which it is not optimized. Would-be insurgents and terrorists are going where the people and money are, and to seek security by hiding among the population and the complexity of a modern metropolis. This has major implications for how insurgencies raise money and recruit. The ubiquity of modern information technology greatly facilitates dispersed insurgent and terrorist operations within cities. Multiple means of communication allow planning and execution of operations without the need to mass.[11]

In Latin American countries, insurgents' repeated failure to establish footholds amongst rural populations in the countryside through the 1960s led them to reassess their means of exploiting government vulnerabilities. This caused them to migrate from rural to urban areas, where they could exploit "the establishment of teeming slums filled with poor, psychologically disoriented people whose search for a better life had yielded little more than bitter disillusionment."[12] Urbanization presents a new small wars environment with populations and

[11] For a different viewpoint see, Steven Metz and Raymond Millen, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century: Reconceptualizing Threat and Response," Carlisle, PA: Army War College, November, 2004, p. 12.

[12] Bard O'Neill, *Insurgency & Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare,* Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1990, p. 46.

infrastructure so dense that a government's law enforcement, intelligence and conventional military assets may not be effectively employed.

While the rural guerrilla remains a potent force, as evidenced by ongoing insurgencies in Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Columbia; increasingly, the complex terrain of world's urban centers will be the insurgent's and terrorist's jungle of the 21st century.[13]

Diffusion of Actors

Another new factor is the explosion in number of actors present in the Small Wars battlespace. The last several decades bear witness to the creation of numerous states, an explosion in the number of nongovernmental agencies and private volunteer organizations, and a remarkable increase in private companies providing services and products in the midst of disasters, humanitarian crises, and ongoing intrastate conflicts. This growing impact of external forces on the conduct of small wars is worsened by a similar explosion in news organizations, media outlets, and websites offering information and imagery into an area via modern communications. These outlets also facilitate involvement and economic support from ethnic and national supporters (Diaspora) around the globe. These can be a significant source of volunteers, intelligence, and moral support as well. These globally dispersed communities, connected as never before by improved information and transportation technologies, comprise a growing category of external participants who contribute significant resources in money and personnel to support their respective communities.

This factor dramatically increases the complexity of trying to define the battlespace, and exacerbates the Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace. The

[13] Jennifer Taw and Bruce Hoffman, *The Urbanization of Insurgency: The Potential Challenge to U.S. Army Operations,* Santa Monica, CA*:* RAND, 1994.

relative simplicity of Red and Blue situation reports pales in comparison to an environment in which are found the UN and some regional relief agencies, coalition partners, private security forces or semi-military organizations, several dozen media entities, and a raft of commercial contractors are present. This will have a growing impact on the conduct of small wars, especially for our counter-intelligence, force protection and operations security efforts.

Of particular interest to the MAGTF commander is the involvement of NGOs and PVOs and the opportunity to share mutual interests to accomplish a common purpose. Many NGOs interact with the military for logistical support and security. For its part, the military has grown to accept the presence of the NGO community as an integral element of the small wars landscape, but important distinctions will always remain despite this increasingly cooperative relationship. One such distinction arises from the NGO inclination to maintain neutrality – not assisting or impeding either side in a conflict. The military, on the other hand, generally exercises impartiality – enforcing discipline against either side that crosses a certain line or violates established rules. Consequently, the two communities have different incentives for information sharing – NGOs are particularly sensitive if they feel that military forces are trying to gain information from them for military advantage. The two communities also have different time horizons – the NGOs' presence is indefinite, whereas the military's is usually of much more limited duration. Resolving these competing perspectives remains an additional complexity of Small Wars in this new millennium.

Speed and Ease of Information Transfer

Ideas are the seeds of small wars, and information technology has given anyone with access to a computer the ability to spread a message globally at little or no cost. In the past it was only the state and the major media who could obtain such coverage. Information technology thus extends the potential support base of the

adversary globally. This extended support base can influence global opinion and can facilitate the provision of financial, material, or personnel support to the cause. The velocity of information flows and the power of imagery which can now be readily transmitted almost in real time anywhere in the globe can generate "combat power" to those than can master it. Al Qaeda's globally dispersed operations, facilitated as they are by the Internet and modern telecommunications technology, make them the first truly network-based adversary we have faced.

In an earlier era, when the Marine Corps operated in Haiti and Nicaragua in the first half of the 20th century, this factor had a much more circumscribed role.[14] Even then the media had a significant impact on strategic decision-making. Now it intrudes or enhances military forces at the operational and tactical level. Today, it can be a force multiplier to the side that can employ the informational domain to secure and sustain a positional advantage in the moral or psychological dimension. Given that persuasion and popular opinion can be a center of gravity or a critical vulnerability in the conduct of Small Wars, this technological development bears consideration by those conducting such campaigns.

Technological Diffusion

The introduction and lowering costs of Information age technologies abets other forms of technological diffusion. The confluence of economic and technologic power invests minor states, sub-national groups, and even individuals, with offensive capabilities formerly reserved solely for the nation-state. Weapons of mass destruction and mass effects have radically increased the potential damage sub-state actors can inflict while at the same time information technology has greatly facilitated their reach to a global scale. Of particular relevance to future

[14] Although written in the mid- to late 1930's, the authors of the *Small Wars Manual* realized that "The rapidity with which a revolution develops is made possible by modern communications facilities and publicity methods," p. 20.

Small Wars, the availability of modern information technology radically changes the manner by which potential adversary's acquire and disseminate strategic intelligence, how they recruit, and how they generate resources.

Technology's current role in increasing weapons lethality is widely understood and is historically consistent with the trend of improved munitions effects and increased precision. However, proliferation of today's highly lethal conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction into the hands of sub-state actors is new, and the implications have created a momentous shift in our national security strategy. Developments in biological, chemical, and computer sciences have also expanded the range of potential weapons of mass destruction and disruption. Enhanced weapons lethality and proliferation of WMD increase the likelihood of small wars by destabilizing regional security and greatly increasing the influence of sub-state actors who may not be deterred in the way in which an accountable state-based government would be. In contrast, the availability of WMD could motivate states and others to revert to more indirect forms of conflict, including state-sponsored terrorism to avoid direct combat. These new technologies increase the risks to the homeland from direct attack and also increase the chances for small wars to escalate into regional or global conflict.

The Small Wars Manual warns today's Marines about complacency when it comes to irregular opponents of the past. This warning is even more salient today than it was more than half a century ago.

Religion

Combat operations of the last decade in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq have included religion as a significant part of the enemy's motivation, intent, capabilities, and goals. This is not really new; religion has been a factor in war for several millennia. What is new is that conflict and terrorism is increasingly

perpetrated by individuals and small groups, with religious motivation, using non-conventional weapons, choosing symbolic targets, and justifying their behavior based on their relationship with their deity or God. There has been a dramatic rise in the religious affiliation of terrorist organizations.[15] One expert concluded "the religious imperative is the most important defining characteristic of terrorist activity today."[16] Not surprisingly, the most violent attacks over the past few years including the sarin gas attack in Japan, the Murrah bombing in Oklahoma, and both World Trade Center attacks, had a religious tie. This will shape the nature of Small Wars.

Religious influences or factors will increasingly impact and perhaps instigate Small Wars in the 21st century in other ways. Religious ideology is becoming an important "cause" of conflict and war. As other global ideologies have become discredited, i.e. Marxism, Communism, Fascism, and Authoritarianism, religion remains a very powerful basis for coherent group behavior and identity. In addition, the uneven and uncertain benefits of globalization have weakened the ability of governments to provide the political, economic, social and security environment that many people aspire to. Some will turn to radical religious ideologies to provide these needs.

The original *Small Wars Manual* noted that societies are sensitive about religion and that care should be taken to avoid antagonizing populations by inadvertent mistakes. Although violence associated with religion is not a 'new' phenomenon, it seems to re-emerge as contemporary religious groups increasingly use the power inherent in religious ideology and reach out to a global audience. Formal

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15 Bruce Hoffman, "Terrorism Trends and Prospects," in Ian Lesser, *Countering New Terrorism*, Washington, DC: RAND, 1999, pp. 15-20, and Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God, The Global Rise of Religious Violence,* Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000.

16 Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1998, p. 87.

analyses suggest that religious influences can escalate the forms, levels, and types of violence. The potential for devastation and destruction may reach levels heretofore unknown to Small Wars.

Ultra-Terrorism

The combination of the last two factors, religion and technological diffusion, presents ominous implications to future Small Wars. What make the prospects of modern terrorism so daunting are the reach, scale and the consequences involved. Heretofore, terrorists were limited by their mutually reinforcing need for political sanctuary, popular support, and financing. Such conditions or limitations no longer hold back the ambitions of some groups. Catastrophic terrorism, with casualties measured in terms of thousands of dead and wounded, used to be both beyond any group's capabilities and interests. Both conditions have changed, making most of the previous historically based analyses about the intentions and motivations of terrorists interesting but moot.

September 11, 2001 highlights "the tipping point" in the rise of this newer and more deadly approach. A new type of terrorist has emerged, one less reliant on state sponsorship for resources and weapons. Modern terrorists are not interested in discrete acts of violence for clear political goals. Nor is the pursuit of their goals constrained by the need to maintain solidarity among their constituencies or external sponsors. The modern terrorist now answers to a higher moral authority. More and more terrorist organizations are religiously inspired or manipulate religion as part of their socialization, training, and espoused ideology.

The existence of this new and more virulent form raises the stakes in Small Wars. Today's ultra-terrorists are more networked and amorphous than

rigidly structured, making them harder to identify and target. State-sponsorship of terrorism has declined, but today's terrorists are not necessarily poor. They have adapted to new technologies and new circumstances by combining transnational crime with creative fund raising. Some like Osama bin Laden can rely on his own personal wealth, but many others have used legitimate business as cover, intelligence sources and a means of income.

What is Not New?

While the bulk of this chapter has oriented on the changing character of modern Small Wars, some elements have not changed appreciably. So it is important to underscore what is immutable or what is not new as well. This includes

Primacy of Politics. Clausewitz's fundamental appreciation for the primacy of political objectives as the guiding object in war remains relevant to Small Wars as it does to interstate conflicts. The application of military force is a means to an end, ends defined and framed by accountable policy makers. The conduct of military operations is shaped and constrained by the nature of the political aim that is assigned. It is this aim that is the principal object to be attained and the crucial determinant in the planning and conduct of Small Wars.

Protracted Nature. By their inherent nature, Small Wars are usually protracted. This runs counter to our strategic culture and our desire to conduct decisive military operations employing our full panoply of military capabilities. However, the political objective and the timelines necessary to achieve lasting results in Small Wars generally require extended applications. The history of Small Wars is clear on this trend, and the usual duration is measured in years if not decades.

Utility of Purely Military Solutions. Purely military or kinetic solutions rarely resolve the underlying issues in civil or intra-state conflicts. Military power is often a

foundation for success, but is rarely decisive by itself. Success in Small Wars is usually achieved in a political or psychological dimension. Military operations must be guided by the overall national strategy and must be tightly integrated with all other instruments of national power for success.

Frustration. The inherent political nature of Small Wars frequently imposes constraints on military force. Sometimes this takes the form of limits on the use of force, or tight rules of engagement. Sometimes it takes the form of shifting policy goals. It is also the product of the prolonged and boring nature of security duties in such environments. Marines need to recognize that their employment in such conflicts must serve policy and that political restrictions are natural. This is usually the source of much frustration, compounded by any ambiguity inherent to complex contingencies.

Cultural Understanding. The *Small Wars Manual,* 1940, was well ahead of its time in recognizing the need to understand the fundamental ways that *culture* affects warfare and how important a detailed understanding of local culture is to success in such operations. It also correctly noted the complications and frustrations that Marines might feel when thrust into a foreign context unprepared for the complexities of interacting with a society who's norms and practices are bewildering at best and seemingly irrational from a Western perspective.

In *MCDP 1 Warfighting.*, we learn to orient on the enemy and to "understand the enemy on his own terms." This requires an ability to assess foreign cultures and to suspend our own cultural lens that acts as a prism and orients what we perceive and how we react to events. Looking at events and circumstances from the perspective of the opponent or the local population is a difficult but crucial aspect of Small Wars due to the intense and intimate contact between Marine forces and the host nation's populace and civil administration. As the Small Wars

Manual notes, the contacts between Marines and civilians is a dominating factor in Small Wars and that the characteristics and culture of a people are subjects for intensive study.[17]

Value of a Unique Mindset. Just as every Marine is a rifleman regardless of duties and military specialty, all Marines must also think of themselves as part of a fundamentally expeditionary organization designed and intended to project military force overseas. The expeditionary mindset is useful in Small Wars as it prizes adaptability to respond effectively without a great deal of preparation time against a broad variety of circumstances. Another part of this expeditionary mindset is a global perspective oriented to responding to a diverse range of threats around the globe rather than to a fixed threat in a specific part of the world.'

In the Marine Corps, an expeditionary mindset is a powerful part of our unique Service culture. Beginning with recruit training, Marines are imbued with the notion of doing more with less, of fighting and prevailing in an austere operational environment, of living a lean existence: all measurements on the expeditionary readiness yardstick. Marines are prepared to use their own initiative and readily solve problems on their own with a minimum of guidance. They are eager to apply their creativity to unforeseen problems. The rugged lifestyle to which they become inured through training is second nature, and is held as a point of pride. Economy is elevated to an art form. The result is Marine units that can operate almost indefinitely with low logistical overhead—a decided advantage in Small Wars, which frequently occur in the developing world where the infrastructure is not fully developed.

Implications

[17] *Small Wars Manual*, p. 1-11.

The most significant implications posed by an altered security environment are the increased potential of small groups to threaten our security. Terrorism per se is not new, nor are state-based threats to our homeland. What is new is the scale of potential violence, and the breadth of its application to a global dimension. Now, individuals empowered by technology can now create their own mass effects. Also, society's critical infrastructure is far more brittle and susceptible to systemic shock than in the past when populations, power generation, communications and transportation networks, and food distribution were far less centralized. These changes allow many new ways for groups or individuals to create serious physical or economic harm with no need to conduct any form of traditional massed operations. Small wars, as we have noted earlier, will occur often, but with higher amplitude than previous eras.

The next implication is the protean or chameleon-like nature of this threat. Cold War era actors were predictable, but not so in this millenium. "The enemies of yesterday were static, homogeneous, rigid, hierarchical, and resistant to change," notes one RAND analyst, "The enemies of today are dynamic, unpredictable, diverse, fluid, networked, and constantly evolving."[18] Our analysis and intelligence gathering must be sufficiently flexible to recognize that future threats may look or structure themselves differently for every objective or phase of a campaign. It is not a static network, but a constantly varying admixture of participants, the very antithesis of traditional order of battle structures prevalent during the Cold War.

Future threats may pose a range of potential structures, including traditional and fixed hierarchical organizations led by charismatic leaders. They may organize themselves into loosely affiliated networks, linked by key individuals

[18] Brian Michael Jenkins, "Redefining the Enemy," *RAND Review*, Vol. 28., No. 1, Spring 2004, p. 17.

or common ideology or common enemies. They may elect a more cellular structure, with greater autonomy and less connectivity than formal networks. Lastly, they may employ hybrid structures, including matrixed structures where specific capabilities or financing support is provided to local cells to augment their functional capability for a single mission.[19]

Thus, future opponents will be more than simply an amalgam of multi-national groups or individuals, but rather, a task-organized grouping of committed specialists tied together very briefly for a specific task as in a matrixed corporate structure. As in the corporate model, specialists can be called in to provide specific assistance, making their expertise and their motivation the key defining variable. While many, if not most, participants may share a common religious or ideological motivation, this is not a prerequisite to "membership" in the greater movement. This variant of the organization is an opportunistic and flexible structure requiring the analyst to have a much more nuanced knowledge of the threat than in the past when combatants could more easily be categorized into finite national, religious, or ideological boxes.

This temporal and structural variation is a key factor when analyzing organizational strategies and objectives. If an organization is highly flexible and subject to rapid change and reconfiguration, a competing organization will have to be able to detect and respond to these changes even faster if it is to control the tempo of the competition or conflict.

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[19] John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *The Advent of Netwar*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1996; Noel Williams, "Matrix Warfare," Quantico, VA: CETO, 2000.

