Friend and/or Foe?

Counterinsurgency and Provincial Reconstruction Team –

The Software and Hardware of Modern Battlefield

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Abstract

The U.S. adaptation to the provoked insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq has led to a new groundbreaking doctrine focusing on this "new" insurgency warfare. Counterinsurgency, or COIN, has become a beacon for Western states battling rogue and disparate insurgents. In the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq, PRTs have been chosen to be on the frontlines in this guerilla war. This study mainly seeks to discern problems and benefits arisen from this usage. My theoretical framework also makes it possible for me to prove the connection between PRT and COIN, and explain why PRTs are even used in campaigns like COIN. I have through the studying of debate, doctrinal thinking and argumentation found both similar and different problems and benefits in the two cases.

Keywords: Counterinsurgency, Provincial Reconstruction Team, Afghanistan, Iraq

Characters: 69990

Table of Contents

Abbreviations

AO	Area of Operation
BCT	Brigade Combat team
COIN	Counterinsurgency
DoD	Department of Defense
FM	Field Manual
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MCWP	Marine Corps Warfighting Publication
MNF-I	Multi National Force-Iraq
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
QIP	Quick Impact Project
RC	Regional Command
R&D	Reconstruction and Development
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

1   Introduction

The old way of conducting war with enormous and powerful armies, to a large degree immobile, is a thing of the past in comparison with today's need for swift movement across the battlefield. The stage for the battlefield has also changed. From the large fields, with much of the confrontations in open terrain, the battle today has been relocated to the urban areas, with fighting amongst the population. This transition, for both sides of a conflict, has neither been frictionless, nor come over night.

The conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq today are characterized as insurgencies. With the use of counterinsurgency (COIN) tactics and strategies, the involved nations, with U.S. as the largest actor in the region, are trying to stabilize the security situation for the population. The need for adaptation to insurgent's way of conducting war has resulted in a doctrinal change for the U.S. troops.

As part of the strategy used in these wars, a measure that has gotten much attention and funding, in both Afghanistan and Iraq, is the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). PRTs are civil-military local efforts in gaining the populations trust and respect, and expanding the reach of the national government,[1] since this trust and respect is the fundamental way of beating an insurgency.

1.1   Purpose

The purpose with this study is to map out the differences in the prerequisites for the use of PRTs as a tool within COIN, with a focus on the use of PRTs by U.S. Forces. By studying the debate, doctrinal thinking and argumentation surrounding the PRT usage I will be able to find possible problems and benefits. The study do not seek to measure the influence PRTs have on the population, or the results they have accomplished, mostly because of the methodological difficulties in measuring peoples affinity and acceptance of a doctrine guided by the notion of *Hearts and Minds*.

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[1] FM 3-24, 2006, 2-12.

1.2 Research Questions

To be able to reach my purpose with this study I need research questions to define and focus the essay's scope.

- *What problems are identified with the use of PRTs as a tool within counterinsurgency strategies in Afghanistan and Iraq?*

- *What benefits are identified in this usage?*

- *In what way has mentioned problems and benefits affected the use of PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq?*

1.3 Method

The use of PRTs has been a proactive effort to mitigate a war with no visible boundaries, and to hand over the control to the national government. To ascertain the true usefulness and importance with the use of PRTs, you need to critically review the problems and benefits. To do this satisfactorily I will put PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq in contrast to each other.

This essay is a descriptive case study of the use of PRTs in two cases, Afghanistan and Iraq. The use of a descriptive method imposes certain requirements to make the study something more than just a referencing of the available material. Mainly two requirements need to be fulfilled in a descriptive case study. First, it has to be based on clear concepts linked to an empirical classification scheme.[2] An empirical classification scheme is another word for the specification of the variables, and their value, regarding you research question.[3] Second, with this classification scheme it should be possible to draw other conclusions apart from those expressed in this study. A third requirement that also can be placed on a descriptive case study is the need to be able to answer the question "a case of what".[4] By answering this question satisfactorily you can merge empiricism with theory.[5] As Afghanistan and Iraq become my units of analysis, my independent variable becomes PRT. With PRT as an empirical classification scheme you can draw other conclusions apart from those I intend on making in this study, as PRT can be seen as a case of COIN strategy.

As I, in my study, select two units of analysis, the comparison between the use of PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq, becomes a part of my descriptive purpose.[6] I

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[2] Esaiasson *et al.*, 2002, p.35.
[3] Teorell, Svensson, 2007, p. 24.
[4] Esaiasson *et al.*, 2002, pp. 35-36.
[5] Teorell, Svensson, 2007, p. 47.
[6] Ibid., p. 26.

will describe, and compare, the problems and benefits arising from the use of PRTs by my units of analysis.

The selection of cases in a descriptive case study is more profitable through a strategic selection, than through random selection.[7]

The reason for choosing a strategic selection in this study, is primarily argued by four factors:[8]

- Select generalizable cases

- Select relevant and significant cases

- Select cases with variation

- Select cases that complement previous results

To avoid getting a distorted result, because of your selection of cases, and not be able to draw any general conclusions, you need cases that aren't too similar. When it comes to selection of cases that are relevant and significant for your study, it is of essential importance that the cases will actually contribute to the study. Which cases will meet these requirements, and why to select them, depend on the context, and is completely dependent on the theory. The reason for selecting cases with variation is both for the survey's more intriguing descriptive conclusions the variation brings to the study, and the promotion of further study when showing a disparity.[9]

The selection of Afghanistan and Iraq, as my two units of analysis, from a perspective of relevance should be motivate. Since PRTs, in its current form, is an innovation in these two cases, their relevance and significance becomes obvious. The cases in my study both have similarities and differences, but the most significant difference that makes up for a good variation is the view on PRTs' achievement. The recurrent pattern in debates and doctrinal discussion over the use of PRTs is that in Iraq PRTs is considered to be a success, whereas in Afghanistan we haven't yet seen this achievement.

There have been earlier attempts in history to integrate a civil-military development campaign with the campaign of COIN. When the British Army during the 1960's was involved in the conflict against the communists in Malaya and Borneo, they used COIN strategies to counter the communist insurgency. By coordinating civil-military activities the British aimed at winning the hearts and minds of the population, in order to deprive the insurgents their base of support. The U.S. pursued a similar endeavor during the Vietnam War with the use of the civil-military tool of CORDS (Civil Operations and Rural Development Support).[10]

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[7] Teorell, Svensson, 2007, p. 150.
[8] Ibid., p. 152.
[9] Ibid., pp. 151-152.
[10] Sidell, 2008, pp. 31-33.

My theoretical framework will be the theory of COIN, through which I can study and describe the emergence of PRTs, and how that concept belongs within the theoretical framework. Why the theory of COIN becomes of interest in this study is its description of how insurgencies work and take their expression, and how to best counter this style of warfare. By using this theory, I can describe and show that PRTs are a tool for conducting COIN.

