

Great progress has been made on the ground by our civilians and our military, who have learned to work together and have adapted in innovative ways to meet these challenges. But for every ingenious adaptation we see in the field, we should ask ourselves - what institutional failure were they trying to overcome? What tools did we fail to provide them?

Our experience in Iraq and Afghanistan reinforces the need to develop better non-military capabilities and processes for integrating civilian and military efforts.

Indeed, the President's Strategy for Victory in Iraq identifies eight "strategic pillars." Only 2 of these 8 pillars (fighting terrorists and training Iraqi Security Forces) rely predominantly on the military. The rest, including promoting good governance, economic development, diplomacy, and rule of law issues, require expertise from the civilian side of government.

This perspective has been repeatedly reinforced by historical experience and "classic" COIN theory. As British General Sir Frank Kitson warned: "the first thing that must be apparent when contemplating the sort of action which a government facing insurgency should take, is that there can be no such thing as a purely military solution because insurgency is not primarily a military activity." French infantry officer and counterinsurgent expert, David Galula, also emphasizes this theme, claiming that counterinsurgency requires an approach that is 80% political, and only 20% military.

Although military personnel in both Iraq and Afghanistan have been engaged in many of these non-military activities, these are not areas in which the military seeks, nor should, take the lead. Military commanders on the ground need the expertise of the other agencies of our government to help them get the job done. In DoD, we believe that the military component should ideally be in support of the broader civilian-led effort, in order to put a particular country on a sustainable, stable trajectory. Coordinating such a civil-military approach to COIN is a difficult task; but our own history demonstrates that it can be done and provides us with useful lessons to help us meet the irregular challenges we face today.

AMERICA has a LONG HISTORY IN COIN

As we approach the task of developing unity of effort in conducting these missions, we should look to our own experiences for insight. Max Boot's bestselling book, *The Savage Wars of Peace*, outlines the long history of U.S. forces in "small wars," from the Barbary Wars in the early 19th century, to 20th century conflicts in the Philippines, the Caribbean and Vietnam. Indeed, for over 200 years, Americans have conducted operations we would today call "irregular war;" but somehow we have lost this historical thread and have failed to institutionalize lessons from this experience. Bruce Hoffman of RAND refers to this American cycle of re-learning in counterinsurgency as a "groundhog day" scenario in which we repeatedly repress these memories and simply revert to basic bureaucratic instincts. We then have to relearn the same lessons over and over again. It is time to reverse that trend.

The re-discovery of the 1940 Marine Corps Small Wars Manual as well as the new Army-Marine Corps Field Manual on COIN are, in part, steps in re-capturing the existing font of historical knowledge. But we still have a long way to go.

A look at past efforts reveals many lessons and a few warnings. I would like to highlight four in particular that I think are relevant today: 1) the importance of unity of effort; 2) the need to overcome bureaucratic inertia; 3) the importance of adaptation and learning and 4) the need for cultural knowledge.

1. Unity of Effort:

One of the most important lessons we can take from our own history in counterinsurgency is the need for unity of effort. Past experience reveals that despite rhetoric expounding the virtues of a clear unified civil-military approach, unified government effort has repeatedly proven to be an elusive goal. Some of the same issues we struggled with in Somalia, Haiti, and the Balkans in the 1990's, and in Iraq and Afghanistan today were debated as far back as 1898 between General Arthur MacArthur and his civilian counterpart in the Philippines, William H. Taft. Experience demonstrates that when faced with this challenge, there is little substitute for leadership.