The final implication involves the operating doctrine and tactics of future threats. Our new enemies play to their strengths, not ours.[20] This opponent will avoid fighting the American Way of War, a mode in which we have been accused of longing "for gallant struggles in green fields while the likeliest battlefields are cityscapes where human waste goes undisposed, the air is appalling and mankind is rotting."[21] Fortunately, our expeditionary culture prepares us for a wide range of missions and underscores the legacy of warfighting excellence that is our heritage. The luxury of focusing on a very finite threat has not been something we have ever enjoyed.

The planning and conduct of Small Wars is like cancer research, very specific and focused on a particular strain while continuing to be informed on the larger fundamentals shared by all. General research and study will still be important, but it will not be sufficient to find the cure for the threats that most endanger international health or American security interests. Once identified the cancer must be isolated and neutralized before it can metastasize into a virulent form that overcomes the body's ability to defend itself.

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[20] Thomas X. Hammes, "4th Generation Warfare," *Armed Forces Journal*, Nov. 2004, p. 40.

[21] Ralph Peters, "Our Soldiers, Their Cities," *Parameters*, Spring, 1996, p. 43.

CHAPTER 3

STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVES

"The campaign plan and strategy must be adapted to the character of the people encountered." [22]

Before we can plan and conduct Small Wars we need to be able to come to some critical judgments about the nature of a conflict and the context in which it is occurring. Gaining a strategic perspective is the basis for the development of good policy and good planning. How can all the elements of national power be employed to develop a sound strategy and optimize the chances of success?

The first step is to begin with a very comprehensive examination of the culture of the society or country involved, and where the MAGTF is being deployed. Small Wars are generally culture intensive conflicts, not easily resolved by firepower intensive strategies. Coming to a detailed understanding of what makes any country or culture different is crucial to gaining a strategic orientation.

After a comprehensive assessment of the cultural battlspace, the planner should breakdown or deconstruct the strategic environment of interest into its most elemental structural components. While complex problems are not easily deconstructed and will frequently have contradictory or unknowable components, it is possible to clarify strategic and operational challenges and gain useful insights into the true character and causes of the conflict. This gives the Small Wars planner a logical framework from which to discern appropriate strategic and operational objectives and missions. Care must be taken to ensure that interrelationships and interdependencies are not isolated from the whole.

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[22] *Small Wars Manual*, p. 1-8.

Culture: A Strategic Perspective

An influential strategist once observed, "good strategy presumes good anthropology and good sociology."[23] Fundamentally, war involves an iterative competition between peoples or societies. This combination of national history, myth, geography, beliefs, ethnic backgrounds and religion we know as *culture*. Culture is the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and thought characteristic of a community or population. Culture is a complex aggregate of learned habits and attitudes acquired by a member of society. It works at many levels, sometimes overtly, but most powerfully as a deeply embedded set of values or beliefs in the subconscious of the individual.

The nature of Small Wars places a premium on an in depth knowledge of a nation's or people's strategic culture—but more importantly its societal culture. As stressed in the *Small Wars Manual*, a detailed understanding of human psychology, social customs, and the history of a people is crucial to preclude pitfalls and of primary importance in the development of plans.[24]

Degrees of Cultural Knowledge

Cultural Understanding is the training of all Marines in basic cultural awareness to ensure they are fundamental prepared to operate in a specific foreign culture. Cultural understanding training contains two parts; a framework for how to study culture and specific training for a particular cultural environment (Iraq, Liberia, etc.). This is more than just knowing the physical attributes of a locale. For success prosecution of Small Wars, we need to impart more than just "do's and

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[23] Bernard Brodie, *War and Politics*, New York: MacMillan, 1973, p. 332. Brodie goes on to add, "Some of the greatest military blunders of all time have resulted from juvenile evaluations in this department."

[24] *Small Wars Manual*, pp. 1-11. "The knowledge of the people at any given moment of history involves an understanding of their environment, and above all, their past."

don'ts" and basic facts about a given society, but *why* an enemy thinks the way they do or *why* the population values certain aspects of their daily lives differently than someone from North America. Most Marines will need some basic cultural understanding to participate successfully in Small Wars.

Cultural Factors are aspects of a foreign society, to include religion, language, history, heroes, attitudes, customs and rituals, mores, values, practices, biases, perceptions, and assumptions. This will include all elements that effect how a person or a people think and what drives them to action. These factors make up the cultural aspects of the battlefield, and a generic list is presented in Table 1.

Cultural Factors

Ethnic Description
- Physical Appearance
- Cultural history
- Population

Centers of Authority
- Description
- History
- Rule of Law
- Role of State vs Role of Ethnic Group

Cultural Attitudes of
- Self
- Group/Tribe/Clan
- Modern Nation State
- Conflict resolution
- United States
- Other ethnic groups
- Neighboring states
- Regional powers

•Social Centers
- Elites vs middle class
- Urban vs. Rural

Language
- •History
- •Dialects
- •Influence on culture
- •Geographic differences

Religion
- •Influence on culture
- •Major tenets
- •Role in society
- •Political Influence
- •Geographic differences
- •International connections
- • Worship buildings/ important sites

Customs
- •Greeting
- •Gestures/hand signs
- •Visiting
- •Negotiations
- •Displays of affection
- •Business
- •Gifts
- •Cultural do's and don't

Lifestyle
- • Role of Family
- • Role of Women/Men
- • Dating /marriage
- • Role of children
- • Role of elders

Clothing
- • Headwear
- • Clothing/Footwear

Diet
- • Type
- • Influence on culture
- • Alcohol/Drugs
- • Eating style

Economy
- • Distribution of resources
- • Employment means
- • Control of resources

Cultural geography
- • Monuments
- • Historical buildings

Cultural factors provide a framework for exploring various cultures. It covers specific behaviors and roles for various members of a society. Who controls social rules; government, or clan? Are there overt social castes or economic classes? What is expected of a family patriarch and matriarch? What are relative gender roles between men and women? What are the values placed on life and death? What is their reason for living and for what are they willing to die? When is it appropriate to kill another human and for what reasons? What is the relative importance of time?

Cultural Intelligence is the incorporation of cultural factors into analysis to support the commander's decision making. By understanding an enemy's thought process, better analysis is conducted of potential actions/reactions. With a better grasp of the cultural factors and cultural geography of a given area, the intelligence section can support the commander and his staff with a grasp of the "cultural terrain" that will influence the MAGTF and its operations. Responsibility for this effort for the MAGTF lies with the Intelligence section of the staff. The intelligence section can also use this effort to create products that support a Cultural Battlespace annex or overlay to the Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace (IPB). With a deeper understanding of the region or host nation being supported, the commander is better prepared to deal with the design of his campaign or supporting efforts including civil dimension of operations and post-conflict activities. Cultural intelligence is not a separate intelligence discipline, but instead a fused product of all-source analysis.

Levels of Analysis

There are three levels of analysis when examining a foreign culture. Most of what we observe as the manifest or explicit forms of a culture; including clothing, gestures, and food, are only the surface level manifestations. These are the most

visible but the least important elements of culture. They are the tip of the iceberg with respect to how a society views the world and behaves. Most of what we observe at the tertiary level can be changed relatively easy, but it will not necessarily change attitudes or behaviors. To do so we must look below the surface level.

The secondary level moves closer to the basic operating code of a society, and is generally known and explainable by members of the particular culture in question. This is merely the tip of the iceberg when it comes to appreciating the distinct elements that comprise a culture. It is at this level that external observers may identify values, rituals, heroes and symbols that are important to that society. It is important to understand this level, so that our communications efforts properly identify key values and are linked to potentially strong symbols of the culture.

But understanding the background and influence of rituals, symbols requires a detailed understanding of a society, getting to its myths and its historical narrative. The final level is the basic or primary level that gets to the root beliefs and internalized values of a social system. This level is unconscious to individuals of that society, often beyond any explanation by members, and generally invisible to external observers.

Conversely, while the basic level is the most unconscious and invisible aspect of a culture, it is often the "source code" of the social system that must be tapped into and altered if the culture in question is in the midst of a violent conflict. It is critical for commanders and their senior planners and intelligence advisors to be able to reach this level of cultural understanding in order to succeed at Small Wars.

A depiction of these three levels of analysis is provided in Figure 1.

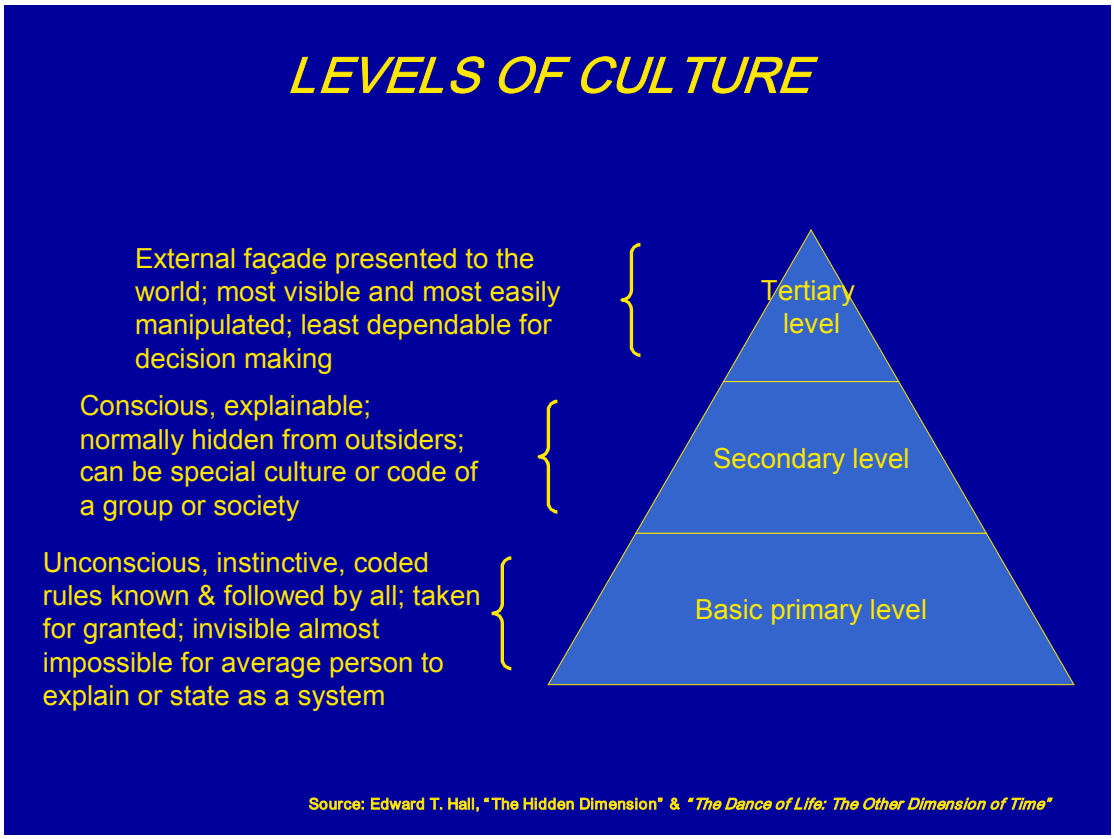

FIGURE 1: :Levels of Culture

Another way to examine human culture is by studying six specific categories: science, language, history, art, myth and religion.[25] These six categories are a useful way for the military planner to consider and evaluate a culture in any Small War or expeditionary intervention.

Science

Given our Western bent for technology, science is perhaps the easiest aspect of culture for the U.S. military to comprehend. Science and technology speak a

[25] Ernst Cassirer, *Essay on Man,* New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1944, p. 68.

universal language. But how different cultures approach and incorporate science and technology is not so simple. In certain western cultures, one can argue with some justification that science has displaced religion as the object of our ultimate admiration or worship. For other cultures, especially Middle Eastern cultures, science has a more circumscribed role, perhaps in part because they see how science has supplanted religion in other parts of the world. How a culture approaches science and by extension, modernity, is an essential insight into its nature.

Language

The construct and use of language provides key insights into a culture. Historians place considerable emphasis on language as a tool for decoding culture. Word origins and syntactical usage do indeed provide a window into foreign cultures. Language training's utility, therefore, is more than simply providing the necessary mechanism to understand what an individual might be saying in the literal sense, but it is also a necessary tool for developing an understanding of what he feels and why he feels the way he does.

History

Humans are storytellers, and contemporary culture is an extension of our narrative history. History provides a culture its foundation, and as such, is an important ingredient in any contemporary conflict. Put simply, one cannot understand a culture without knowing its history, and one cannot understand a conflict without understanding its culture.

Art

While there may be an inclination for the military planner to give art short shrift, the study of a culture's art provides important insights into what is important to

that culture. Whereas language is a spoken and written key to the understanding of the intricacies of a culture; art is a visual, textual, and symbolic window into its essence. During relief operations in Somalia, Unified Task Force (UNITAF) forces produced a daily paper, *RAJO*, in which they sponsored a poetry contest – poetry being an important art form in the Somali culture. U.S. Special Envoy Robert Oakley said, "We are using *RAJO* to get the correct information into the hands of the Somali populations and to correct distortions …."[26] Oakley subsequently explained how important the poetry contest was in opening a dialogue between the two sides, thus offering a tangible example of how an appreciation of art can influence operations and outcomes.

Myth

To greater or lesser degrees, all cultures possess important defining myths. Like history, narrative myth is really a story, objectively true or not, that is believed and passed down by a society. Myth contains metaphoric and symbolic meaning. Understanding a culture's myths provides a key for unlocking its deepest mysteries, and by extension, the character of the competition and conflict in which it engages. Despite the sense conveyed by many of our high school and college mythology courses, myth is not a subject of the ancient past. On the contrary, information technology has created a new environment where myths can be generated and perpetuated with amazing ease. The instantaneous nature of electronic media, and its passive reception by the viewer, encourages reliance on impressions and feelings rather than thoughtful analysis.

Religion

[26] Joint PSYOP Task Force, Unified Task Force Somalia, "Psychological Operations in Support of Operation Restore Hope," Ft. Bragg: 4th Psychological Operations Group, 1993, p. 9.

The role and influence of religion varies among cultures. It can be assessed along a continuum from being the dominating influence to being simply a derivative consideration. Many cultures are distinct from neighboring cultures due to religious lines. Historically, religious conflict has been a stimulus for war. Small wars are often fought along the margins between areas populated by groups differentiated by religion or spiritual beliefs. As the past century's ideologies wane in importance, religion is rising to become a dominating supranational organizing principle. As in secular movements or political ideologies, religion can be a rally point for the have-nots of the world.

Religion can be manifested as a type of ideology, form the basis of group identity, or be mobilized in support of political violence. Religion refers to an integrated, systematized set of beliefs, behaviors, values, institutions, modes of communication, and leadership. It institutionalizes preferred patterns of behavior for human beings in relationship both to a supernatural power and fellow humans. It is both an ideology and a set of appropriate and preferred behaviors reflective of that ideology.

Religion has emerged or re-emerged as a critical factor in contemporary security studies. However, "religion," per se is not the issue or problem. The self-justification for violence may be cloaked in religious terms, but the true cause may be much deeper. Religion is for most people, a source of coherence, rationality, and reason. Yet, when religion assumes a more active role in conflict, situations may become more intense or lethal. Religion is the single most consistent factor in violent groups. For example, some of the most destructive terrorist groups are identified by religion: Al Qaeda - Islam, Aum Shinrikyo - Buddhism, and Akali Dal - Sikhism. Ethnic cleansing is more brutally effective when the groups are of different religions, such as in: Bosnia, Burundi, Sri Lanka and Cyprus. Civil Wars are more lethal when the protagonists are religiously identified, as seen in:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Sudan, Nigeria, Israel, and Indonesia. Insurgencies are increasingly protracted when the groups take on religious identities: the Kurds of Iraq, Hindu nationalists in Gujurat, India, and the Moros in the Philippines.

Religion, as ideology provides (a) a meaningful framework for understanding the world, (b) rules and standards of behavior that link individual actions and goals to this meaningful framework, (c) links that ties individuals to the greater whole and provides a formal institution for interacting with the world, and (e) the ability to legitimize actions and institutions. Religion also provides parameters for education, family rituals such as birth, marriage, and death, the perpetuation of community myth and legend, and respect paid to heroes and icons.