It is important, and of great interest, to know what similarities and differences the selected cases exhibit, to adequately motivate my selection of cases and strengthen the validity. As a study's problem and questions are generated through a theoretical reflection, and the research is conducted by operational means, the risk of loosing something in the "translation" is always imminent.[11]

The similarity in this study between Afghanistan and Iraq, and the connection to my formulated questions, I think can be found in mainly four areas: (1) the use of COIN strategies and tactics has been shown in the establishment of PRTs in both conflict areas, (2) the significance the PRTs has been given as a leading instrument for the suppression of the insurgency, (3) the insurgencies were a reaction to the invasion by U.S., and is conducted by mostly the same organizations, (4) U.S. has been the most distinctive actor in both conflict areas, including most troops present. Many differences can be found in the local context. For example: the extensive history in Afghanistan of tribalism, local governance by elders, and the experience of conducting war against a powerful opponent during the first Afghan War, makes the country and its population a different setting than in Iraq. In Iraq the then ruling government of Saddam Hussein had been in power since the end of the 70's with a strict dictatorship, and their history has been marked with strong ruling governments. When it comes to the population, Afghanistan has a society made up by mainly four big tribes, whereas Arabs mainly make up Iraq. The religious affiliation within the population is also a distinguishing factor between the two countries. In Afghanistan a large majority is Sunni Muslims, while the Shiite Muslim are dominate in Iraq.[12]

Despite the similarities, and perhaps because of the differences, the use of PRTs has in the debate been argued to show different outcomes. In Iraq the constitutional power and responsibility for security has been transferred to the government, and the only foreign soldiers present in Iraq are those who act as mentors and instructors for the new national security forces. In Afghanistan we haven't yet seen this development.

As I only have access to secondary sources of empirical material, I will conduct a study of literature. And by the character of the research questions it also becomes a study of debate, doctrinal thinking and argumentation about the use of PRTs, how the U.S. perceives what works and what doesn't work in its use. By studying the general debate it will be possible for me to see what processes led to

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[11] Esaiasson *et al.*, 2002, p. 61.
[12] NE, searchword: Afghanistan; Irak, 2011-05-11.

the creation of a new doctrine regarding PRT.[13] Beyond the use of COIN theory, I will also have to look further into the more operational uses of the theory. By looking at the new doctrine, FM 3-24, I will be able to examine what happens in the reality, and what the debate leads to. As I formulated in my purpose I do not seek to, in any way, measure the results PRTs has accomplished, I only seek to follow the discussion about the use of it.

1.4   Empirical Material

The sources used in this study are of secondary character since I don't have the possibility of collecting it myself. The material mainly comes from published literature and articles. The authors of these texts are foremost academics and military personnel. Governments and their branches, like USAID, USGAO and U.S. Army, publish some of the material. Even well known organizations like U.S. Institute of Peace has offered material. ISAF-documentation has also contributed to this study.

As I seek to examine the discussion that has evolved around the use of PRTs, I'm not so worried about biased sources. It is rather the comments and statements articulated by scholars and military personnel that are of interest to me. Obviously you have to have a critical eye towards your sources. But as the available material is vast, I don't think it is going to be a problem to sort out the questionable sources.

1.5   Limitations

In this study I will focus on the use of PRTs by the U.S. The reason for this is: (1) to narrow the study's scope and actually be able to answer my questions, (2) the research conducted on PRTs' usage is mainly done on U.S. PRTs, which gives me a vast assortment of material to choose from, (3) the involvement of United States in the use of PRTs in both Afghanistan and Iraq, and (4) an aspect that falls somewhat out of the scope of this study, my own interest in seeing how you as a superpower handle a situation like Afghanistan and Iraq, where you first are the aggressor and then the protector.

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[13] Åkerman, 1972, p. 18.

1.6   Disposition

I will start by presenting my theoretical framework of COIN, with a review of classical and modern approaches to COIN. Then I will proceed into the operational use of COIN theory, where Kilcullens *Twenty-Eight Articles* and the U.S. doctrine FM 3-24 will be reviewed. This chapter concerning the operational use of COIN will begin with a quick review of the background story of U.S. involvement in the region.

Chapter four reviews the basic of PRTs: its purpose, definition, function and historical background. In chapter five my analysis begins with a description of the theoretical connection between COIN and PRT. Then I move on to look at the PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq. The last chapter portrays my conclusions.

2   Theoretical Framework

To be able to understand the underlying factors for the use of PRTs as a tool within COIN, it's crucial to have an understanding of the theory of COIN. In this theoretical section I will explain the fundamentals of COIN theory, what the best approach to handle an insurgency is, and what pitfalls you want to avoid. As COIN is a reaction to an insurgency, and doesn't exist without an insurgency, I will also have to present the characteristics of an insurgency, and the conflict as a whole.

2.1   Classical Counterinsurgency Warfare – When Bullets Doesn't Cut It

An esteemed pioneer within COIN theory is David Galula. His book, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, will be the base of my theoretical review.

2.1.1   The Guerilla War

Even though assistance and influence from outside actors is common in a guerilla war, the war is mainly an internal conflict. The conflict is a product of action and reaction. The insurgent's actions aim at overthrowing the ruling power and taking it for itself is responded by the counterinsurgent in an effort to keep his power. The result is a guerilla war. Unlike in a conventional war, where any part can start a war, only the insurgent can start a guerilla war. A COIN is only a reaction to an insurgency. It could be fruitful to also bear in mind that an insurgency can start well before any use of force by the insurgent is implemented. Galula is paraphrasing Clausewitz when he is explaining an insurgency and guerilla war: "*Insurgency is the pursuit of the policy of a party, inside a country, by every means*".[14]

   The conflict between the insurgent and the counterinsurgent is characterized as an asymmetrical conflict. The asymmetrical balance of power is the very nature of the conflict, where the counterinsurgent holds all the strength cards while the insurgent has to make do with his scarce resources and assets. But this asymmetrical nature of the conflict has its advantages for the insurgent to. Since

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[14] Galula,1964, p. 1.

he is the only one who can initiate the conflict, he has the strategic upper hand. He is the one who chooses the time and place to make a move. And as he isn't burdened by big and slow military structures, he can swiftly move in and out from government-controlled areas. For the rigid counterinsurgent the dilemma in the protection of the population and the battling of insurgents, makes him unable to apply insurgent-tactics with a loose and primitive organization. There is also a difference in the availability to tangible and intangible sources. While the counterinsurgent, as the ruling power, usually has the legitimate, legislative and judicial power, controls the administration and the police, and has the financial resources to uphold this power, the insurgent has his own assets to tap power from. The power he gets from his ideological cause, on which he bases his actions on, is hard to be surpassed by the government. For the insurgent to be successful in his campaign he has to grow in strength and size. If he does that the counterinsurgent's power and size will decline in direct relation.[15]