Prevalence of Religion As a Contemporary Influence

- Religious factors are present in almost all conflict. Religion provides an ideology for group behavior and a system of preferred behaviors for individuals (including rewards and sanctions).
- Religion provides comprehensive and coherent ideas about the meaning of life and death as well as principles that provide a basis for "reasons to kill" and "reasons to be killed."
- Religion and religious personages can wield power over the control of resources, decision-making, language, education and communications; and community organization.
- Religion plays a critical role in defining a group's identity by providing value and meaning related to territoriality, using coded language to communicate values, definitions of "value and worth" for an economic system, and criteria for the selection of political leaders.

- Religious conflicts tend to have higher levels of intensity, brutality, and lethality than other forms of war. Religious factors can expand the scope and duration of a conflict significantly spilling over borders and finding advocates and adherents in the global arena.

It is not suggested that religion is the only explanatory factor in explaining warfare. Religion relates and overlaps other explanatory variables - specifically economic and political factors. But, whether religion is treated as causal in ideological explanations, or as a contributing factor to other variables, it is an integral piece of the security puzzle and deserves focused attention.

In sum, religious beliefs are essential components of many cultures, and when challenged can generate very emotional and widespread resistance. Religion, as a significant cultural factor, provides the impetus, or the justification for certain individuals and groups to act out violently. It can also provide the motivating ideology that sustains a movement or insurrection against high odds and heavy losses. A religiously motivated Small War can be the most challenging and most protracted form of conflict.

Macro-Analysis

After coming to a greater understanding of the cultural context of a conflict, strategic planners can examine other macro-contextual issues to frame their study of the mission. The combination of the cultural intelligence and these questions provides essential insight into the nature and motivation of a resistance effort or insurgency and the sources from which they draw their strength. It is the essential start point for answering that most crucial Clausewitzian question, what is the nature of the conflict?

For our purposes, the macro-contextual analysis can be divided into *political, geographic*, *demographic*, and *economic* elements whose characteristics and trends are affected only marginally by discrete events or activities. Thus, this analysis requires a clear understanding of structural fundamentals and an appreciation of the long-view of history. The questions that follow are meant only to assist the planner in thinking through and identifying the strategic issues relevant to the planning effort and are not meant to be prescriptive checklists.

Political

Small Wars are frequently caused by significant political conflict, and this conflict can be internal, or instigated from external sources. Thus, these questions lie at the root cause of a conflict and need detailed study.

Political Questions

- Who are the haves? Who are the have-nots in this state?
- ÌüÐ ÐÙÛÿúÕ đÐÿÙõÙÚÒÿ Òãú ÕÐÚÙÒÿ đÐÐÛø Òãú üÐÐ ÙÕ Ùõ ÐÙÛÿúÛú' Ù'Û" üÙÛøÒøÚüÙÚÒÿ' ÃÒõøÙÒøÚüÒÿ' đÒõøÙÒøÚüÒÿ' øÛÿÙÜÙÐÝÕ' õøÙòÒÿ' ÚÿÒãÕ' đÒøÿÙÒÃÛãõÒøÞ' ÒÝõüÐøÙõÒøÙÒãÄ
- What is the form of government, how stable is it? Is it authoritarian or representative? How representative and accountable?
- How transparent are government procedures and actions? Are there mechanisms between the executive elements, and the legislature or judiciary that facilitate transparency and accountability?
- How much support does the populace give to its current government and the present leadership?
- Are external parties or neighboring states supporting the opposition. Why? How much support and in what form?
- Are bordering nations stable or unstable, aggressive or benign, supporting or supportive?
- What is the ideology of the opposition group? What is their strategy and structure?
- How strong is this group in terms of personnel, materiel and resources?

- How much support does the opposition group garner from the general population? Is this support stronger among certain social classes, ethnic groups, or geographic areas?

Geography

While technology can span great distances by ever-improving means of transportation and communication, the geographical attributes of a country or region are still a substantial determining factor in the makeup of the inhabitant's geostrategic and economic situation, as well as culture and institutions.

Clearly, there is a strong correlation between the natural endowments of a country and its material and societal health. Climate, terrain, natural resources, relative position to other nations, and accessibility to the sea are strong determinants of a people's economic success and societal cohesion. Terrain and weather have traditionally played a significant role in operational planning, but in strategic planning, we examine geography not just for its impact on our military operations, but on how it is a formative factor in shaping the nature of the conflict – how it impacts the inhabitants and their institutions. From the beginning of recorded history, geography and environment have played a preeminent role.

Geographic Planning Questions:

- How are the adversary's resource dependencies (especially water, sustenance, energy) fulfilled, and how are they distributed?
- How are these dependencies trending, i.e., more or less available, self-sufficient?
- Is it a maritime or continental nation?
- Does the internal terrain balkanize the population, impede or promote mobility and commingling?
- Does the nation or group possess significant exploitable natural resources?

Demographics

Given the immutable fact that conflict is a clash of human wills, demography, broadly defined, plays an essential role in understanding the nature of the conflict. Population density, age, and gender distributions have a tremendous impact on a nation's productivity and proclivity for aggression. Aberrant demographic trends create fertile ground for the messianic leader who is able to scapegoat his society's woes onto another national, religious, or ethnic group.

Demographic Questions:

- What is the population density and distribution? How is it trending?
- What are the age and gender distributions?
- What are the ethnic/religious/ideological compositions?
- How homogeneous is the populace?
- Is the nuclear family intact?
- What is the level, distribution, and quality of education?

Economics

In its most basic sense, a nation-state's economy is driven by its geographic and demographic characteristics. Natural resource endowments and intellectual and social capital are the fundamental components of a viable economy. Influential writings from the Bible onward have recorded the power of money. Money and more broadly, economics, are tremendously important shaping forces in human affairs, especially human conflict. Despite the tremendous variations and volatility in economic affairs, large-scale, macro-economic trends can be forecasted and can be of significant use to the planner.

The economic momentum of advanced societies is such that radical changes in direction are unlikely barring a cataclysmic event. Thus it is possible to forecast macro-economic trends and thus identify potential sources of future conflict. As a general rule, where economies are declining or in transition, the chances for civil unrest and violence are proportionately increased. Of note, even when the

planner is focused on sub-national groups, the economic tectonics of host nations and the increasingly global economy maintain a predictive utility.

Economic Questions:

- What is the economic growth rate, and is the economy in question sufficiently transparent to accurately assess this question?
- To what extent do societal and cultural institutions support economic activity (social capital)?
- How is wealth distributed? What is the relative share of distribution among social classes and ethnic groups?
- What is the nation's (host nation's) GDP? Is it increasing or decreasing?
- How much of the wealth of the nation is dependent on international trade? Is trade and opportunity growing or declining? Is it based on industrial production/manufacturing, services or merely extraction of natural resources?
- How efficiently are natural and human resources exploited for economic development?
- What are the societal mores regarding economic growth and wealth distribution?
- Who holds the economic power and how are these individuals interconnected?

Again, the foregoing political, geographic, demographic, and economic questions are not meant to be definitive or prescriptive, but rather, are meant to assist in developing a mindset with which to better facilitate small wars planning. Combining this framework with an accurate cultural and regional appreciation of the area of interest is the surest way to meet the strategic and operational planning challenges and establish the context in which the campaign will be conducted.

Conclusion

In sum, the importance of cultural intelligence cannot be overemphasized in the planning and execution of Small Wars. In such an environment, an

understanding of the culture can mean the difference between success and failure. Seemingly minor or tactical actions can cause major disruptions at the strategic level. As the opening quote of the chapter suggests, we must adapt our plans and strategies to the nature of the culture and the people we encounter. We cannot dictate that they see events, priorities, and our efforts through our own cultural prism.

CHAPTER 4

FUNDAMENTALS of SMALL WARS

"Although Small Wars present a special problem requiring particular tactical and technical measures, the immutable principles of war remain the basis of these operations, and require the greatest ingenuity in their application.[27]*"*

While every small war is unique, in important respects significant to the military planner, there are common attributes that justify categorization under the collective term – small wars. As the British author Colonel Charles Callwell once noted at the turn of the last century, "… the conditions of small wars are so diversified, the enemy's *mode of fighting is often so peculiar*, and the theatres of operations present such singular features, that irregular warfare must generally be carried out on a method totally different" from conventional wars. He went on to stress that "The conduct of small wars is in fact in certain respects *an art by itself,* diverging widely from what is adapted to the conditions of regular warfare."[28]

This description and our own legacy of Small Wars suggests that small wars must be prepared for, planned for and conducted differently than large-scale conventional wars.

Many skills and processes involved in conventional operations are relevant to Small Wars, and require little adaptation. While it is certainly true that there are many complementary areas, the following operational considerations reinforce the need to think about small wars differently than conventional operations.

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[27] *Small Wars Manual*, p. 1-6.

[28] Charles E. Callwell, *Small Wars: A Tactical Handbook for Imperial Soldiers,* London 1990, p. 23. This is a reprint of the classic 1906 edition.

Fundamentals for Small Wars

The fundamentals of Small Wars offered herein present as a framework for education and for planners studying and preparing Marines for the specific context of a potential contingency. They are not a prescriptive list or a set of inviolable principles to be rigidly applied. The spectrum of missions that may be assigned to a MAGTF in a Small War, and the continuously adaptive nature of our adversaries precludes employing such a simplistic solution. As in conventional conflicts, the professional judgment of an informed and highly educated commander and staff is required.

The basic approach to the conduct of Small Wars is fairly well known, and consistent over a number of historical case studies. By extrapolating from the *Small Wars Manual* and from the litany of successful and unsuccessful examples in Algeria, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Malaya, a list of eight fundamentals has been developed.[29]

Sir Robert Thompson, the successful architect of the British counter-insurgency effort in Malaya developed an overarching approach based on a list of five principles. Thompson's list is good but it was not complete. The protracted nature of Small Wars is not covered by Thompson's basic principles, but he did once state, "by preparing for the long haul, the government may achieve victory quicker than expected. By seeking quick military victories in insurgent controlled areas, it will certainly get a long haul for which neither it nor the people may be

[29] Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam,* New York: Praeger, 1966. This list expands on Robert Thompson's five principles of counter-insurgency; 1) Have a clear political aim; 2) Function in accordance with the law; 3) Have an overall plan to include political, social, economic, administrative, police, and other measures; 4) Give priority to defeating the political subversion, not the guerrillas; and 5) Secure your base area first.

prepared."[30] Thompson's long experience in Malaya throughout the Emergency of 1948-1960 made him an especially qualified commentator on the subject of small wars. However, subsequent application of his approach as a template did not help countries in subsequent insurgencies. Drawing from a single unique situation did not assist U.S. planners who sought to apply the Malaysian template in other scenarios, including Vietnam. As stated in our own Small Wars Manual, "to a greater degree is each small war somewhat different from anything which has preceded it."[31] Once again, context matters and commanders and their planners must consciously look for both similarities and distinctions in applying historical precedents. The following fundamentals elaborate on existing Joint and Service doctrine for a wide range of complex contingencies, and the long historical record of such conflicts.

END STATE

American warfighting doctrine has always included the principle of the objective. Both current U.S. Joint doctrine and the annals of military history in both conventional and unconventional conflict are similar in this regard. The government should have a clear political **objective,** and this overarching political objective or aim must remain paramount and always in focus. Further, the objective should be clearly understood and credibly attainable by all parties. Agreement and understanding of the objective helps create conditions for unity of effort among coalition and interagency partners. Clarity also facilitates development of subordinate objectives, missions and tasks for military planners and other participants as well. If this overarching objective is not first in the minds of all participants, there will be a tendency to adopt short-term measures in reaction to insurgent or terrorist activity.

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[30] *Ibid.,* p. 58.

[31] *Small War Manual* , p. 1-6.

History suggests that political objectives are not always well defined. As one former Regional Combatant Commander has said, "It's not nice and neat – for openers, you don't get a clean hard mission that tells you exactly what you're supposed to do."[32] Continued and interactive discourse between senior policy makers and military officials is warranted to clarify the intentions of policy in order for military planners to translate the aim into concrete military objectives and missions. While our understanding of the nature of war underscores defeating the will of the opposing commander and his means to resist, military planners are used to defining military objectives, and frequently do so in terms of either defeating the enemy's main combat force, or by seizing defined physical objectives.

In Small Wars, neutralizing irregular forces and securing and holding specific geographical areas or cities may be necessary. But they are rarely sufficient. It may be better to think in terms of an end state rather than objective. End-state has a very definitive connotation. In conventional warfare, defeat of the opponent's military force is a clear-cut end-state, but in small wars, the requirement may be to establish a certain set of conditions conducive to stability, local governance, and economic growth.

While an objective might be misconstrued in the physical sense, an end state in Small Wars is something that has to be created or reconstructed over time. It is a long tern condition to be established and sustained. The end state includes functioning institutions including political and security elements, legitimate processes for transparent and accountable governance, and public participation.

An end state to a Small War also includes an alteration in attitudes and perceptions. Both the general population and the disaffected element that

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[32] General Anthony Zinni, "It's Not Nice and Neat," *Proceedings*, August, 1995, p. 26.

resorted to violence must accept the new end state as an acceptable political outcome. There may be a distinct military objective in the conflict, but success will be determined largely in the political and psychological sphere and it is best to define our objectives in those terms to ensure compatibility with overall policy. Thus, operational art and our study of Small Wars begin with the establishment of end state as the first fundamental.

UNDERSTANDING

As Clausewitz once intoned, "The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesmen and commander have to make is to establish … the kind of war on which they are embarking." This particular judgment on the part of civilian and military leaders is difficult to establish in Small Wars for numerous reasons. Commanders and planners who are examining a potential contingency need to assess the nature of the conflict in very detailed terms with limited time and information. Many contingencies develop rapidly from crises that are not routinely developed within our deliberate planning process. Thus, our grasp of the geography, topography, airports, transportation hubs, urban centers of power may be underdeveloped. Our grasp of the underlying grievances and attitudes of the adversary may also be quite limited at first. Likewise, our appreciation of the specific nature of the opposition may be less than complete.

Our predecessors understood that solid intelligence was a precious commodity in Small Wars, largely due to the remote nature of the host country, the inadequacy of infrastructure, and the lack of familiarity with the native population. Good intelligence about new insurgent groups or autonomous cells from a global network of terrorists is difficult to identify. Hearkening back to the earlier discussion on the need for cultural appreciation, it is impossible for U.S. forces to succeed in working within another society without an intimate appreciation of the local culture.

During the Cold War, it was possible to provide professional military education on "the threat" (e.g., Soviet Union) through formal schools and informal training programs. We created an entire cadre of experts in Russian history, language, and culture. In the current world of numerous but non-specific threats, this is no longer so easy. The traditional approach to teaching "the threat" is now impractical since the list of possible adversaries is too numerous to focus on any one individual threat in great detail. We must prepare a generation of future expeditionary warriors with the general skill sets of working within foreign cultures, while learning how to access specific knowledge and understanding of crisis areas on short notice.

"Wars are not tactical exercises writ large. They are conflicts of societies, and the can be fully understood only if one understands the nature of the society fighting them. The roots of victory or defeat often have to be sought far from the battlefield, in political, social, or economic factors."[33]

For example, the military planner has traditionally viewed the world through the lens of the nation-state, providing a clean and logical way to divide the world. As a result, the military planning and intelligence system is built upon this premise. Intelligence organizations produce country studies and country books that describe the threat, while analysts tend to focus on specific countries. This may no longer be adequate. While we can still look to the state as the primary building block, an inadequate emphasis on sub-national organizations and ethnic groupings limits our understanding of well spring of future conflict. Small Wars require us to decompose the problem into smaller pieces, below the state level, in order to obtain the fidelity necessary to successfully understand and cope with new non-state threats and to address the underlying factors that influence the

[33] Michael Howard, "The Use and Abuse of Military History," *Parameters,* March, 1981, p. 14.

local populace. As the previous chapter noted, we need to focus with greater resolution on the cultural, ethnic, religious, societal, and economic micro-climates within key nations and regions.

The differences and variations amongst the world's cultures make small wars inherently complex. Small wars often involve a contest for the popular support of a nation's polity, and as numerous conflicts have demonstrated, it is impossible to win the cooperation, let alone the hearts and minds, of the people without a thorough appreciation of their culture. Culture in fact comprises a significant element of the second "O" in the O-O-D-A Loop. In the words of John Boyd, "The second O, orientation - as the repository of our genetic heritage, cultural tradition, and previous experiences - is the most important part of the O-O-D-A loop since it shapes the way we observe, the way we decide, the way we act."[34] This statement ties cultural understanding to the operational art and endorses the need for cultural knowledge or awareness as fundamental skill base for future conflict.

If we accept that the goal in any military operation is to force someone to do our will, then understanding, anticipating and altering attitudes and behavior is paramount. Marines who view war as "an interactive social process" must base their actions on the underlying value and belief system of their adversary as it will be key to changing the perceptions, attitudes and ultimately the behavior of either the adversary or the general population. Thus, understanding is a fundamental of Small Wars.

The American–led intervention in Somalia in 1992/1993 was severely impacted by its limited understanding of the clan and political framework in that

[34] John Boyd, "A Discourse on Winning and Losing," unpublished paper, 26.

impoverished country. The degree of social disintegration and infighting extant in this starving East African state was beyond the grasp of almost all whom were involved. This lack of understanding curtailed the design and implementation of appropriate solutions within the time and resources the international community was willing to bear.

> "Psychological errors may be committed which antagonize the population of the country occupied and all the foreign sympathizers; mistakes may have the most far-reaching effect and it may require a long period to reestablish confidence, respect, and order."

At the operational and tactical levels, a lack of comprehensive understanding of the end state, assigned missions and culture can easily produce minor errors. Yet as the Small Wars Manual warns us, very small cultural and psychological mistakes can antagonize supporters and embolden our enemies.

Ultimately, however, only through the study of history and culture can we build the broad foundation necessary from which to interpret and then counter emergent threats and intra-state conflict. This necessitates "a knowledge of the mental soil in which the ideas that direct its course have to germinate."[35] This is not the type of information that can be efficiently gleaned by sensors in a grid. Rather, it is the information and understanding that can only be gleaned from human networks, and it is information that can only be successfully interpreted by a military imbued with a deep understanding of the historical and cultural context that has generated the conflict to begin with. We may not create special units, as the vignette below suggests, but we may be able to arm our commanders and the MAGTF with the framework and cultural interaction skills to succeed.

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[35] *Small Wars Manual*, p. 1-13.

VIGNETTE

Company I, 3d Battalion, 2d Marines (3/2), Task Force Tarawa disembarks from assault amphibious vehicles on the outskirts of Najaf, a mile from the Grand Imam Ali Mosque. As they approach the holy shrine, Capt McLaughlin sees that the situation outside the mosque is complete pandemonium. The Marine expeditionary brigade commander (MEB CO) is expected in just under an hour, and McLaughlin is having trouble raising his battalion CO on the net. Two hours ago his CO told him, "Seano, secure the mosque and the area surrounding it, but don't get decisively engaged. We don't need a bloodbath when we're trying to facilitate a meeting between the new Shiite leader and the MEB CO. Shouldn't be too difficult. Central Intelligence Agency representative with the general says things are fairly quiet in Najaf." McLaughlin moves forward to meet his lead platoon commander. 2dLt Esposito says, "Sir, I think I can handle this. Let me send Cpls Majeed and Johnson forward to talk to the crowd. I haven't seen any weapons . . . I think these people are just angry 'cuz they think we're going to defile the mosque." Corporal Majeed and Johnson have both been to MSG duty in the Middle East, been to school to update their Arabic, and are my assigned Enlisted Foreign Area Specialists. They really understand and know how to talk with these folks. That's a good idea; go for it," says the captain breathing a sigh of relief. Majeed and Johnson approached the crowd, their fellow Marines providing overwatch. Majeed calls out in the Iraqi Arabic he learned as a boy in Um Qasr, "Iraqi people, don't worry. We are not here to enter the mosque. We respect Islam and its holy places. We are here simply to meet with the Ayatollah, and we respect the Ali Mosque." Majeed and Johnson continue to talk and slowly the crowd starts to calm down and to disperse as Company I, 3/2 takes up security positions around the mosque. "Thank Allah for those Marines," says McLaughlin with a sigh of relief.[36]

UNITY OF EFFORT

Unity of Command is another important principle in U.S. military doctrine. In Small Wars it may be impracticable and beyond attainment. Not surprisingly,

[36] Adapted from Major Patrick J. Carroll, "Enhancing Cultural Intelligence," *Marine Corps Gazette*, online, June, 2004.

existing Joint doctrine emphasizes unity of effort instead. Unity of effort will take on added importance because of the complexity inherent in balancing the military with the political dimension. It is also further complicated by the extensive participation of various nations, other government agencies and international participants. As discussed earlier, the Small Wars battlespace may include numerous parties including OGA, NGO's, IOs and PVOs. It may also include numerous private commercial entities supporting either side of the conflict as well. Not all of these parties will share U.S. interests or priorities, but they may support the desired end state and they may provide crucial resources, skills, and information to the overall effort. Many organizations will desire to overtly distance themselves from U.S. policy and want to make their political independence clear. Few will accept a clear-cut chain of command and an accountable set of missions or taskings. Harnessing the efforts and capabilities of myriad entities in the area of responsibility toward a common goal is one of the biggest challenges and opportunities for the MAGTF commander unique to Small Wars. An inability to establish unity of effort elongates the mission, exposes our forces to additional risks and burdens, and may undermine the entire mission.

There are a variety of techniques for achieving unity of effort. The international community or the United States government may designate and empower a senior official to coordinate an international response. A U.S. ambassador may employ a variation of the Country Team approach to manage and integrate the various national and international participants in a Small War. It is possible that in some security situations that a Regional Combatant Commander or JTF commander may be designated as overall executive for U.S. participation.

No matter what methodology is selected extensive coordination is necessary. Interagency coordination and cooperation are essential to achieving effective

unity of effort and to synchronize the coherent application of all elements of national power. Political, economic, diplomatic, military, and informational efforts must be effectively balanced and coordinated. The success of the British involvement in the Malayan Emergency is an example that supports this conclusion. There, subordination of the military to the civilian and the resultant unity of effort was the key to British success. The British avoided this problem by the appointment of Sir Harold Briggs as the Director of Operations. There is perhaps no better example of how a clear and logical organizational chart can have decisive results on unity of effort. Briggs became the director of operations, and recognizing the need for unified command, established a War Council that included civil, police, and military representatives and acted as a coordinating committee.[37] Coordinating committees were also established at state and district levels. These committees provided for unity of effort by reducing duplicative operations and facilitating more rapid exchange of intelligence, thereby significantly improving operational results.[38] Unity of effort was essential to British success.

CREDIBILITY

Current doctrine stresses the importance of legitimacy in actions short of war. Without any doubt, legitimacy is a vital principle at the strategic level. The perceived legitimacy of the government must be reestablished and maintained. Legitimacy is often equated to approval by an international organization like the United Nations or the international community writ large. Yet, legitimacy of any U.S. action cannot be determined solely by external communities or the media. Nor can "legitimacy" be equated to neutrality. There are occasions when impartiality is very important, and there are times when working within an agreed

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[37] Robert Asprey, *War in the Shadows,* New York: William Morrow, 1994, p. 568.

[38] Richard Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War – Counter-Insurgency in Malaya and Vietnam,* New York: Praeger, 1966, pp. 57-9.

peacekeeping framework is required to preserve coalition support or to preserve a precarious consensus between clashing parties. But this does not make legitimacy an enduring principle at the operational level.

Within the conduct of Small Wars, legitimacy is not a precondition but a product or result. It is often part of the end state to be achieved. The acceptance of a political solution and the establishment of the political institutions to maintain it must be perceived as legitimate in the eyes of the local population. A lasting peace and the reintegration/reharmonization needed to bring about long term stability will be impossible to achieve if the political solution is not perceived to be legitimate.

At the operational level in Small Wars, ***credibility*** becomes fundamental. All actions must serve to create and sustain credibility in the eyes of supported populace and government. Force size and its dispositions must be adequately robust enough to present a credible threat of force. When challenged, the commander must employ sufficient force to reduce the threat to the local population or his own forces, consistent with the nature of that threat and without undue collateral damage or risk to non-combatants. Both the insurgent and the local population need to perceive that our forces are, in the words of the 1st Marine Division Commander's guidance during Operation Iraqi Freedom, "no better friend and no worse enemy."

The MAGTF commander should ensure that all military operations & civil-military actions deliver as promised. Relationships and trust are built upon credibility. Trust and mutual respect between our forces and the host nation and its representatives reinforces this credibility.

Credibility is also reinforced when our forces act in consonance with our values as a society. Operating within the law and our own guidelines

reinforces our credibility with local leaders and the population. Regardless of the outrages committed by the insurgent or terrorist, our response must always be within lawful bounds. Governments which do not act consistently and in accordance with their own legal system automatically lose the right to demand that its' people comply with the law.[39] The same is true for military forces. A failure to follow signed treaties and international law with regard to the employment of force, or the handling of prisoners, gives ammunition to the opposition in the fight for the hearts and minds of the indigenous population. Ultimately, we need to generate an overwhelming impression of credibility. This perception pulls the local population to their own government, and helps convince the irregular combatants that their cause is doomed.

DISCRIMINATE FORCE

One of the enduring elements of this form of conflict identified in the *Small Wars Manual* is the concept of minimizing the use of blunt military force. It is possible to conduct a brilliant series of tactical actions with overwhelming force and firepower and lose the larger strategic goal. "In small wars caution must be exercised and instead of striving to generate the maximum power with forces available," advises the *Small Wars Manual*, "*the goal is to gain decisive results with the least application of force and the consequent minimum loss of life.*"[40] This is has been codified into U.S. doctrine as the principle of restraint.

The excessive application of military firepower, or an imprudent ill-advised act can significantly alter the strategic situation. Firepower intensive operations may antagonize both external and internal parties that are neutral to the insurgent, swinging support and resources to the opponent. Excessive collateral damage, or

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[39] *Ibid.*, 52.

[40] *Small Wars Manual*, p. 1-17.

accidental injuries to noncombatants will undermine the credibility of U.S. efforts to assist the Host Nation, and make our intervention longer and more costly. The French experience in Algieria is one example of this concern, as were aspects of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. In Algeria, the French employed raids, reprisals and interrogations that produced a series of tactical successes. However they failed to gain the support of the populace in the long run, and lost popular support at home at the same time.[41]

The principle of restraint does not the capture the necessary degree of discipline and force application needed to succeed in small wars of the 21st Century. The concept of restraint may be very appropriate for some kinds of Small Wars, especially peacekeeping operations or when U.S. forces are conducting post-conflict stability operations. Care must always be taken to preserve life, minimize casualties among noncombatants, and reduce property damage. However, modern small wars pit U.S. forces against acutely agile opponents with no qualms about killing innocents by the thousands. Such opponents recognize no bounds, and are not easily deterred, nor can they be deflected by clever appeals to their conscious.

Marines understand that an element of attrition exists in most forms of combat, and has always been present in Small Wars. The requirement to present a credible threat of force, or even apply deadly force if and where needed, is a regrettable necessity. Some elements in today's world cannot be persuaded or deterred from violence. The fundamental guidepost that should steer us in preparing Marines for the dynamics of modern small wars is the concept of ***discriminate force***.

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[41] Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, *Algeria 1954-1962*, New York: Viking, 1978.

We should instill in our Marines, by their training and by the use of appropriate rules of engagement, the capacity to recognize those situations in which the context and the commander's intent, requires the application of military force. When they recognize that the situation requires the application of deadly force, they should ensure that each firefight or engagement is carried through to resolution with discipline. The kind of force employed must always be applied in consideration of the wider mission and the local context. We need to establish in their mental skill sets, the ability to properly *discriminate* between situations, within the context of the chaos and uncertainty of deadly combat, and apply their decisions. Our training and educational programs must create and sustain the necessary degree of professional judgment required to apply force appropriately in Small Wars.

FREEDOM OF ACTION

Security has been a principle of war for some time. It is usually thought of in terms of securing one's base of operations or lines of communication. Because of the nature of guerrilla operations and the propensity for the weaker side to resort to raids and ambushes against outposts, detachments and convoys, this principle is highly relevant to Small Wars. However, the purpose of gaining security has been often misunderstood. It is not just to achieve a position of security, or to create a base for positioning supplies, or as an economy of force measure to preserve combat power. The objective is to obtain and sustain a position of advantage in order to prevent the enemy from surprising us with hostile action. The whole purpose of security is to preserve or enhance our Freedom of Action. We do this by reducing the vulnerability of our force to undue influence or interference, in both the physical and informational domain. Thus the aim of creating firm bases, convoy operations, security patrols, check

points, etc is not security per se but to sustain our freedom of action *vis-a-vis* the government and the population we are supporting.

Of note, the principle should not be used as an argument for developing an isolated bastion that separates our forces from its coalition partners, its interagency teammates or the indigenous populace. A cantonment out of touch with the local population may offer secure basing arrangements, and an opportunity for our forces to rest between missions. But if it allows the adversary to control key elements of the population or critical resources, or to operate with impunity, it does not contribute to mission success. Close contact and saturation patrols may afford more force protection than intensive fortifications. The improved situational awareness and intelligence gathered through close interaction and cooperation with the populace is one way to establish security and stability for both our forces and those of the general populace. The MAGTF will always have to balance its force protection against its mission. The concept of prudent risk will guide MAGTF and unit commanders as they seek to achieve this balance.

Freedom of action has a psychological benefit that is at least as important as the material because it gives tangible evidence of success in the minds of the populace. Most people want to be on the winning team, and if we are unable to secure a home base and freely operate throughout the AOR, it is unlikely we will be successful in convincing a wavering population that we can extend the necessary security to them. Likewise, our ability to operate at will sends a signal to the populace that it should support the government and not the counter-government force.

ENDURANCE

One of the unique principles for Military Operations Other than War is perseverance. It is defined as "the measured, protracted application of military capability in support of strategic aims." This principle acknowledges the fact that the patient, resolute, and persistent use of military force is often needed to achieve success in Small Wars. The asymmetric nature of small wars often forces the weaker power into strategies that rely upon protracting the conflict in hopes of capitalizing on an asymmetry of wills. If we demonstrate through word, deed, or policy that we do not have the stomach to stay for the long haul, our adversaries will assuredly capitalize on this fact and develop a strategy to attrite our will.

But persistence and perseverance are attitudes. We may want to persevere but lack the national will or the institutional capacity to operate within a foreign country for the protracted nature of a conflict. We may have the will, but lack the physical endurance to sustain our forces, to operate in austere operating environments, or lack sufficient expeditionary forces to cover the AOR or to rotate them when necessary. This is more than just persistence, for a force can persistently apply the wrong tactics or persistently insist on employing firepower intensive operations instead of discriminate force. We must apply both will and capacity to succeed in Small Wars.

For these reasons, we need to think in terms of endurance. Rapid and decisive results are rare in Small Wars. We need to apply the approach of competitors in events like the Tour de France. This grueling competition contains many different forms of racing, including time trials, sprints, long distance flat rides, and punishing mountain climbs. It also includes individual and well as team events, analogous to our efforts with other agencies to achieve U.S. national interests. The right tactics, good equipment, and arduous training must complement the mental perseverance of the rider. Preparation, mental, material

and physical preparation are at the heart of endurance. Likewise, our MAGTFs must employ the right combination of tactics in different types of competition, they must employ their equipment and leverage the capabilities of the entire team, including the interagency, if they are to succeed.

AGILITY

Small Wars place a premium on agility at three levels; mental, organizational and operational. As mentioned earlier, Small Wars have usually required a special mindset—akin to the expeditionary mindset and cultural ethos shared by Marines--one that is constantly prepared for immediate deployment overseas into austere operating environments, bringing the minimum necessary to accomplish the mission, constantly prepared to adapt to new situations, and mentally agile enough to create innovative solutions to unanticipated circumstances, in a cultural context that may be completely foreign to our Marines.

Mental agility is formed by the study of history, frequent exercises and opportunities to test one's professional judgment against thinking opponents in tough situations. Our Service culture and professional military institutions reinforce individual and collective learning for such situations. Agility is based on mental alertness and conditioning, and improves the ability to move swiftly and change direction or mode of operation on short notice based upon pattern recognition and training. Agility lies at the heart of the "Three Block War" construct which describes the tactical complexity of having to conduct offensive, peacekeeping and humanitarian tasks consecutively or even simultaneously. Within each of these blocks, Marines must recognize the need to adapt their tactics, techniques and procedures on the fly. Each block requires different skill sets and different methods, and Marines have to seamlessly alter their approach as the context changes.