In guerilla war the weaker part, the insurgent, can't attack his opponent head on with conventional tactics. He must use a different battleground where he can balance the asymmetrical power situation. The population serves this objective. If the insurgent can turn the population against the counterinsurgent and get them to support his cause, he will win the war. To physically control the population, and have their support, is the ultimate political power. It is among the population the political power is exercised, either through its agreement or its submissiveness. As the control of the population becomes the most important objective for both parties in a guerilla war, the operations conducted is mainly of political essence. This means that the relation between politics and military actions is very much intertwined. You have to make a judgment on the effects a military move have on the political climate. Guerilla war is a slow-forming and protracted war. The asymmetrical situation for the insurgent forces him to takes a long time to build up a sufficient political base and military power to adequately challenge the government.[16]

A factor that should be taken into consideration is the uneven economic expenditures in the two campaigns. In relation to a COIN an insurgency is cheap as it easily can create a disruption in the society. The counterinsurgent that is responsible for upholding the security within the territory has to use large economical resources to be able to prevent an insurgent's actions.[17]

In a guerilla war, the most important tool the insurgent must be able to use is a well-established cause and ideology. Since his cause at the beginning is the only solid thing to his disposal, it has to be powerful enough so he can overcome his initial weaknesses, and start winning over the population. The power of ideology is only a factor in the early stages of the conflict. When fighting has broken out, the focus on the war itself becomes the most important issue, and ideology takes somewhat of a back-seat position. As the war more and more becomes the main

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[15] Galula, 1964, pp. 3-4, 8.
[16] Ibid., pp. 4-6.
[17] Ibid., p. 6.

issue, the popularity for the two parties becomes secondary, as the population now is more concerned for their safety. The population now sides with the part that offers best protection, and is more likely to win the war.[18]

2.1.2 The Insurgency

For an insurgency to even be able to start there has to be a set of favorable conditions for a political opposition to take form. Galula highlights four prerequisites for an insurgency to be successful: *a cause, weakness of the counterinsurgent, geographic conditions*, and *outside support*.[19]

A cause is the starting-point for an insurgency. As the support of the population, in an insurgency, is the main factor in deciding the outcome, you have to, as an insurgent, able to convince the population that it is you they should be supporting. In fact it is quite enough to turn the populations support against the counterinsurgent, thereby neither actively nor passively supporting you. It is through the insurgent's cause that he will gather his followers, and the best cause is the one that will attract the most supporters, and alienate fewest opponents. This puts the cause in a contextualized situation, where the insurgent obviously has to be able to strongly connect with both the cause and the majority of the population, whilst the counterinsurgent preferably should have difficulties in identifying himself with the cause without risking his power. The strength of a cause is also measured by its longevity. Preferably the cause should last throughout the war, but at least until the insurgency has gained enough power to be able to stand without it.[20]

The weaknesses of the counterinsurgent are also something that has to be taken into consideration when assessing an insurgency's capabilities for success. National consensus, the resoluteness for, and knowledge of, COIN warfare, and the machinery available for the control of the population are some factors that are worthy of mentioning when discussing the weaknesses of the counterinsurgent. As an insurgent you have to play the cards you've been dealt. If you're facing a strong counterinsurgent, you are just going to have to wait until he has been weakened by a crisis of some sort. A constant weakness the counterinsurgent always suffers from is the border issue. A country is divided into different provinces etc, this for a more manageable administration for the counterinsurgent, which makes the borderland a matter of confusion for the counterinsurgent when you can move freely across those borders.[21]

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[18] Galula, 1964, pp. 8-9.
[19] Ibid., pp. 11ff.
[20] Ibid., pp. 11-16.
[21] Ibid., pp. 16-23.

The geography is a matter of survival for the insurgency in the early stages. Geographical factors that affect the insurgent's capabilities include location, size, terrain and climate etc.[22]

Outside support is delivered to the insurgency in the form of moral, political, technical, financial or military. The support is usually welcomed as long as it's not received too easily, which could affect the confidence within the insurgency. The support is also needed in varying degree in different stages of the insurgency. At the beginning it is not required, but helpful of course, and when the time comes for a military structure formation to be realized, support of various forms is vital.[23]

2.1.3 The Counterinsurgency

When the insurgency has established itself, as a political organization bounded to a cause, many of the uncertainties gets clearer for the counterinsurgent. The counterinsurgent's enemy becomes clearer, which leads to a more discernable situation as to where the focus of your attention and countermeasures should be aimed.[24]

Four laws accordingly to Galula, govern how to militarily defeat an insurgency. Essential factors that has to be overcome or satisfied, include the obsolete notion of conventional warfare, the importance of gathering intelligence from the population, and the capability of combining strength with fastness.[25]

Galula's first law brings up the importance of the population; *the support of the population is as necessary for the counterinsurgent as for the insurgent*. The goal for a counterinsurgent is to be able to clear an area, hold it, and then leave it without losing it again to the insurgent's. For this to be achievable the population has to be involved. The population has to be willing, and feel safe enough to enter cooperation with the counterinsurgent to expel the insurgent. Much energy, from the counterinsurgent, has to be put in to this work, as the insurgent, with its grass root organization, already has a head start and a stronger connection to the population.[26]

Support is gained through an active minority is the second law. This law considers the question of how to get the population to actively support the counterinsurgent, and help out in the struggle against the insurgent. According to Galula there are in a political power structure three camps: an active minority that supports the cause (in this case the insurgent), a majority that is neutral, and an active minority that supports the other side (in this case the counterinsurgent). By gaining the support of the minority that is in your favor, you can bring the neutral

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[22] Galula, 1964, pp. 23-25.
[23] Ibid., pp. 25-27.
[24] Ibid., p. 49.
[25] Ibid., pp. 50-51.
[26] Ibid., p. 52.

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majority over to your side, and dispose of the minority that threatens you. Every countermeasure and operation the counterinsurgent undertakes has to be adjusted and geared towards this objective.[27]

With these two laws one can already put forward a definition on what is to be considered a positive victory, and what isn't. A true positive victory is when the counterinsurgent manages to defeat the insurgent forces and political organization in an area, and at the same time involve and encourage the population to take a stance against the insurgents. Only when this occurs the counterinsurgent can be confident enough to move on to other areas troubled by insurgents.[28]

The third law, *support from the population is conditional*, highlights the security-issue involved in an area controlled by insurgents. As long as the population feels threaten by the insurgents, they are not going to be willing to take a stance against them. As counterinsurgent you have to conduct operations against the insurgent units and political organizations. An early victory or success is crucial to convince the population that you as a counterinsurgent have the ability, knowledge, and will to deal with the insurgents. If you are to enter negotiations be sure to be in a position of strength (strength here meaning a political organization supported by the population), or else you'll lose potential supporters.[29]

The last law, *intensity of efforts and vastness of means are essential*, raises the nature of the long struggle that a guerilla war is. As counterinsurgent you have to be well aware of the duration of a conflict like this. As earlier mentioned it is a costly warfare, and patience becomes a virtue, as you area by area will try to win over the population by driving out the insurgent.[30]

2.2 Modern Counterinsurgency Warfare – A Globalized Warfare

COIN theory has with the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq evolved tremendously, especially for the American forces. A leading military/scholar expert in the field of COIN today is David Kilcullen. His experiences in the field from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have evolved Galula's classical theory to a modern, up to date, version.

First Kilcullen points to the adaptability of insurgency and COIN, and emphasizes the ability to shift the countermeasures against the insurgencies. In the spirit of Galula, Kilcullen stresses the need to understand the insurgency to be able to understand the COIN.[31]

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[27] Galula, 1964, pp. 53-54.
[28] Ibid., p. 54.
[29] Ibid., pp. 54-55.
[30] Ibid., p. 55.
[31] Kilcullen, 2006, p. 112.

The definition of an insurgency remains the same: "*Insurgency is a struggle to control a contested political space, between a state (or group of states or occupying powers), and one or more popularly based, non-state challengers*".[32]

The classical approach to COIN depicts the insurgent as a competitor to a functioning, yet fragile, state, and a contender to the status quo, whereas the counterinsurgent seeks to maintain his power by destroying the threat. This is still the case in some ongoing insurgencies today, but other variations have also come to light. Today insurgencies can be an effect of a breakdown of the state, and is not always an effort at taking over the power. Insurgencies can also be a historical product, and pre-date the present government.[33]

According to Galula, and the classical theory, it is only the insurgent who can start an insurgency. But as we have seen today, in Afghanistan and Iraq, that is not the case. The insurgency is often a reaction to governments or invading coalition forces start of a campaign. Together with the counterinsurgent's campaign comes often a revolutionary political agenda, which the insurgent wants to undermine to keep the status quo of the ungoverned space, or fight off any occupying forces. This political relation is quite the opposite from that of the classical COIN.[34]

One of the most significant changes in modern time, according to Kilcullen, that has impacted the evolution of insurgency and COIN is the globalization. With the globalization the boundaries of insurgencies has been deleted. The classical vision of insurgency as something that happens within one country, with the two main actors being from within its boundaries, is something of the past. Today the insurgents' organization is transnational with extensive cooperation between them. The insurgency at the same time involves many different competing groups who seek to follow their own agenda, which makes the battlefield more complex and disorganized. Above all the globalization has brought with it new, easier and faster ways for distributing a cause, the most important tool for an insurgent.[35]

Despite the differences between classical and modern insurgency and COIN, there are still similarities. The population is still the main focus for both sides. The insurgents rely on their social networks (village, tribe, political party etc.) to conduct their operations, while the counterinsurgent aims to interrupt the insurgent's control over the networks.[36]

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[32] Kilcullen, 2006, p. 112.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid., pp. 112-113.
[35] Ibid., pp. 113-114, 116, 118.
[36] Ibid., p. 117.

2.3 A Brief Theoretical Discussion

The inspiration and experience behind the classical theory of COIN comes mainly from theorists of the 50's and 60's, many of whom had experienced the warfare first hand. A guiding principle for these theorists, regarding COIN, is: '*a government that is losing to an insurgency isn't being out-fought, it's being out-governed*'.[37]

The development of these theories, during the course of the 20th century, has molded it to a more contemporary model for seeing COIN in the light of a modern society. Joel Migdal's contribution to this development is his focus on the functional, rather than the structural, aspects of guerilla war. As governments is structurally different from the movements of the insurgents, a focus on the functional aspects becomes a better scale for comparing strength and effectiveness of the two parties. Migdal found four functions that any form of government, including the ruling government and the insurgents, has to control in order to have a functioning leadership. *Penetration of society*, *regulation of social relationships*, *extraction of resources* and the ability to *apply those resources to identified group ends*, are all functions that are structurally independent.[38]

Another contribution to the development of COIN theory is Stathis Kalyvas study of the third actor in guerilla war, *the local noncombatant population*. Through an extensive field study he discovered a discrepancy in causality between the assumptions within COIN theory and the reality. The previous assumption: *areas where people support the insurgent's cause, the insurgents are strongest, whereas the government is the strongest in areas where the population has a positive attitude towards the ruling government*, is in reality the opposite. The local population will support the actor that is the strongest in their area, regardless if it's the insurgents or the government, as their main concern is survival. It is the strength that determines the support, not vice versa.[39]

Robert Egnell discusses the aspect of *Hearts and Minds* within the COIN theory, and draws parallels between these operations and the conducting of state-building and SSR. All these types of operations share the same inherent normative guidance. COIN campaigns, state-building and SSR becomes a question of normative thinking when external actors try to impose a Western model, despite local needs and wishes. This is an interesting aspect as the need to recognize the population's influence in a COIN campaign is vital for a definitive success. It is in the end the perceptions of the population that determines who is the insurgent, and who is the counterinsurgent.[40]

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[37] Kilcullen, 2010, p. 149.
[38] Ibid., pp.149-150.
[39] Ibid., pp. 150-151.
[40] Egnell, 2010, pp. 292, 294.

3 Twenty-Eight Articles and FM 3-24 – Counterinsurgency in Action

Both theorists and practitioners have confessed to the difference in counterinsurgency regarding theory and practice.

One of the reasons for the difficulty in fusing COIN theory and practice together is the constant changing of the environment you are working in. Even as we make efforts to try and understand the environment, we unavoidably change it. This makes any "true" knowledge of the environment mere a snapshot of the reality, as the scene in the next instant has changed again.[41]

3.1 Getting Into Context

After the 9/11 attacks on American soil, the U.S. declared a *War on Terror*. The first action in this new war was the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, and the start of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), a month later. As the U.S. with its allies continued to hunt for al-Qaeda terrorists, a new U.S. supported provisional government was installed with the help from UN. To help the new government to establish control, and start rebuilding, the UN mandated the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).[42]

The invasion of Iraq in 2003 by U.S. troops spurred an insurgency when Sunni Arabs mobilized to force the occupying Americans out of the country, and regain the political power. As COIN wasn't a recognized warfare within the U.S. military, conventional warfare tactics was used to counter the insurgency. Despite having deployed 150'000 soldiers on the ground, the inadequacy to counter the insurgents only strengthened the insurgency. Together with a poor strategic knowledge in the White House, the insurgency exploded in early 2004. With the appointment of a new commander of Multi National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) in late June 2004, the situation within the U.S. military started to change. COIN became a strategic goal for the military, and a self-review was initiated. The review revealed a need to focus more on the formation of a national security force, and to make sure the democratization process was carried out. COIN experts also stressed the need to secure the Iraqi borders to cut of outside assistance.[43]

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[41] Kilcullen, 2010, p. 3.
[42] NE, searchword: Afghanistankriget, 2011-05-11.
[43] Malkasian, 2008, pp. 287-288, 290, 294, 296-297.