In Small Wars, the enemy is extremely elusive, employs irregular tactics, and disperses to avoid destruction by our technological superiority. Success in these contests requires great creativity, better situational awareness, autonomy, and increased freedom of action at lower tactical levels. This enables subordinate commanders to compress decision cycles, seize the initiative, exploit actionable intelligence and take advantage of fleeting opportunities. Small unit actions are guided on mission tactics and decentralized means of command and control. Decentralization pushes decision-making authority and responsibility down to the lowest level necessary.

Success in Small Wars requires many rapid decisions at lower levels and the fluidity inherent to maneuver warfare. Today's conflicts are the ultimate squad leader's war, and demand greater levels of agility and preparation at that level. Adaptive threats will be met and overcome by an agile and distributed network of small unit leaders who have been trained, educated and empowered to lead their Marines. This exploits our human capital, and accelerates our operational speed and tempo of operations.

Operational agility is also abetted by decentralized and distributed operations to deal with ambiguous threats and help commanders fill in the blanks that technology alone cannot resolve with the persistence, granularity, and discrimination we need for unconventional opponents. To fulfill the incapacitation component of our strategy, success can be boiled down to three functions, to "Find, Fix and Finish" the enemy. In the past, we could easily find Soviet style armored formations crossing the European plain or a desert. Taking them on and finishing them was the hard part. However, in Small Wars the challenge is often reversed, the real challenge in situations like Afghanistan and Iraq is in the "find and fix" part of the equation.

At the operational level, each phase of a Small War also presents the same challenges and the corresponding need to shift from offensive operations to more stability and support operations. At the same time, we need to be alert to changes in the enemy's methods, and recognize that in conflict the opponent has a vote too. He may not respect our phased approach, and we need to be prepared to shift back and forth between operating modes. We must avoid operational or tactical templates. The United States has had problems adapting to changes in context in situations in both Beirut and Mogadishu, as reflected in the text box below.[42] The situation must be constantly evaluated for changes in context that may change the mission, required resources, or operations.

VIGNETTE BOX: AGILITY

The Commission concludes that U.S. decisions as regard Lebanon taken over the past fifteen months have been, to a large degree, characterized by an emphasis on military options and the expansion of the U.S. military role, notwithstanding the fact that the conditions upon which the security of the {U.S. Multinational Force} USMNF were based continued to deteriorate as progress towards a diplomatic solution slowed. The Commission further concludes that these decisions may have been taken without clear recognition that the initial conditions had dramatically changed and that the expansion of our military involvement in Lebanon greatly increased the risk to, and adversely impacted upon the security, of the USMNF.

By the end of September 1983, the situation in Lebanon had changed to the extent that not one of the initial conditions upon which the mission statement was premised was still valid. Source: Long Commission Report

[42] Tactical templates were identified by our opponents in Somalia, and exploited in Oct. 1993. See Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War*, New York: Penguin, 1999

Organizational agility is inherent to our MAGTF philosophy. Our ability to rapidly reconfigure combined arms teams for deployment and employment stands us well for the nature of Small Wars. The adaptive, task-organized nature of Marine units, and the ability to re-aggregate or disperse based upon the situation is a classic example of organizational agility or flexibility. Given the dynamic, adaptive nature of the threat described above, it is likely that an effective countering strategy will require an equally dynamic and multi-disciplinary organizational structure which will vary from mission to mission. There will be times where either a Civil Affairs unit or the Engineers will serve as the main effort, with more traditional maneuver units in support. Other times, MAGTFs or subordinate units may lead or be subordinated to an Interagency Task Forces with members of the Justice Department, Department of Energy, or intelligence community represented.

Interagency cooperation must become a reality, and this implies the need to develop tailorable and scaleable task organizations comprised of military and non-military government agencies.

Conclusion

We should be clear about the nature of these fundamentals. They are not a set of immutable or prescriptive principles that have to be rigidly applied. They provide a framework to orient MAGTF commanders, their staffs, and Marines on the nature of Small Wars. They require reflection and the professional judgment of the commander for application in a specific situation.

The original *Small Wars Manual* correctly noted that each conflict is different than the one before it in some way, and that Marines must ever be on guard to prevent our views from becoming fixed as to either procedures or methods.[43]

[43] *Small Wars Manual*, p. 1-6.

CHAPTER 5

OPERATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

"In small wars, caution must be exercised, and instead of striving to generate maximum power with forces available, the goal is to gain decisive results with the least application of force and the consequent minimum loss of life."[44]

The Marine Corps' maneuver warfare philosophy is perfectly suited for winning small wars because it accepts the inevitability of chaos, complexity, and friction and the preeminence of the human element. Recognizing that even the simplest things in war are difficult, maneuver warfare places a premium on flexibility and adaptability – essential attributes of a successful small wars force. As an institution embracing maneuver warfare, where mission orders and decentralized execution based upon commander's intent are the norm, the Marine Corps constitutes a highly effective force for the prosecution of future small wars.

Likewise, the MAGTF staff planning process provides a solid framework for the planning effort needed to provide the commander with the information and decision making support he needs to design and execute successfully in Small War.[45] This process is extremely useful for developing a common understanding of the problem, and the commander's vision for effectively bringing about a solution. In particular, planning as a form of *anticipatory adaptation* is very applicable to Small Wars.[46] Planning supports this form of adaptation as the commander and his staff begin assessing future requirements and preparing the MAGTF to meet them. This may require creative tactics or novel MAGTF organizational arrangements. Planning is also the basis for improvisation and agility on the fly as the commander later responds to unforeseen circumstances.

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[44] *Small Wars Manual*, p. 1-17.

[45] MCWP 5-1, *MAGTF Staff Planning Process*, Quantico, VA: 2002.

[46] MCDP 5, *Planning*, Washington, DC: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1997, p. 14.

This element of agility can be built into the planning process through red teaming and wargaming various courses of action in the planning process.

Operational Planning

Campaign design is informed by and begins with the overall strategic aim, identified by higher authority. The MAGTF staff may or may not have been involved with refining the political objective through an iterative discourse between policy makers and military commanders. The commander will usually have the opportunity to interact with Joint planning officials in the development of the military mission and objectives.

There are two basic strategic approaches available to impose our will upon the opponent. One is called the strategy of *annihilation*, which calls for the substantial but not total destruction of the enemy force. The approach more common for Small Wars is the strategy of *erosion*, which is more appropriate for protracted conflicts in which we hold limited political objectives. A strategy of erosion seeks to wear down the opponent and his will by raising costs for operating against us and by reducing his capacity to do so. We raise the costs for his operations by limiting his freedom of action, and by attacking his critical vulnerabilities, including his communications and his resources. We also raise costs by our efforts to maximize our freedom of action and force protection capabilities. We further reduce his resources by working with the native population through various civil-military and information operations to isolate him from their support.

Marine doctrine suggests that the term "incapacitation" may be more appropriate in many cases, and it certainly seems the best way to capture the essence of the strategic objective in Small Wars. We rarely intend or need to annihilate a rebel

force, and may find it counterproductive to do so with respect to long term political objectives. The more destruction we create in early phases, only elongates the missions and raises resistance to our presence and effort. A strategy of *incapacitation* better conveys the military component of the strategy.[47]

In addition, our campaign will have to support the political side of the government's strategy by working with other interagency partners to assist the host government in establishing the political, economic and social conditions needed to restore control and effective governance. These efforts will contribute to our efforts to incapacitate the irregulars who oppose the host nation, by burnishing the legitimacy and effectiveness of the existing or new government. However, it may be better to convey this activity as supporting a strategy of *restoration.* This should not be interpreted as merely restoring an existing government at the pre-existing level of capability, which may have been the source of the violence in the first place. A strategy of *restoration* seeks to establish a better and more stable state.

MAGTF Employment. Per Marine Corps doctrine, the MAGTF may be assigned a number of roles.[48] They are not mutually exclusive. In the course of a protracted conflict, MAGTFs may serve in different regions and be employed in various ways. Likewise, as the course of an internal conflict develops for better or worse, the role of the MAGTF and its assigned missions may be altered substantially. Likewise, the assignment of a primary role, as a decisive force for

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[47] As suggested in MCDP 1-2*, Campaigning*, Washington, DC: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1997, p. 105.

[48] MCDP 1-0, *Marine Corps Operations*, Washington, DC: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, September, 2001, pp. 2-12-2-13. This section of the reference discusses the role of the MAGTF in sustained operations ashore. However, herein, we are not ruling out the application of the MAGTF's capabilities from a seabase.

example, does not exclude the necessity of incorporating the need to conduct civil-military projects or to plan for the transition to post-conflict operations.

1. **Decisive Force.** The MAGTF may be deployed as the component of a Joint force expected to conduct decisive operations. Marine combat operations in the city of Fallujah in March and November of 2004 are an example of decisive operations within a larger campaign.

2. **Enabling Force.** Marine forces may be employed as an enabling force in a civil war, such as in Operation Restore Hope in late 1992 when U.S. forces were ordered to Mogadishu, Somalia to support the distribution of humanitarian assistance. Marine participation in Operation Just Cause in Panama in 1989 is another example. Naval operations off the Horn of Africa in 2003 and 2004 served as an enabling capability during the global war on terrorism for other Joint components.

3. **Exploitation Force.** Marine forces can also serve as an exploitation force to conduct subsequent operations created by an earlier enabling operation. Operation Enduring Freedom to overthrow the Taliban regime in Afghanistan included the introduction of a Marine-led contingent, known as Task Force 58, that served as an exploitation force in the southern region of that strife-torn country.

4. **Sustaining Force.** Marines may be assigned to short- or long-term sustaining tasks, or as a rotational element in a sustained campaign. This would include examples like the pre-World War II missions in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Marines who participated in the U.S. Naval Mission to Haiti from 1959-1963 to train the Haitian gendarmerie is another. In 2000, CG III MEF dispatched combat service support units to East Timor to provide sustaining capabilities to an international force in the wake of post-plebiscite violence. MAGTFs that have been assigned to subsequent follow on rotations in Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom have served as a sustaining force.

Operational Phases

Although there is no prescribed set of phases for the conduct of Small Wars, it may be useful for commanders and their staffs to consider the nominal set of activities listed below. This provides a useful grouping of tasks that may allow

the commander to envision the application of the MAGTF in time and place. As in any war, large or small, a thorough mission analysis is necessary to determine specified and implied tasks from the higher headquarters' mission statement. This also includes determining centers of gravity and associated critical vulnerabilities, determining the desired end-state, and establishing measures of effectiveness. In the case of small wars, the conduct of a mission analysis is not always easy. First, there may not be a clearly articulated mission statement. Commanders may be left to plan what is required based upon inferred information due to the suddenness of a crisis. Likewise the development of centers of gravity and critical vulnerabilities is complicated by the amorphous nature of the opponent. However, no matter how nonlinear or adaptive the enemy, his requirement to gather resources and intelligence, or to recruit new supporters, as well as operate against the government to sustain his movement or position will open any network or structure to analysis and a determination of potential critical vulnerabilities. New and sophisticated forms of network and link analysis are being developed to assist planners in this task.

These phases are a point of departure for considering how a campaign may unfold. The actual missions and tasks assigned to the MAGTF from the Joint Task Force commander may vary this set. Additionally, the MAGTF may be arriving at some point in time after the initiation of a conflict, and some of these phases may be achieved by other components of the JTF.

- **Mission Analysis.** *This analysis should precede finalization of any deployment plans.* It must be based upon a detailed appreciation of the political object assigned by higher authority and the physical terrain and culture of the target country/region.

- **Isolate Insurgent/Contending Elements from Support.** Physically and psychologically separate the insurgents or opponents from both external and internal support or resources. Use both military force and information operations to demoralize these elements, and de-legitimize their underlying ideology or political movement. Begin to "cauterize" around the insurgency to keep it from spreading or acquiring support.[49] In civil wars and peace enforcement operations, isolate the contending parties.

- **Neutralize Anti-government Forces.** Employ military operations to neutralize and incapacitate identified anti-government elements that pose a security threat to coalition, U.S., or host nation operations and infrastructure. This requires extensive patrolling and intensive intelligence collection, followed by aggressive but discriminate engagements. In this phase during civil wars and peace enforcement missions, the MAGTF will work to establish and enforce rules between the contending parties about weapons and movement.

- **Organize Indigenous Security and Intelligence Mechanisms.** Invest intensively in bringing the local security and intelligence apparatus up to requisite levels. This may take intensive training. It is important in most Small Wars to put a local face on the solution.[50]

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[49] Metz and Millen, Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century, p. 21.

[50] T. E. Lawrence captured this thought distinctly with his quip that "Better to let them do it imperfectly than to do it perfectly yourself, for it is their country, their way, and your time is short." He also stated, "Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them." 'Twenty-Seven Articles', *Arab Bulletin*, 20 August 1917.

- **Penetrate (if possible).** Employ indigenous assets to penetrate the opposing group and/or its support networks. These sources should be used to develop actionable intelligence, prevent operational surprise, and make the adversary less secure in his planning and operations.

- **Enhance Host Governance Mechanisms.** As required, military forces may be employed to assist in enhancing state and local level governance. This could include a wide range of civil-military operations, to provide for administration, public services or the restoration of needed functions including critical infrastructure, road/transportation networks, or educational facilities. In intra-state conflicts not involving a counter-insurgency, the MAGTF will generally be supporting diplomatic efforts to create new political and security mechanisms acceptable to both parties.

- **Sustain and Reintegrate.** Sustain ongoing security assistance efforts and military operations as needed to achieve a decisive result. Assist in the reintegration of previously hostile elements into mainstream political and economic activity to ensure long-term stability.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

The operational activities discussed below are merely tools to order our thinking and are not, therefore, prescriptive. It is important that we define our terms and use them correctly, but it is also important that we not become overly doctrinaire, for functions can and often do overlap.[51]

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[51] Adapted from *MCDP 1-0 Marine Corps Operations*, Washington, DC: Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, September, 2001, pp. pp. 6-17-6-18.

Shaping Actions. In purely military operations, shaping is defined as the use of lethal and/or non-lethal activities to influence events in a manner that changes the general condition of war to our advantage. In the context of small wars, shaping actions refer to the application of various elements of national power; political, diplomatic, economic, military, social, legal, and informational to modify or shape conditions so as to facilitate decisive operations.

Information operations are a significant element in shaping actions. The prevalence of new information technologies and the pervasive presence of modern media, require that we redouble our public diplomacy and educational efforts and begin focusing on shaping the informational dimension of the battlespace. Because small wars are information wars, it is possible that successful shaping operations can be sufficient to accomplish the desired end-state and thus can become "decisive" operations.

In Small Wars, the nature of shaping actions are different and more cumulative than in regular operations. The majority of what the MAGTF does each day is a series of related and integrated shaping activities toward a common end state.

Decisive Operations. In small wars "decisive" may not be decisive in the traditional military meaning of the term. In this context, "decisive" means achieving a clear decision or final resolution on a specific objective or goal rather than necessarily reaching a broad and definitive conclusion. Once multi-dimensional shaping has set the stage for successful decisive operations, the concerted application of all elements of national power must be used to accomplish the desired end-state. Frequently, the military will play a prominent role during the decisive stage, but close coordination amongst all agencies is still vital for lasting success.

The cumulative impact of many discrete shaping actions can eventually achieve a "tipping point" in the minds of the civilian population that describes a point in time where they accept and desire the existing government as its legitimate vehicle for the representation of its views and authorizes it to act in their collective behalf for the delivery of services and governance. Likewise, at some point in the protracted series of military and non-military activities directed at the counter-governmental force, it too reaches a "tipping point" where it recognizes that it cannot attain popular support, resources or a decision. This is the decisive point in the conflict.