In 2007 the U.S. launched a new operation known as *the Surge*, in an effort to regain the control of a Bagdad increasingly influenced by insurgents. With approximately 25'000 more soldiers deployed to Iraq, and the new focus of protecting the population, one hoped to turn the security situation. As the surge continued throughout 2007 and 2008 the security environment improved in Bagdad, and started to spread to Iraq in general.[44]

As the U.S. was preoccupied with the difficult situation in Iraq, the security environment in Afghanistan deteriorated.

Since 2003, NATO has been given command of ISAF, who with its new national wide responsibility has become more involved in the war.[45] The lack of long-term strategies and planning before invading Afghanistan and overthrowing the Taliban, gave the insurgents an opportunity to regain its balance. With only 9'000 U.S. troops deployed in 2003, not properly educated in the art of COIN, it took more than five years before it was recognized that the "terrorists" they were hunting, were motivated by the same reasons typically fueling an insurgency. The COIN campaign in Afghanistan has improved from 2003 to 2010, thanks to the implemented strategies and lessons learned from the campaign in Iraq.[46]

3.2 Twenty-Eight Articles

In an effort to try and minimize the gap between theory and practice within COIN, Kilcullen outlines twenty-eight articles that describe how you at company-level should use COIN theory.

Kilcullens twenty-eight articles are divided into five chapters: *Preparations*, *the Golden Hour*, *Groundhog Day*, *Getting short*, and *Conclusion*.[47]

The stage of *Preparation* is before you deploy to a guerilla warzone.[48] Article:

1. *Know you turf.* Get to know the area in which you are going to be operating in. Study the people, culture, religion, history, topography etc. Use every available source to get a good understanding of both your Area of Operation (AO), and area of influence.

2. *Diagnose the problem*. When you have a good understanding of your AO you can start analyzing the problem. With your knowledge you can more correctly discern who the insurgents are, what it is that drives both the insurgents and the population that helps them. In order to reach your goal of winning the population, you have to understand their motivations and problems.

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[44] Malkasian, 2008, pp. 304-305.
[45] NE, searchword: Afghanistankriget, 2011-05-11.
[46] Marston, 2008, pp. 257, 260, 266, 268.
[47] Kilcullen, 2010, pp. 30ff.
[48] Ibid., pp. 30-34.

3. *Organize for intelligence.* To be able to win a war against insurgents you have to have good intelligence, and the fruitful intelligence will come from the population. This makes the operations in counterinsurgency special, since you will collect your own intelligence while on patrol.

4. *Organize for interagency operations.* To conduct a successful counterinsurgency a wide portion of actors has to be involved; civilian, military and local actors. This requires some training in interagency operations and work procedure. In the end it is the civilian reconstruction of the society that will ultimately win the war.

5. *Travel light and harden your Combat Service Support.* To be able to keep up with the swift moving enemy you'll have to lighten your travel pack.

6. *Find a political/cultural adviser.* You will need someone who understands the political and cultural environment. If you can't get a trained person like a diplomat, you have to search in your own ranks. Remember that an adviser shouldn't only be able to understand the environment; he should be able to shape it.

7. *Train the squad leaders – then trust them.* Counterinsurgency is conducted on squad and platoon level. Train your squad and platoon leaders to make intelligent and independent decisions. Then trust them to be able to resolve the mission.

8. *Rank is nothing: talent is everything.* Be sure to make use of the people that counterinsurgency comes naturally for, no matter what the rank says.

9. *Have a game plan.* Before you deploy work out a game plan. Make a mental plan for how you want your mission to unfold. The plan has to be adaptive, as you probably will experience setbacks.

The Golden Hour is the time where you deploy to your AO. The mistakes and successes made here will characterize your whole deployment.[49] Article:

10. *Be there.* The first thing you have to do is to establish your presence. Patrol and make yourself visible for the population. This makes you more contactable, and will help you to build up a network with the locals.

11. *Avoid knee-jerk responses to first impressions.* Don't be too hasty in your interaction when you encounter a dispute of some sort. The dispute can be a product of insurgents, but can also be a tribe issue or even an episode from normal daily life. Be careful not to alienate

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[49] Kilcullen, 2010, pp. 35-41.

yourself from the population by acting to hard and without all the facts.

12. *Prepare for handover from Day One.* Immediately start a hand over folder where you collect you lessons learned and other reports. This will help the ones coming in after your deployment is over.

13. *Build trusted networks.* The building of trusted networks is the key to winning the populations "hearts and minds". To build a reliable network you have to convince the "hearts" of the population that your success is their success, and their "minds" that they can rely on you for protection. You don't have to make them like you, but they must be convinced of that you will serve their best interests.

14. *Start easy.* Don't go after the insurgents the first thing you do. Start off easy to ensure a smooth beginning of your tour, and hopefully you will get some local allies.

15. *Seek early victories.* Seek to get an early victory regardless of its size. Even a small victory will suffice, and it doesn't have to be a victory by arms. Remember to avoid causing collateral damage.

16. *Practice deterrent patrolling.* Use patrolling methods that will keep the insurgents off-balance and deterred from attacking you, and let the population feel safe.

17. *Be prepared for setbacks.* You will experience setbacks in forms of mistakes, people lost, and wrong people killed or detained. You have to be adaptive, go back a step in your game plan, and start over.

18. *Remember the global audience.* The battlefield of today is televised around-the-clock. Have that in mind when you interact with the population, and assume a global audience views everything you say and do. Make use of the media, particularly the indigenous media, and get your message out to the global audience.

19. *Engage the women, beware the children.* Women are a strong point in the social networks. Win them over and you will have access to a large network. At the same time you have to be careful with the children. If you start giving them food and candy the will start gathering around you, and your safety will become compromised.

20. *Take stock regularly.* Start collecting information that will help you see trends over time, which will tell you the true progress of your mission. The information can consist of social, economic, military issues.

Groundhog Day is the stages where you settle in to your AO, and will begin the phase where you will be most productive.[50] Article:

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[50] Kilcullen, 2010, pp. 41-45.

21. *Exploit a "single narrative".* Within the society you can find people who have an influence on the public opinion, and who can mobilize the population. Take advantage of this, and offer an alternative narrative to that of the insurgents. One that excludes the insurgents.