> "The planning process, the decision-making process, the thinking process, is remarkably different. You need to be much broader based in your knowledge. You need to be much more flexible in your thinking. You've go to be prepared to take things that all your life have been completely logical—and understand that it does not apply. You may have to think entirely differently about cultures, about history, and the effects of the environment that will lead you to do things that you would never arrive at using your normal, logical, thinking process."[52]

BATTLESPACE FUNCTIONS: CREATING SYNERGY

Synergy is gained by properly considering and applying the battlespace functions to the assigned mission. It is not necessary to explain the conduct of each function or every form of offensive or defensive maneuver. The conduct of many conventional warfighting functions remains the same in Small Wars. Yet, there are some unique aspects of Small Wars to consider when applying and integrating these functions.

Command and Control

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[52] Anthony Zinni, "Non-traditional Missions: Their Nature, and the Need for Cultural Awareness and Flexible Thinking," p. 269, in Joe Strange, *Capital "W" War: A Case* for *Strategic Principles*, Perspectives on Warfighting, No. 6, Quantico, VA Marine Corps University, 1998.

The Marine Corps doctrine and philosophy for command and control is equally applicable across the spectrum of conflict, and applies to both MAGTF commanders and unit leaders. Command and control is the single most important function in war.[53] It provides purpose and focus to our actions. Without the doctrinal concepts and processes inherent to command and control, our efforts in Small Wars will lack synergy and effectiveness. Through such processes, the many elements of the MAGTF gain direction and harmonize their actions into a common direction. These processes support rather than replace the leadership and decision making of the MAGTF and subordinate commanders. They do not eliminate the uncertainty, chaos and friction that are inherent to conflict, and frequently magnified in the complexity of Small Wars. However, they do prepare the MAGTF to cope with these conditions, and even thrive in them.

Our understanding of war as an interaction of complex and adaptive systems underscores the unpredictable and uncontrollable behaviors that occur throughout the battlespace. These are behind precise and orderly control. Thus, our approach to command and control accepts the complex nature of war, and seeks to harmonize the efforts of many people by providing decision makers with the critical information they need to assess missions, determine what needs to be done, and to communicate these requirements to subordinates. We do not insist on attaining information dominance as much as giving commanders the critical elements of information needed, when needed, which improve their awareness of the operation, and the ability to act in a timely and decisive manner.

The role of the MAGTF staff is to assist the commander in framing and satisfying his information requirements. This will enable him to apply the creativity and boldness of MAGTF's leadership in the formulation of plans to

[53] MCDP 6, *Command and Control*, p. 35.

attain assigned objectives, and in integrating the various functions of the MAGTF towards those aims. The staff provides the necessary information support structure for the commander to recognize what needs to be done, and for turning that decision into discrete actions, synchronized in time and space. The staff also serves as part of the necessary feedback mechanism that observes and reports on these actions, determining if progress is being made. The staff has a vital role in Small Wars by tying together myriad tactical actions that occur on a daily basis to defined political and military objectives.

The nature of Small Wars has historically relied upon greater decentralization of command and control. The delegation of authority to match the spatial and temporal nature of Small Wars is necessary. Marine leaders at the local level will often identify pieces of information and fleeting opportunities that cannot be acted upon at higher levels in a more centralized system. This reality highlights the importance of clear commander's intent, mission orderss, extensive professional education, and unit cohesion to success in Small Wars. Harmonious initiative and implicit communications built up over extensive training, doctrine, and common experience remains vital.

External Coordination. The commander may be required to accomplish the mission through extensive external coordination. Political sensitivities of all entities involved must be acknowledged. This will require the MAGTF commander and the staff to be diplomatic and to identify areas of mutual concern and collaboration. Coordination requirements external to the US military forces may include multinational forces, host nation civil authorities, nongovernmental and international organizations, and corporations. The potential for competing objectives and conflicting laws of coalition countries must be factored in. Additionally some multinational partners may not be traditional allies and may possess different motives for participating and

cooperating. These factors create difficult but not unique interoperability, information sharing and, and counterintelligence issues. Early resolution of these issues with partner nations and other institutions during the planning process is critical for retaining cooperation and building mutual trust. The liaison officer and communications requirements for external coordination may be significant and require additive resources.

Intelligence

The Small Wars intelligence planner views the battle space very differently from that of the conventional planner. Planners must expand beyond conventional enemy analysis to focus more on the local population and its probable reactions to potential U.S. or insurgent actions. This emphasis requires cultural intelligence; detailed knowledge of the ethnic, tribal, racial, economic, technical, religious, and linguistic groups in the host nation, as well as the underlying cultural beliefs and narratives that distinguish their value system, from which we can attempt to think about how they would perceive and react to our operations.

Small wars are first and foremost information wars. In conventional warfare, destruction is the norm, whereas in small wars, persuasion and influence are more often the objective. This shift in emphasis from destruction to persuasion creates a radically different context for intelligence gathering and processing. In conventional conflicts, the warfighter's intelligence and information requirements are largely concerned with physical entities such as locations and dispositions of enemy armed forces. In small wars, these requirements are more often subjective evaluations of intentions, aspirations, and proclivities. Just as at the strategic level it was necessary to more thoroughly deconstruct the threat, so at the operational and tactical levels it is necessary to examine in finer granularity the composition and nature of the adversary.

U.S. forces are normally at a significant disadvantage in foreign areas because they lack local knowledge. Commanders should make a concerted effort to collect, record and disseminate detailed knowledge of the areas in which they are assigned to operate. This is especially important in the early phases of an operation when the situation may be relatively permissive. The goal of this collection should be to place the local actors into the context of the existing political, commercial, residential, social, religious infrastructure.

It must be recognized that higher headquarters and national sources, while providing valuable intelligence and information, may not provide the necessary fidelity of information needed to conduct tactical operations. Thus, it is the commander's responsibility to generate useful information from organic sources. All source fusion of this intelligence is what brings fidelity to the commander's estimate and ongoing planning. Commanders must ensure their entire organization becomes an indications and warnings system. Every patrol, every convoy, every visit to a local tribal leader is a potential source of insight for intelligence. Maintaining close contact with the civilian population, intensive patrolling and observation of populated areas, and developing networks of local sources, all create opportunities. Only such close interaction can provide the level of understanding necessary to develop accurate situational awareness.

The Commander must ensure that intelligence drives operations, but may have to "fight" for it by conducting operations or exploiting routine actions in which intelligence may be garnered. In Small Wars, the conduct of operations will produce pieces of information that if properly processed could lead to further operations occurring at a tempo faster than the enemy can react. A clearing operation or a raid on a suspected arms cache may generate information on other sites or about future operations that can be leveraged to produce decisive results. Being prepared to exploit intelligence rapidly is key to success in Small wars.

Two other critical intelligence functions of relevance to Small Wars are human intelligence (HUMINT) and Counterintelligence (CIT). HUMINT may be the most valuable source of information when dealing with unconventional forces. HUMINT can supplement other intelligence sources with psychological information not available through technical means. For example, while overhead imagery may graphically depict the number of people gathered in the town square, it cannot gauge the motivation or enthusiasm of the crowd. NGOs and PVOs, by the nature of what they do in their daily actions with local officials and with the local population, gain a great deal of information about the culture, language, and sensitivities, etc., and may provide general information. When coordinating or interacting with these organizations, the phrase "information gathering" is better than of " intelligence" because they usually prefer a stance of overt neutrality, and could resent being considered used as a source of intelligence.

Counterintelligence operations are as important in small wars as they are in conventional war. There are many sources of intelligence that can be exploited by the opponent. Members of NGOs and PVOs working closely with US forces may pass information (knowingly or unknowingly) to belligerent elements enabling them to interfere with the mission. Members of the local populace often gain access to US military personnel and their bases by providing services such as laundry and cooking. The local populace may provide information gleaned from interaction with US forces to seek favor with a belligerent element or they may actually be belligerents. Finally, when conducting counter-insurgency operations, the possibility that the host nation being supported has been infiltrated has to be considered.

As pointed out earlier, the commander must possess a solid grasp of the culture and history of the area in order to make proper sense of and appreciate the significance of such information.

Maneuver

The essence of maneuver warfare is the creative and bold application of forces to generate and exploit opportunity. Maneuver means more than just the literal term, it is not limited to movement in a spatial sense. This would limit us to the mobility of units over terrain to gain a positional advantage versus an adversary. However, in the context of maneuver warfare, the term maneuver has a much broader context. It seeks to generate an advantage in several dimensions. As defined in MCDP 1, "That advantage may be psychological, technological, or temporal as well as spatial."[54]

As Winston Churchill once put it:

> "There are many kinds of manoeuvre in war, some only of which take place upon the battlefield. There are manoeuvres far to the flank or rear. There are manoeurvres in time, in diplomacy, in mechanics, in psychology; all of which are removed from the battlefield, but react decisively upon it, and the object of all is to find easier ways, other than sheer slaughter, of achieving the main purpose."[55]

Because of the need to reduce violence and to generate an advantage with a civilian population in Small Wars, this conception of maneuver takes on special meaning. Rather than focus on using fires to attrite an adversary's forces by physical destruction, the MAGTF must maneuver to create multi-dimensional advantages to secure the civilian population, build up the local government, protect and enhance its critical infrastructure and economic resources. It may seek a psychological advantage by preserving its freedom of action, and appearing

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[54] MCDP 1, *Warfighting*, p. 72.

[55] Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis,* Vol. 2, New York: Scribner's, 1923, p. 5.

able to move freely throughout the entire battlespace, electing to operate at a time and place of our choosing, to undercut any perceptions that the opposing elements has any credibility or capacity to influence events. Maneuver will also generate traditional forms of military advantage over the insurgent force or the opposing force in a civil war.

Mobility remains a key aspect of maneuver in Small Wars. The MAGTF's multiple forms of tactical mobility afford the commander a great deal of flexibility for ground, air and waterborne maneuver in a wide variety of environments. Our organic mobility provides the capacity to rapidly assemble forces from various locations to surprise insurgents in areas they believe to be sanctuary. This capacity should be used aggressively to maintain the initiative. It would be easy for the MAGTF to stand back and conduct intelligence-driven penetrations into urban areas or distant rural areas where insurgents are located. However, this approach cedes too much of the initiative to the counter-government forces and retards rather than accelerates the development of actionable intelligence.

The *Small Wars Manual* and recent experience suggest that large sweeps and periodic operations are not as effective as maintaining close contact with the civilian population and regularly patrolling key areas. Such patrols send a message and reinforce our intent and credibility for securing the safety of the people and their infrastructure. Historically, the employment of "flying columns" and very mobile patrols of small detachments of all arms has been useful in Small Wars.[56] Aggressive patrolling from small units that have a detailed local knowledge can achieve ascendancy over an area, and further accelerate the development of actionable intelligence. Saturation patrols and "flying columns" are ideal for

[56] *Small Wars Manual*, p. 5-8.

harrying insurgent efforts to train, maneuver or gather resources. As suggested in the original manual, vigorous and relentless pursuit of the opponent is best.[57]

Civil Military Operations (CMO) are one of those nontraditional forms of maneuver we employ to achieve advantage. CMO describes the efforts we make to build and use associations with civilians in order to facilitate our primary military actions. At times, CMO itself may be the focus of our efforts, especially in Small Wars. Whatever the mission, CMO is a constant element throughout the planning and execution of military operations, and not merely an adjunct specialty that occurs before or after hostilities. If we consider this dimension in the design of a campaign or battle, we can limit problems that may lead to greater violence and a more costly campaign. The more effectively we can conduct our combat operations and reduce potential problems, the easier our military involvement is and the shorter the duration of the conflict. Because of the nature of Small Wars, this dimension is critical, making CMO a critical shaping capability and potentially a decisive form of "maneuver" for the MAGTF commander. (See Appendix A)

> "The problem is that we think of CMO as something that CAG does. We are all more comfortable with kinetic operations so that's what we focus on and then leave the detailed planning for phase IV operations to the CA guys on the OPT."
>
> MEF Planner I in Iraq, 2004

Fires

Fires is the function that involves the collective and coordinated employment of target acquisition systems, fires from direct and indirect weapons, armed aircraft

[57] *Ibid.*, I-17. See also Coates, John, *Suppressing Insurgency: An Analysis of the Malayan Emergency, 1948-1954*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992, pp. 157-162.

including UAVs, and nonlethal systems including physical and non-kinetic means that destroy or neutralize military forces, physical targets, or the electromagnetic spectrum. Fires are employed to delay, disrupt, degrade or destroy enemy capabilities, or reduce his will to resist. Fires can also be used as a shaping action to facilitate or mask maneuver. Consistent with the concept of combined arms, fires are usually integrated with maneuver to shape the battlespace and establish conditions for decisive action.

As a non-kinetic form of combat power, information operations and activities must be a significant part of a small wars campaign plan. Small Wars are battles of ideas and battles for the perceptions and attitudes of target populations.

Traditional military forces are good at applying kinetic solutions, which are a form of influence as well, and they will play a key role in this effort. Other non-kinetic military tools however, such as psychological operations, civil affairs, engineer, and medical, are the fires and maneuver of small wars. They frequently are the main effort simply because of the criticality of the functions they perform. Their efforts, when backed-up by traditional military forces and combined with the entire panoply of other instruments of national power (government and civilian resources, including political or diplomatic, economic, and information, as well as intelligence, financial, judicial, law enforcement, and humanitarian), are the primary means towards achieving the desired end state in many small wars.

Thus, the importance of information activities must also be integrated with the overall scheme of maneuver and fire support plan of the MAGTF. This is usually achieved by fusing Information Operations (IO) capabilities into the overall operations plan. Because of the psychological dimension in Small Wars, the inclusion of IO as part of the "fires" function is key. In some forms of Small Wars, it may be the principal weapon of choice. In each scenario of the Three

Block war construct, Marines can employ information "fires" to warn civilians of danger, isolate insurgent forces, or direct civilians to the location of food distribution sites and humanitarian assistance.

Additionally, information activities such as messages and broadcasts on local TV or radio can extend our influence into other neighborhoods, villages or cities where the MAGTF is not physically present. In this regard, we may need to consider how the nature of Small Wars requires us to add an additional block to the Three Block War construct. Small Wars involve an effort to convey information and to manage or influence perceptions. We need not be present, but we can convey or deny information to targeted audiences as part of battlespace shaping. In the Fourth Block, Marines are not physically present, but our IO efforts are. (See Appendix B for more on Information Operations)

Psychological Operations (PSYOPs) are a critical supporting arm in Small Wars. PSYOPs also has a counter-propaganda role to negate an adversary's attempt at influencing local, U.S. and coalition audiences. The MAGTF must be alert to this threat, and have prepared "counter-battery fires" in the informational domain to offset or negate this influence. An effective enemy propaganda campaign can have enormous impact on operations; from prompting neutral parties to resist military operations to causing a coalition partner to withdraw support. If IO can turn the people who tacitly support the adversary, it can decisively affect both the adversary's materiel support and morale.

"…the contributions of PSYOP during the war in Kosovo made one thing clear: PSYOP will continue to be a weapon of first choice as a combat and diplomatic multiplier and a combat reducer for future military operations."

Source: After Action Report, Operation ALLIED FORCE

An overall objective during small wars is to win the battle of ideas and the politico-military struggle for power. The stated IO core capabilities and supporting related activities enable or support military operations that create opportunities for decisive counterinsurgency operations. These capabilities, when synchronized, counter insurgent actions and subversive activity while seizing and maintaining the initiative with a steady broadcast or delivery of information. It is for this reason that Lawrence of Arabia observed, "the printing press is the greatest weapon in the armoury of the modern commander."[58]

Logistics

Logistics elements may be employed in quantities disproportionate to their normal military roles. In fact, many combat service support elements can become maneuver elements in Small Wars. Planners will have to learn how to factor the capabilities of these units into the campaign and their schemes of maneuver. In these nonstandard tasks, planners must be aware that overextending such forces may jeopardize their ability to logistically support regular combat operations.

In addition, additive capabilities may be necessary based on the nature of the physical environment in which the MAGTF is operating. Logistics planners must ensure that their mission analysis includes an assessment of these needs. Contracting/purchasing functions and legal assistance are two areas commonly noted. Contracting assets can be a force multiplier for gaining local resources and for conducting civil military operations, planners need to think about finance, resource management, and contracting personnel to assure the necessary level of contract support. Contracted food and bottled water sources must be inspected

[58] T. E. Lawrence, "The Evolution of a Revolt," *The Army Quarterly and Defence Journal,* October, 1920.

by veterinary personnel for food safety and sanitation. Preventive medicine personnel must inspect and monitor water sources and supplies.