22. *Local forces should mirror the enemy, not ourselves.* It is not fruitful to train the local security forces into an image of a military structure. The indigenous security forces should instead take after the insurgents, to that extent that it should move swiftly and travel light, but with the exception of the insurgents have the ability to call for military help. To link these security forces to a local trusted network is a big step towards driving the insurgents out of the AO.

23. *Practice armed civil affairs.* Counterinsurgency is not only a military endeavor, but to equal extent a civil affairs operation. This makes the interagency cooperation an important factor in rebuilding a society free from insurgents. As the humanitarian help increases, so does the threat against them. This will expand your role as a security enforcer, not only to include the population, but also the humanitarian assistance personnel.

24. *Small is beautiful.* Keep the programs small. Often when you try to repeat a successful small program on a larger scale, it doesn't have that impact. A success in a program has much to do with the local context, something that varies from AO to AO.

25. *Fight the enemy's strategy, not his forces.* When you push the insurgents too far they will be turning to offensive measures. Don't fall for the temptation of confronting the attacks with the hope of destroying them for good. Instead keep doing your business of driving their influence out of the population.

26. *Build your own solution – only attack the enemy when he gets in the way.* Stick to your game plan, and do not get distracted by insurgents trying to trick you into damaging your connection to the population. Your solution should focus on an environment-centric approach.

As you are *Getting Short* of your deployment you have to keep your focus, and continue with the operation and projects. Add to this a new important article:[51]

27. *Keep your extraction plan secret.* To not give the insurgents a chance to strike a major blow to your doings and recapture the population, keep your extraction plan a secret.

Conclusion is the compilation of all before, and serves as the final wisdom in countering an insurgency:[52]

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[51] Kilcullen, 2010, p. 46.
[52] Ibid., p. 48.

28. *Whatever else you do, keep the initiative*. Get the insurgents to react against you, and you will be the one who controls the environment, and in the end will win the war. The initiative together with the goal of winning the population will ensure you the final victory.

3.3   FM 3-24

At the time of 9/11, the military structure of United States was going through a change in its doctrine. As Bush and Rumsfeld were transforming the agenda of U.S. involvement in foreign affairs, the terrorist network of al-Qaeda was changing the premises for the whole battlefield. The Quadrennial Defense Review that was released three weeks after the attack didn't mentioned anything about the need to adopt counterinsurgency strategies. After the overthrow of the Taliban the U.S. government relied on the new Afghan government to restore peace and security in Afghanistan, while the White House saw itself to have fulfilled its commitments.[53]

The White House was working under the assumption that Afghanistan would become a peacekeeping mission, but NATO forces weren't turning up in enough numbers, and the new regime's weaknesses were too severe to take control over the territory.[54]

With the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the U.S. was now engaged in two wars. With the quick overthrow of Saddam's regime, thoughts about the new adaptive environment on the battlefield had a hard time gaining ground. But the worsening security situation in Afghanistan during this time prompted a change of minds within the White House. The need for a quick rethinking, more in tune with the new threats, became more imminent as Iraq was starting to follow in Afghanistan's footsteps. Despite this reorientation in focus, enforced by the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan and Iraq, it would take another year before the Department of Defense (DoD) started using COIN as a countermeasure.[55]

In December 2006, a breakthrough in the COIN discussion came when the new military doctrine FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5, named *Counterinsurgency*, was published. The new doctrine made a great contribution in mainly three areas.[56]

Firstly, the manual stressed the need to deploy a substantial number of ground troops to be able to conduct COIN operations. Secondly, it recognized the need for the U.S. military to devote it self to the whole branch of tasks included in COIN. The soldiers shouldn't only be prepared to fight a war, but also to build up

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[53] Ucko, 2009, pp. 54-57.
[54] Ibid., p. 58.
[55] Ibid., pp. 59, 63.
[56] Ibid., p. 109.

a new country. Thirdly, the doctrine took to note the full complexity that COIN entailed with it. It expressed the importance to see the operation as a protracted challenge.[57]

A very successful aspect of the field manual was the expressed paradoxes describing the kind of operation COIN is. The paradoxes could in a simple way explain the differences between the U.S. military's old ways of conducting combat and the new COIN tactics and strategies. The complexity, and need for adaption, was explicitly expressed in '*If a Tactic Works this Week, It Might Not Work Next Week; If It Works in this Province, It Might Not Work in the Next.*'[58]

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[57] Ucko, 2009, pp. 109-111.
[58] Ibid., p. 111.

4   Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan and Iraq

PRT is an adaptive tools that forms after the surrounding. But it still has some core beliefs on what to achieve. Its definition, purpose and function will be reviewed in this section along with the PRT background and evolution in Afghanistan and Iraq.

4.1   Definitions, Purpose and Function

PRTs saw daylight in 2002 when the U.S. was first to use it in OEF after the invasion of Afghanistan.[59]
    The USGAO has formulated a description on U.S.-led PRTs:

>   *"U.S.-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) are designed to help improve stability in Afghanistan and Iraq by increasing the host nation's capacity to govern; enhancing economic viability; and strengthening local governments' ability to deliver public services, such as security and health care. PRTs are a means of coordinating interagency diplomatic, economic, reconstruction, and counterinsurgency efforts among various U.S. agencies in Afghanistan and Iraq."*[60]

    The reason for integrating civilian and military actors in one unit, like the PRT, is its assumed effect it will have on the ground when trying to win over the population and its political support.[61] The military aspect will be able to go in to unstable and insecure areas, and with the help of its civilian components, like diplomacy and development, stabilize the area.[62]
    The basic skill a PRT must possess is the ability to assist in all areas of interest for the development of a provincial governing structure. This requires cooperation of many actors ranging from military and civilian, to leaders of tribes and

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[59] Abbaszadeh *et al.*, 2008, p. 5.
[60] USGAO, 2008, p. 1.
[61] Stapleton, 2007, p. 3.
[62] ISAF Handbook, 2009, p. 8.

religious organizations. PRTs consist of soldiers, diplomats and civilian experts in fields such as development, SSR and reconstruction.[63]

Despite the civil-military interagency aspect of PRT, it isn't in itself an institution for combat or development.[64] The conducting of activities that fosters stability is not just for the sake of developing Afghanistan or Iraq. Its usefulness in the COIN campaign, as a means for turning the population against the insurgents, is the primary purpose for PRTs.[65] Its contribution as a tool for the COIN campaign in reaching the desired end-state of a stable and secure country is of critical importance. To reach this goal, the PRT has to be involved in all aspect of the society within its province.[66]