The additive demands of humanitarian assistance efforts, as well as the care and feeding of large numbers of indigenous personnel or prisoners must also be factored into logistics plans.

Medical Operations. Medical operations will extend beyond just care for US forces. The potential to medically treat the host nation indigent population, dislocated civilians, refugees or allied military personnel can pose significant medical challenges. The respective capabilities of allied, civilian relief, or other supporting medical forces should be considered prior to finalizing the US medical support concept. Commanders, with the assistance of civil affairs personnel, must determine the level of health service support, especially civilian preventive medicine, required to support small wars operations. Medical care is a universal desire that cuts across cultural boundaries and can have a positive impact if worked in conjunction with the overall information operations plan.

Legal Affairs. Legal personnel may require expertise in areas such as refugees; displaced and detained civilians; fiscal law; rules of engagement; psychological operations; civil affairs; medical support; local culture, customs, and government; international law and agreements; military and political liaison; and claims. Commanders should ensure that their supporting staff judge advocate has the resources available to respond to the variety of complex international and operational legal and regulatory issues that may arise. If possible host nation legal personnel should be integrated into the command legal staff as soon as practical to provide guidance on unique host nation domestic legal practices and customs.

Public Affairs. The media will be a factor in military operations. It is their right and obligation to report to their respective audiences on the use of military force. They demand logistical support and access to military operations while refusing to be controlled. Members of the media have a significant influence and shaping impact on political direction, national security objectives and policy and national will. The speed with which the media can collect and convey information to the public makes it possible for the world populace to become aware of an incident as quickly as, or even before, commanders and U.S. government decision-makers.

A well-defined and concise public affairs plan that provides open and independent reporting must be developed. Use of embedded reporters can help provide open reporting but the public affairs plan must include and enforce media ground rules to ensure force protection at the source and stress operational security awareness. The public affairs plan must speak with one voice that communicates a consistent message to the international audience. Conflicting messages or information can cause skepticism and undermine public trust and support for the operation. Public affairs must be proactive vice reactive and the plan must be understood at all levels of the operation.

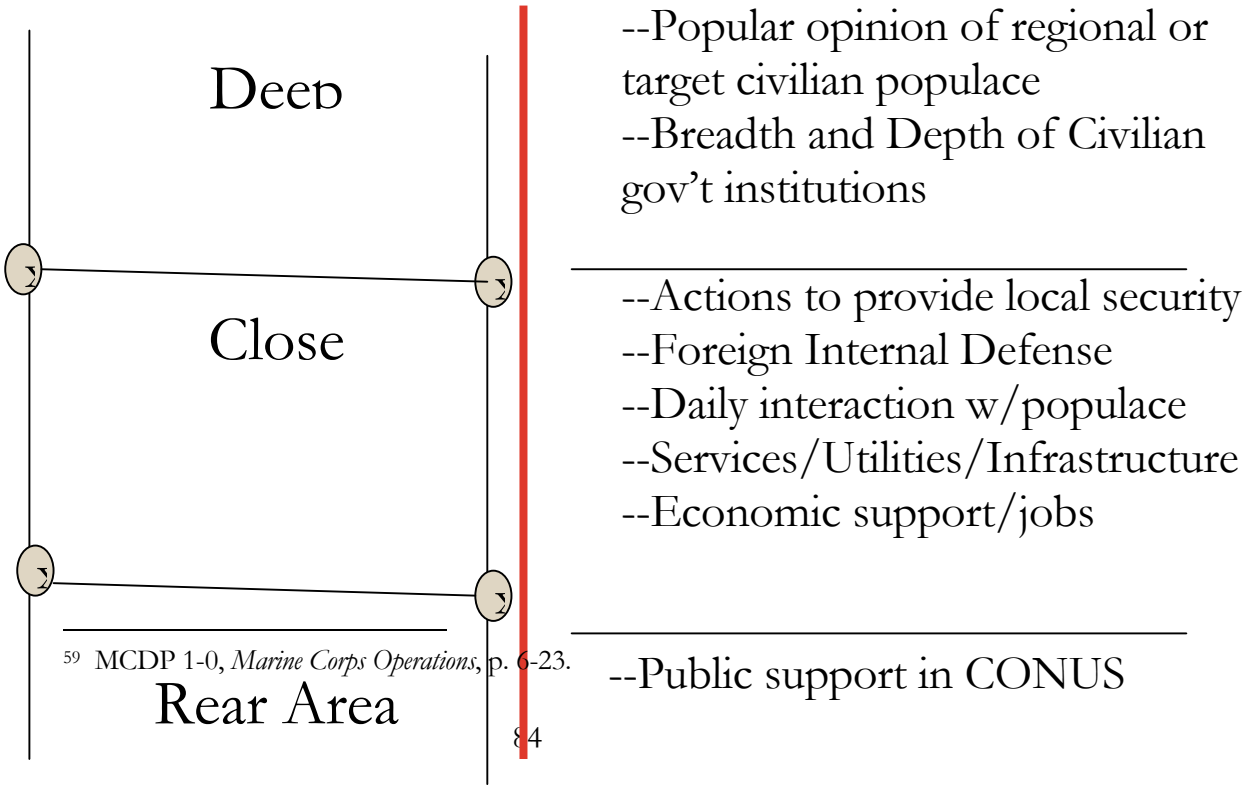
PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Battlespace Geometry. The commander and his staff must consider the altered nature of battlespace geometry in Small Wars. The battlefield framework lays out the way the commander will organize his assigned area of the battlespace and array the main effort, reserve and security forces. The MAGTF will generally not be sweeping through a battlespace or "maneuvering" some number of miles per day. The concept of deep and rear areas are different. Strategically the "deep area" could be thought of as regional support for the host

nation, and the support of its own population. Actions the JTF or MAGTF can take in the deep area include many long-term projects that build up the government and its political and service institutions. The "rear area" may be our own population at home. In the close fight, operationally, we can expect to occupy noncontiguous areas and conduct more distributed forms of operations. Instead of a traditional battlespace organization, it may be more likely that the MAGTF will take up a series of battlespaces within an AOR for the conduct of nonlinear operations with noncontiguous deep, close and rear areas.[59]

As part of the "close fight," local security efforts and security assistance efforts will be conducted. The day-to-day interaction between Marines and the local population occurs in the close combat area, as do many CMO projects that target social and economic development opportunities. Figure 2 compares the traditional and Small Wars view of the battlespace.

CONVENTIONAL WAR **SMALL WARS**



[59] MCDP 1-0, *Marine Corps Operations*, p. 6-23.

Single Battle. The most important aspect we must consider during small wars is focusing on the mission we want to accomplish and the use of all the tools available to accomplish it. Ultimately, we want to influence foreign audiences to behave in certain ways. We have a wide range of tools available with which to influence them, from traditional kinetic resources to more subtle ones such as civil military and psychological operations. The trick is to consider them all and carefully select what, how, and when you will use them. The harder trick is coordinating the message and the unit's maneuver, synchronizing the delivery, and integrating them with the MAGTF's other capabilities to gain synergy and success. That's the basic challenge in Small Wars, fighting the "single battle" with many tangible and intangible assets.

This coordination, synchronization, integration, and deconfliction process are the essence of what makes Combined Arms such a powerful concept. This is something Marines are particularly good at because it is something we routinely do as part of applying combined arms in maneuver warfare. It is one of our core competencies.

The important thing to understand is that in Small Wars all aspects of combat power must be integrated into MAGTF operations. In a sense, the terms Civil-Military Operations and Information Operations are misnomers. They are not operations in their own right. They are functions or activities that must be integrated into MAGTF operations in Small Wars to *influence* the adversary and the populace. In this respect, it may be better to define a new term for Small Wars called Integrated Influence Operations to reconcile the confusion created by our terminology. It can be defined as follows:

Integrated Influence Operations is the result of those actions taken to affect an adversary and/or a populace with the intent of influencing their perception and ultimately their actions. This perception is generated by the orchestrated aggregate of warfighting, civil-military operations, public affairs, and psychological operations. Integrated Influence Operations include kinetic and non-kinetic means, and are always guided by the commander's objectives and intent.

In short, *Integrated Influence* = Traditional Warfighting Functions + *Info Ops* + *Public Affairs* + *CMO.*

SOF/Conventional Force Integration. Historically, commanders have employed SOF in advance of conventional forces to ensure the timing and tempo of the overall unified campaign is maintained. However, during extended small wars operations, it is critical to integrate and synchronize SOF with conventional forces. Principal areas of interest may include intelligence, fire support, target deconfliction, and logistics support.

Liaison elements within SOF and conventional force staffs further enhance integration. These liaison elements aid mission execution; preclude fratricide; and eliminate duplication of effort, disruption of ongoing operations, and loss of intelligence sources. These integrated liaison efforts are crucial to maintaining the commander's overall unity of effort, coordination of limited resources, and campaign tempo.

Rules of Engagement (ROE). A military commander will never be given the absolute authority to act without ultimate accountability. Military action and the application of force will be limited by a variety of political and practical considerations, some of which may not seem sensible at the tactical level. Leaders are likely to find themselves operating with a much more constrained set of ROE because tactical decisions regarding the application of force can often have

strategic implications. Therefore, leaders and Marines at all levels need to understand the nature of such limitations and the rationale behind them in order to make sound decisions regarding the application of force.

Care must be taken to ensure the mission drives the ROE and not vice-versa. The commander should aggressively seek modifications to the ROE if the ROE are inadequate in light of the mission and anticipated threat level.

Assessment/Measures of Effectiveness (MOE). Assessment in Small Wars is an art, requiring significant adaptation from normal evaluations conducted during conventional conflicts. Quantitative statistics like enemy casualties, movement rates, sorties generated, etc., offer little.

MOEs should be developed for quantitative or qualitative standards as a means to evaluate operations and guide decision making. They help identify effective strategies and tactics and indicate when to shift resources, transition to different phases, or alter or terminate the mission. MOEs should be driven by guidance from higher headquarters and related to the nature of the desired end state. They are established to aid the commander in determining his force's effectiveness and for judging when the MAGTF has met the criteria for transition of control and redeployment to home stations.

The leader and his staff decide how the MOE will be identified, reported, and validated. They determine what action will be taken when the MOEs are achieved, as well as contingency plans in case MOEs are not achieved according to the original plan. MOEs are often adjusted as the situation changes and higher-level guidance develops.

Measures of effectiveness (MOE) vary significantly with each situation. In many cases it may be as simple as asking the question, "how are we doing today?" In Somalia, MOEs were termed stabilization indicators and consisted, among others, of the following: death rate per day due to starvation, gunshot wounds in hospitals, street price of an AK-47, and street price of sack of wheat.[60] In general, measures of effectiveness in small wars are largely subjective and highly changeable given the dynamic nature of the conflict. Poorly chosen measures of effectiveness can have dire consequences while properly chosen measures can guide a force toward constructive and effective activities. The body count in Vietnam is an example of a flawed measure of effectiveness. Attempts to increase the body count led to counterproductive emphasis on large-scale ground and air operations that were, in the end, militarily ineffectual and politically damaging. This contradicted and diverted resources away from pacification programs such the Combined Action Program (CAP) and Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (CORDS).[61] As the Vietnam example demonstrates, measures of effectiveness have a powerful influence on military operations and must be chosen carefully to ensure they are in consonance with political objectives and the military strategy.

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[60] Ambassador Robert Oakley, *Briefing to MOUT 2000 Conference,* Santa Monica, CA, 22-23 March 2000. This can be found in Russell Glenn, ed., *Capital Preservation: Preparing for Urban Operations in the 21st Century*, Santa Monica: RAND, 2001.

[61] Douglass Blaufarb, *The Counter-Insurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance 1950 to the Present*, New York: The Free Press, 1977, p. 119.

CHAPTER 6

PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

"A knowledge of the history of interventions and the displays of force and other measures short of war employed…in the past are essential to thorough comprehension of our relations with foreign states insofar as these matters are concerned."[62]

The body of writing on the tactics, techniques, procedures, and lessons-learned applicable to small wars is voluminous and ever changing. Unlike 1940 when the *Small Wars Manual* was published, there is an extensive library of Joint and Service doctrine, TTPs, and lessons-learned.

Today's challenge is getting the right information to right user at the right time. There are a number of potential sources internal to the Corps, including the Doctrine Division and the Marine Corps Lessons Learned Center at Quantico. The Marine Corps Intelligence Activity will also be a prime resource for cultural intelligence and a range of useful products. The Marine Corps University, including the expanding archival and research resources and faculty are another valuable resource for exploitation. The Joint community also offers numerous doctrinal, educational and reference materials that can be leveraged to increase our knowledge and understanding of complex contingencies.

It is the intent of the small wars website http://www.smallwars.quantico.usmc.mil/search/default.asp to assist in meeting this challenge. While nearly everything on the website is available in printed form, the website is designed to have a robust search capability to allow the busy operator to plug in a search query and get the required information quickly. This resource is intended to facilitate development of unit standard operating procedures

[62] *Small Wars Manual.* p. 1-6.

(SOPs) that can be tailored to meet the immediate situation and then printed and distributed to unit leaders as required.

Ideally, unit leaders will have time during their preparatory phase to review the website and build their own reference resource prioritized upon mission, enemy, terrain, weather, troops, support, and time available (METT-T) analysis before deployment. However, the real world inevitably contains surprises, and the small wars website offers a valuable tool to prepare for these unexpected contingencies by providing access to a wide array of latest small wars relevant reference material.

While it is certainly true that the tremendous experience our forces gained in Operation Iraqi Freedom and the continuing Global War on Terrorism provides vitally needed combat experience, today's hard earned experience has to be institutionalized by vigorous education and training to capture the best lessons and to ensure that the learning curve for future Marines is reduced. Second, the Corps' warfighting ethos and culture of adaptability have to be maintained. Veterans of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom will be an important source from which our warfighting tradition is maintained and updated. Training, education, and doctrine will be their tools.

Recent operational experiences will undoubtedly increase both our understanding of modern Small Wars, and increase our overall warfighting excellence in ways we cannot yet imagine. As Chesty Puller said, "The Constabulary Detachment, where I saw it in both Haiti and Nicaragua, was the best school the Marine Corps has ever devised." In the same vein, a more recent commentator has stated that, "If, as the Duke of Wellington once claimed, the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, then it might be said with equal justice that the Pacific campaign in World War II was

won in the jungles of Nicaragua."[63] This should not suggest that the best individual small wars warriors necessarily made the best fighters in World War II. Rather, it was the institutional warfighting ethos, the exposure to leadership under conditions of stress and limited information, and the expeditionary "can-do" approach derived from involvement in small wars that held the Corps in such good stead when it came to preparing for and conducting the island-hopping campaigns of the Pacific.

The real strength of the Marine Corps has been its laser like focus on warfighting excellence. Marines have always learned by doing and have always passed on their insights with which to perpetuate this legacy. Officers and non-commissioned officers of the early years of the last century who excelled at small wars and subsequently in the cauldrons of World War I and World War II were long-serving professionals with extensive field experience and exposure to formal, rigorous schooling. They documented their lessons in our seminal *Small Wars Manual* and taught at our professional educational institutions. They also provided the competent and capable cadres that enabled the successful wartime expansion of the Corps.

As we have in the past, the Corps will tap into today's small wars experiences and preserve the best practices and techniques by updating our doctrine and educational programs. Marines must be able to make critical decisions quickly in the face of great uncertainty. Given the many forms that warfare can take today, it is impossible for first-hand experience to provide the level of expertise necessary to make the best decisions. Given this, the study of military history must act as a surrogate for actual experience. We need to take advantage of

[63] Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace*, Boulder: Basic Books, 2002, p. 252.

those who have gone before us and leverage their experiences. The study of history generates a professional edge.[64]

Conclusion

The conclusion of this work should be the beginning of a continuing study of small wars. This slim volume is obviously not intended to be the definitive word on the subject. It is hoped that it will stimulate additional examination and reflection on the complex phenomena of small wars. The art of successfully conducting small wars cannot be learned from a manual, but rather requires professional reading, thinking, and doing. We must study history, the cultures of the world, and our military profession. With our long legacy of Small Wars experience, to paraphrase T. E. Lawrence, we have no excuse for not fighting them well.[65]

[64] James N. Mattis, "The Professional Edge," *Marine Corps Gazette*, February, 2004, pp. 19-20.