4.2   Background

In January of 2003, the first PRT was established in the town of Gardez in eastern Afghanistan. The reason for establishing PRT was the assumption that an expansion of the government's reach would foster and strengthen the security. Despite the confidence in PRT, there didn't exist a strategic plan describing how to reach this objective.[67] A released document from the U.S. Embassy in Kabul in February 2003 set up three objectives for the PRTs: extend the reach of the Afghan government, foster a secure environment, and further reconstruction. Unfortunately the document didn't solve the problem with a lack of central coordination, which led to a free interpretation of how to reach the objectives, an interpretation that was influenced by the local environment and the national priorities of the assisting nations.[68]

NATO took command over ISAF in August 2003, and the UN expanded the ISAF mandate in October. Between the years 2003-2006, eight PRTs was established by ISAF, whereas the U.S. OEF established 17 PRTs that were transferred to ISAF control, who in October of 2006, had command over all PRTs in Afghanistan. Of the 26 PRTs established in Afghanistan, U.S. has, as of May 2008, responsibility for twelve, ten in Regional Command (RC) East, one in RC South and West respectively. Although ISAF has the operational command over all the PRTs in Afghanistan, it is the individual participating nations that lead the PRTs and decides how to structure it when it comes to staffing and provincial focus.[69]

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[63] Drolet, 2006, p. 4.
[64] ISAF Handbook, 2009, p. 8.
[65] Malkasian, Meyerle, 2009, p. 6.
[66] ISAF Handbook, 2009, pp. 8-9.
[67] Stapleton, 2007, pp. 1-2.
[68] Perito, 2005, p. 2.
[69] USGAO, 2008, pp. 1-4.

PRTs in Iraq were first established in 2005 as a step in the mission to strengthen the effective governing capacity of provincial and local governments, and to support the military's work in COIN. To better coordinate the work between MNF-I, DoD and State Department, PRTs were established. Of the 31 PRTs established in Iraq, U.S. has, as of August 2008, responsibility for leading 28.[70]

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[70] USGAO, 2008, pp. 1-2, 4.

5   Analysis

Before we take a look at the PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq I feel a need for explaining how I look at the connection between the use of PRTs and COIN theory. How PRT can be seen as a tool in a COIN campaign.

5.1   Why Use Provincial Reconstruction Teams? – The Theoretical Connection

As the theory of COIN emphasizes, the warfare of insurgency and COIN is mainly a political struggle. The defeat of the insurgent's cause and political subversion is the main goal for a counterinsurgent; the direct fighting against the insurgents is secondary. As politics are the decisive factor in guerilla war, the winning of the population's support, their hearts and minds, is crucial for a definitive victory. For the counterinsurgent this is achieved through the improvement of people's lives, usually achieved through development programs and security improvements.[71] But the end-focus is still a military victory: "*Hearts and minds activities are primarily conducted to achieve military objectives rather than to achieve development or humanitarian aims. In Afghanistan most of these tasks are performed by the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)*"[72]

By designing a contemporary doctrine and applying it in the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq, the counterinsurgents have been able to shift an outdated conventional warfare thinking into a modern train of thought. In this doctrine, the PRTs have become the counterinsurgents "choice of weapon". With the PRTs role as a promoter of local governance and empowering of the population by interaction with leaders and civilians, the ideas of COIN theorists like Galula, Thompson and Kilcullen have been put to good use.[73]

In COIN operations a close relationship between civilian and military actors is required to get a greater effect on the ground. PRTs have been incorporated into the U.S. COIN doctrine, as a tool for using in both information and combat operations. Even though this civil-military unit to a large extent is the result of a theoretical discussion about the nature of modern high-intensity conflict, its

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[71] Sidell, 2008, p. 32.
[72] Egnell, 2010, p. 289.
[73] Sidell, 2008, pp. 33-34.

application in post-conflict situations has become a key feature in COIN strategy.[74]

The phrase 'unity of effort' has become a fundamental issue within the contemporary COIN doctrine. The phrase stresses the importance of reaching a unified vision of what needs to be done, and how it should be achieved. The chapter in the FM 3-24 devoted to this issue states that in order to address the underlying causes for the insurgency, it is societal programs, like political and economic reforms, that often brings more value to development, and should receive more focus than conventional military operations. PRTs are the leading actor in conducting military, political, economic, and civic operations. The military aspect of PRTs is to conduct these operations where civilian actors can't go.[75]

According to the manual, and in line with the theory, the counterinsurgent with his PRTs should have the well being of the population in mind in every aspect of their operations. One could say that: "*the recovery stage of COIN operations reads like an operational mandate for the PRTs*"[76]

Undoubtedly, there exists an interrelationship in the evolution of PRTs and the new military COIN doctrine. Today, PRTs and its activities are seen as a part of the U.S. COIN doctrine.[77]

5.2 Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan – Usage, Problems and Benefits

Commentators say that the U.S. usage of PRTs has become the: "*primary tool for using large-scale reconstruction to improve security in Afghanistan; the executors of the softer side of counterinsurgency.*"[78]

The U.S.-led PRTs stresses the importance of legitimate governance, force protection, and, in the effort of "winning hearts and minds", development projects with a quick impact.[79]

The focus and objective of PRTs in Afghanistan, according to NATO, are mainly directed towards three tasks: the facilitation for the Afghan government to expand its reach across the provinces, help in the development of a secure Afghan environment, and assist in SSR and other reconstruction efforts.[80] This coincides

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[74] Sidell, 2008, p. 37.
[75] Ibid., p. 38.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid., p. 39.
[78] Malkasian, Meyerle, 2009, p. 1.
[79] Perito, 2005, p. 1; Eronen, 2008, p. 14.
[80] Runge, 2009, p. 11.

with the general vision for PRT objectives in the FM 3-24; *pursue SSR, build local governance, execute reconstruction and development.*[81]

Of these three objectives, strengthening the Afghan government, through support in provincial governance, has been the primary focus for U.S. commanders. Both problems and benefits have arisen from this focus. A significant problem has been the question of legitimacy for the local leaders. Often have the PRTs supported local leaders, like old warlords or military commanders, which often has a disputed loyalty and interests and agendas of their own. The PRT support has thereby only enabled these leaders to distance themselves even more from the central government, which in turn has affected the local populations perceptions of the PRTs activities. On the more positive side, the PRT was instrumental in promoting the elections in 2003. By conducting information campaigns they managed to get a strong turnout.[82]

Despite the proclaimed importance of establishing a secure environment, the PRTs security role isn't extended to involve more than the protection of its on troops. No responsibility for the protection of Afghan civilians, UNAMA personnel or other NGO personnel is taken. Neither do the teams concern themselves with enforcements missions, counter-narcotics or the tracking of insurgents.[83]

This security attitude has raised tensions between the PRTs and the "unprotected" people working in the same areas. Not being mandated to protect relief workers in insurgent contested areas only helped the insurgent's strategy of driving out the agencies being there to help the civilians, and in the same process undermine the central government's legitimacy in fulfilling its promises of security. The PRTs have also been characterized as understaffed and small units, often not large enough to regularly patrol its area of responsibility. Its small size has also made them vulnerable, which has forced them to often reside in military compounds, naturally affecting the contact to the population.[84]