[65] Garnett, pp. 768-9.

APPENDIX A

CIVIL MILITARY OPERATIONS

Small Wars are distinguished from large conventional conflicts in part by the degree to which the commander considers the civil dimension of military operations. Because the political dimension remains paramount in Small Wars, MAGTF and subordinate commanders must focus on civilian considerations in and around the battlespace, instead of solely orienting on the destruction of an adversary's military capacity. In fact, in many Small Wars, the main effort will focus on what are called Civil Military Operations since the civilian populace may be the center of gravity. MCDP 1 acknowledges the need to "consider maneuver in other dimensions as well."[66] In Small Wars, Civil Military Operations may be the most decisive MAGTF "maneuver" in another dimension. Civil Military Operations provide another opportunity to gain or exploit an advantage and accomplish our objectives more effectively.

> **Civil-Military Operations:** "the activities of a commander that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relationships between military forces, governmental and nongovernmental civilian organizations and authorities, and the civilian populace in a friendly, neutral, or hostile area of operations in order to facilitate military operations, to consolidate and achieve U.S. objectives. Civil-military operations may be performed by designated civil affairs forces, by other military forces, or by a combination of civil affairs forces and other forces." Joint Pub 1-02 *DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*

The term Civil-Military Operations (CMO) describes all of the activities that the commander undertakes to gain, maintain, and exploit relations between the MAGTF and civilian populations, organizations, and leaders. There is normally a CMO component to each and every military operation, though the MAGTF resources devoted to CMO will vary with particular operations and even

[66] MCDP 1, *Warfighting*, p. 72.

throughout the phases of operations. Whatever the mission, CMO must be a constant element throughout planning and execution of operations, and not merely an adjunct specialty that occurs before or after hostilities. Effective CMO minimizes civilian interference with, and maximizes support across the range of military operations.

Just as the battlespace has dimensions across the surface, in the air and space, and through time, each and every operation also has a civil dimension. This civil dimension of military operations requires that commanders consider not only the actions of armed forces and irregular troops, but also how these actions effect and are affected by non-combatants in the battlespace. These actions and effects make the task of achieving objectives on the battlefield more or less easy to accomplish, both for us and for our enemies.

The term CMO does not refer merely to operations in which the MAGTF provides support or services to civilians and their governments, such as Humanitarian Assistance efforts. Sometimes, CMO is performed solely to allow the MAGTF commander to apply combat power as efficiently as possible in order to win battles and destroy the enemy's military capabilities. CMO may be employed to isolate the opposing armed force, or to accelerate the MAGTF's maneuver. Thus, CMO may be a critical shaping action designed to support a critical kinetic blow in the campaign. Similarly, CMO is not limited to post-conflict transition efforts. CMO can support every MAGTF effort in each phase of a campaign across the full range of military operations. Consequently, MAGTF staffs must be proficient in the design, conduct and execution of CMO.

Civil-Military Operations and Civil Affairs Forces

Civil Affairs (CA) is a term used only to describe designated personnel and distinct units. CA is neither a mission nor an objective, but the name of particular

units that help the MAGTF commander plan, coordinate, and execute CMO. CMO is not a responsibility assigned solely to dedicated Civil Affairs units or personnel. Instead, many elements of the MAGTF should participate in the planning and execution of CMO, while CA forces bring expertise to each and every MAGTF operation.

Successful Civil-Military Operations

By creating and successfully managing relations between the MAGTF and the wide variety of civilians on the battlefield, the MAGTF commander helps to shape his battlespace. This enables and facilitates his operations, while complicating his enemies' activities. In small wars CMO helps the commander to see, isolate, and finally negate his adversary**,** while meeting his legal and moral obligations to those civilians under his control. CMO is intended to help the MAGTF to win the fight. Several benefits accrue to the commander through successful CMO.

Enhanced Situational Awareness. MAGTF elements conducting CMO contribute to the commander's feel of the battlespace and generate actionable intelligence. Frequent association with civilians, NGO's, and IOs provides information that contributes to the estimate of the situation as well as active operations.

Enhanced Freedom of Action. CMO extends MAGTF operations and maximize their effectiveness to the fullest breadth and depth feasible, by minimizing political, force, and logistics constraints. It does this by making logistics lines of communication, air- and seaports available to the MAGTF, or helping the MAGTF acquire logistics support from the Host Nation. This enhances support to the force and sustains the MAGTF's desired tempo.

Greater Isolation of the Enemy. CMO works to limit the enemy's freedom of action, by turning support of civilian populations away from their cause. CMO minimizes the support given to the enemy by solving problems first, and by helping to win the information fight and the "battle for ideas" that underlies most Small Wars. Our Combined Action Program in Vietnam is an example of a CMO that worked to advantage by eliminating a resource base and sanctuary site in rural villages.[67]

Force Augmentation. Effective CMO adds additional capabilities to the MAGTF commander's toolbox, including those provided by the host nation, other government agencies and NGOs.

Contribution to Decisive Operations. CMO demands the enemy commander consider the relationship between his force and the civil population and may influence his operations. As an enemy force loses the support of the civilian population, they begin to doubt their purpose and lose momentum. As we make the environment less supportive of his actions and objectives, we shape the battlespace and contribute to the "turbulent and deteriorating situation with which he cannot cope."[68]

Types of CMO. The following types of CMO are most often performed by the MAGTF that are relevant to Small Wars**:**

Populace and Resources Control (PRC). PRC involves providing security for the civilian population, denying personnel and materiel to the enemy, mobilizing civil materiel resources, and detecting and reducing the effectiveness of enemy agents. Populace controls include curfews, movement

[67] On assessments of the Combined Arms Program, see also Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, pp. 172-177. The program could have been more effective if cultural training was increased.

[68] MCDP 1, *Warfighting*, p. 73.

restrictions, travel permits, registration cards, and resettlement of villagers. Resources control measures include licensing, regulations or guidelines, checkpoints, ration controls, amnesty programs, and inspection of facilities.

Foreign Humanitarian Assistance (HA). HA encompasses short-range programs aimed at ending or alleviating human suffering. HA is usually conducted in response to natural or man-made disasters, including combat. HA is designed to complement the efforts of the HN civilian authorities or international agencies that have primary responsibilities for providing relief.

Military Civic Action (MCA). MCA involves activities intended to win the support of the local population for the local government. MCA use preponderantly indigenous military forces on projects useful to the local population in such fields as education, training, public works, agriculture, transportation, health and sanitation that contribute to social development.

Nation Assistance Operations (NAO). Nation assistance is civil or military assistance (other than FHA) rendered to a nation by U.S. forces within that nation's territory during peacetime, crises or emergencies, or war, based on mutual agreement. Nation Assistance Operations promote sustainable development and growth of responsive institutions. NAO include, but are not limited to, security assistance, Foreign Internal Defense, and MCA.

Civil Administration. Civil administration support consists of planning, coordinating, advising, or assisting those activities that reinforce or restore a civil administration in friendly or hostile territory. Civil Administration may be undertaken by agreement with a HN which has lost the capacity to carry out its own affairs, or when the MAGTF is directed by higher authority.

The organization for interagency involvement in CMO can take several forms at each level in the chain of command. A MAGTF may establish a civil-military operations center (CMOC) to assist in the coordination of activities between

engaged military forces and the other participants. Establishing CMOCs can be a valuable technique as a focal point for coordination and planning between the MAGTF and a wide variety of external organizations, though it is not where the CA element plans MAGTF CMO. A CMOC is a conduit for the MAGTF, relaying information and recommendations; it is not a command center.

The Commander may elect to task organize his major elements into combined arms teams or Civil Military Operations Task Forces (CMOTFs). When other government assets are available, CMO Interagency Task Forces at the Company or Battalion level may be more appropriate to bring the right assets to bear at the appropriate scale. In recent operations, the employment of Provincial Reconstruction Teams, composed of interagency assets within assigned geographic areas of responsibility has been beneficial for ensuring unity of effort. Once again, organizational agility is a requirement and commanders should encourage innovative approaches in this regard.

In sum, CMO are a component of the MAGTF commander's "single battle," they are not a separate activity. The planning and synchronization of these activities, and the integration within an overall campaign effort, is critical to the successful conduct of Small Wars. Conventional conflicts place a premium on the MAGTF's destructive capabilities. Small wars place increased value on the *constructive* capabilities generated by the conduct of CMO.

APPENDIX B

INFORMATION OPERATIONS

IO involves actions taken to affect an enemy's information and information systems while defending one's own information and information systems in order to achieve specific objectives.[69] The focus of IO is on the individual decision makers and the decision making process. IO is the ability to adversely influence enemy decision making processes while enhancing and protecting our own. Therefore, for IO to be successful, it demands an ability to understand people, cultures, and motivations. In the context of maneuver warfare, IO attempts to disrupt the observe, orient, decision, action (OODA) loop of the enemy, affecting his ability to act by causing the enemy to receive information that is inaccurate, incomplete, or received at an inopportune time.[70]

IO covers the entire spectrum of warfare and is a key capability in small wars. Peacetime IO can be used to influence our adversaries through regional engagement and influence operations to help shape the strategic environment. Additionally, it can be used to impart a clearer understanding and perception of our mission and its purpose. In the pre-crisis stage, IO can help deter adversaries from initiating actions detrimental to the interests of the United States or its allies. Carefully conceived, coordinated, and executed, IO can make an important contribution to defusing crises; reducing the period of confrontation; and enhancing diplomatic, economic, military, and social activities, thereby forestalling and possibly eliminating the need to employ physical force. In the crisis stage, IO can be a force multiplier. During combat operations, IO can help shape the battlespace and prepare the way for future combat actions to accomplish the

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[69] Joint Publication *Information Operations, A Strategy for Peace-The Decisive Edge in War*, Washington, DC: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, March 1999, p. 3.

[70] The Marine Corps applies the basic concept laid out by John Boyd in U.S. Marine Corps, "Information Operations Concept," in *Marine Corps Warfighting Concepts*, for the 21st Century, 1998, pp. IX3-IX18.

MAGTF's objectives. Once the crisis is contained, IO may help to restore peace and order, and allow the successful termination of military operations.

Information Operations Principles

- ***IO is an integral function of the MAGTF.*** Planning for IO is inherent to MAGTF planning and is not conducted by unique IO forces, although some non-organic capabilities such as PSYOP units may assist in planning and executing IO activities.
- ***MAGTF IO is focused on the objective,*** not just enemy forces.
- ***The MAGTF commander's intent and concept of operations determine IO targets, objectives and priorities.***
- ***MAGTF IO must be synchronized and integrated with those of higher and adjacent commands. This integration occurs in two directions.*** Horizontally, MAGTF IO must be coordinated and integrated with strategic and theater-level IO activities. Vertically, MAGTF IO activities have to be integrated with everything else the MAGTF is doing since military operations and actions will also send a message. Rhetoric and action must be integrated to send a consistent message.[71]

Target Audiences.

There may be numerous target audiences for Information Operations as depicted in Figure 1.[72] The MAGTF may target hostile forces and their supporters in a given area with one message. It may be necessary to influence the neutral component of the population to influence them in a positive way to support our allies and coalition partners. Obviously, as previously covered, the impact of each message is dependent upon a very nuanced understanding of current perceptions

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[71] MCWP 3-0.4, *Marine Air-Ground Task Force Information Operations*, Washington, DC: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 2002, pp. 1-3 to 1-4.

[72] Colonel Richard Iron, British Army, used this graph and construct during a presentation on Irregular Warfare at Quantico, VA, 6 Oct. 2004.

and attitudes of the target audience, and the underlying culture. Without an in depth grasp of the basic cultural values, rituals, heroes or symbols of a given culture, it is extremely difficult to tap into and shift the basic attitudes and ultimately the behaviors of the audience.

By operationalizing IO, we can gain the initiative and achieve an informational advantage over our opponents that expertly employs offensive and defensive tactics, techniques, and procedures in order to achieve success. To comprehend the employment of IO, it will be necessary to describe each of the elements of IO as key enabling functions.

IO is the cumulative effect of distinct functions integrated in order to create synergistic effects and act as a force multiplier. These functions, when combined with accurate and timely intelligence, form the basis of IO. The following paragraphs outline the essential components of IO most relevant to the planning and conduct of Small Wars:

Electronic Warfare (EW). Electronic warfare represents the military use of the electromagnetic spectrum and directed energy to manipulate the same in order to defeat enemy systems. EW is a force multiplier and is not limited to just radio frequencies (RF spectrum) but includes optical, acoustical, and infrared emissions as well. Control of the electromagnetic spectrum is gained by protecting friendly systems while exploiting and countering enemy systems. When all EW assets (air, ground, sea, space) are fully integrated into the scheme of maneuver, synergy is

achieved, attrition minimized, electronic fratricide avoided, and decisiveness enhanced. In a small wars context, EW can be used to paralyze an enemy's C2 network. Given the growing sophistication of adaptive networks and their use of modern information technology, this will remain a relevant pillar of IO.

Computer Network Operations (CNO). Computer network operations are activities designed to control or deny the adversary's use of telecommunications and/or computer networks. Network attacks are used to render inoperable or temporarily disable systems or functions without physical evidence of destruction or manipulation. Computer and/or telecommunications attacks aim to influence decisions and perceptions; for example, affecting user confidence, denying data/information exchange, or confusing images or other information. Considering the increasing use of computers by potential enemies and transnational actors, an increasing need to attack these systems in Small Wars, in order to deny their use to the enemy is anticipated.

Psychological Operations. Psychological Operations (PSYOP) is the art of influencing the attitudes, feelings, emotions, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals.[73] It involves operations planned to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences, and can serve as both a combat multiplier and a combat reducer. It can help magnify the impact of combat operations, for example, by convincing enemy forces that defeat is inevitable. It can also help reduce the incidence of combat and save lives. It can be used to convince enemy soldiers to put down their weapons. As Major General Wilhelm, the commander of US Marine Forces during Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, explained, "the PSYOP loudspeaker teams were a combat subtractor…they reduced the amount of

[73] Joint Publication 3-53, *Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations*, Joint Staff, 5 Sept. 2003.

unnecessary bloodshed by convincing Somali gunmen to surrender rather than fight."[74] PSYOP gives military commanders the capability to communicate directly with the civilian population, providing the people with needed information and articulating the United States' side of the story to gain indigenous support.

In Small Wars, PSYOP can be used to:

1. Create dissension, low morale, and subversion within *insurgent forces,* which may shift the loyalty of adversary units or individuals.
2. Attack the legitimacy or credibility of the adversary to the general population.
3. Counter or negate the effectiveness of *the adversary's* propaganda to external audiences and local population.
4. Gain *civilian support* for the host nation (HN) government.
5. Generate a favorable image of the US. among selected *foreign target audiences*, and support for U.S. operations.
6. Reduce support and resources of the adversary's operations among the HN's *civilian population.*
7. Build and maintain the morale of HN *military forces* and sustain their perception that success is assured.
8. Gaining support of *neutral elements* (uncommitted groups) to our side.[75]

The delivery of messages through PSYOP can take numerous forms: face to face communications, loudspeaker broadcasts, radio and television broadcasts, printed materials such as leaflets, posters, booklets, comic books, and newspapers, and modern technology such as cell-phones and e-mails via internet.

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[74] *Psychological Operations in Support of Operation Restore Hope*, United Task Force Somalia, May 4, 1993, p. 6.

[75] Adapted from Joint Pub. 3-53, p. I-12.

In planning PSYOP, several basic elements must be present: a clearly defined mission; analysis of all targets; the evaluation of actions for psychological implications; a reliable medium or media for transmission; rapid exploitation of PSYOP themes; and continued assessment of the results of PSYOP for their relevance to the mission. When integrated into the joint force commander's overall campaign plan, PSYOP can help accomplish the mission by magnifying the impact of the many different things the command is saying and doing. Designed and tailored for a specific target audience, psychological operations must relate to the situation at hand, be used in a timely manner; be projected through the most appropriate media forms, and use the appropriate language.

Related IO Activities

Public affairs and civil military operations, while being military functions, are not elements of IO but are related activities that support IO and require close coordination and integration with the core capabilities. However, the primary purpose and rules under which they operate must not be compromised in the planning process. This will require additional consideration in the planning and execution of IO.

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