Despite these shortcomings, PRTs have actually been a contributing factor, by its mere presence, in establishing a secure environment. U.S. forces have been viewed as a source of security amongst most Afghans. This relationship of trust and willingness to discuss security issues, together with an active patrolling, has resulted in trusted networks that produce viable intelligence on insurgents. The PRTs have made its largest contribution in SSR through its training and assistance of local security forces.[85]

To demonstrate goodwill in reconstruction efforts the PRTs used Quick Impact Project (QIP) to foster a permissive attitude towards their presence. When it came to the construction of buildings, the PRTs often lacked local knowledge and were pressured by higher authority to show progress. This resulted in

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[81] FM 3-24, 2006, 2-12.
[82] Perito, 2005, pp. 6-7.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid., pp. 7-8.
[85] Ibid., pp. 8-9.

reconstruction efforts not correspondent with the Afghan need. The reconstruction efforts by the PRTs also raised criticism from different organizations involved in the Afghan reconstruction and development (R&D). The criticism stemmed from the fact that U.S. had military combat units present in Afghanistan, conducting war efforts. To also be involved in R&D would distort the public's view of neutral relief workers. It was also emphasized that the soldiers in the PRTs weren't trained to conduct development projects.[86]

The view towards R&D within PRT shifted when USAID were incorporated into its structure. Now, the early "Hearts and Minds" projects are reserved to more insecure areas where other organizations often can't be present. In areas were NGOs can operate, the PRTs will focus on building infrastructure.[87]

At the start PRTs were to be established in possible insecure provinces where local conflict could flare up or areas where they could serve a COIN purpose. This means that PRTs as of today have been established to operate in combat zones. There is a big difference in how the PRTs interpret their military role. Depending on the size of area of responsibility, troop density and security environment, the military feature of PRTs vary significantly. This is evidence of the complex and varying environment in which PRTs operate.[88]

The most significant difference between PRTs is the leading nations attitude towards their use in reconstruction. Originally, PRTs were regarded to only perform QIP that would meet the most imminent needs amongst the population, in areas where relief workers couldn't operate.[89] As NATO took command over ISAF an increase in PRT variations occurred as responsible PRT nations brought its own agendas and list of caveats from their home government. This plenitude of contributing actors made it difficult to agree on a set of objectives and a common mandate for all PRTs.[90]

In regards to U.S.-led PRTs it should be mentioned that most of them operate in provinces in RC South and RC East, in the borderland to Pakistan. It is in these parts of Afghanistan that the insurgents are the strongest, exercise most influence over the population, and conduct attacks on a regular basis. This results in a scarce presence of NGOs, which has most certainly led to an assumed role by the U.S. PRTs of a larger R&D role. However, the U.S. PRT model has from the outset been focused on reconstruction through QIP as a tool for winning over the population's support, the main goal in a COIN campaign. This strategic choice to use PRTs as tools in the COIN campaign has faced criticism from many actors within the NGO community.[91]

An overall criticism against the PRT program is its controlling from the lead nations home government. Instead of being controlled and coordinated by a

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[86] Perito, 2005, p. 10.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Eronen, 2008, pp. 13-15.

[89] Ibid., p. 11.

[90] Stapleton, 2007, pp. 38-39.

[91] Eronen, 2008, pp. 17-18.

central Afghan agency, PRTs have become models of Western governments own interest in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.[92]

5.3   Provincial Reconstruction Team in Iraq – Usage, Problems and Benefits

The usage and structure of PRTs in Iraq differs somewhat from that in Afghanistan. There have been many lessons learned from the use in Afghanistan.[93]

The PRT mission in Iraq is to:

> "[A]ssist Iraq's provincial governments with developing a transparent and sustained capacity to govern, promoting increased security and rule of law, promoting political and economic development, and providing provincial administration necessary to meet the basic needs of the population."[94]

With President Bush's new plan in 2007 a new kind of PRT was established. These new *embedded* PRTs (ePRTs) would be incorporated into Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs). Out of the 28 PRTs under U.S. responsibility, 13 are embedded into BCTs. PRTs are generally staffed with fewer personnel and a larger percent civilian, than those in Afghanistan. While the remaining PRTs are led by civilians,[95] the new ePRTs will act under military structures and work towards an accelerated transition to Iraqi self-reliance. According to the new plan embedded PRTs are to: "*bolster moderates, promote reconciliation, support counterinsurgency operations, foster development, and build the capacity of Iraqi government officials to perform their duties*". Their goal is to create a space in which the moderates can exercise their political work, and where the violence from extremist can be subdued. The ePRTs will operate as one team and have an emphasis not so much in building up infrastructure, as in framing a viable political environment.[96]

From lessons learned in the establishment of the PRT program, the new ePRTs are modified to overcome those initial problems. When it comes to objectives that the PRTs are to accomplish, there doesn't exist any formal guidance. No joint game plan or framework for operations has been produced by the involved agencies. There is not even an agreement regarding areas of responsibility in the civil-military relationship. A memorandum of November 2006, from DoD and

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[92] Marston, 2008, p. 275.
[93] Drolet, 2006, p. 13.
[94] Perito, 2007, p. 3.
[95] Eronen, 2008, p. 6.
[96] Perito, 2007, p. 2.

State Department, eased some of these concerns, but there still remain unresolved problems regarding these issues.[97] As in Afghanistan, PRTs in Iraq focus on three functions for reaching their goals: governance, security and reconstruction.[98]

The strengthening of the provincial government, as the authority has been decentralized, is the PRTs' main focus. The lack of security throughout Iraq makes the operations of the PRTs harder to conduct, and affects the building of local governance especially hard. Often is the contact with the population hard to establish since they are unwilling to be seen with U.S. personnel.[99]

The PRTs provide security throughout Iraq by being visible. The PRTs are not combat units, and does not conduct military operations. Their security role is the protection of own forces.[100]

The security environment also hinders the ability to conduct reconstruction efforts. It becomes harder to motivate economic development to business owners, local leaders and investors, when it's hard to ensure their safety. Their role in the reconstruction section is only of coordination, not implementation.[101]

Furthermore, the PRTs have many structural problems to deal with. The lack of sufficient personnel is a common feature of most PRTs, which affects the efficiency. The frequent change in personnel also affects the PRTs, as it often comes with a new direction in objectives and programs to achieve. The successors often have to rely on their own expertise, as an overlapping in deployment is rare, which results in projects being stopped and other start before they are completed, which in turn causes confusion among the population.[102]

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[97] Perito, 2007, p. 3.
[98] Ibid., p. 7.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid., p. 8.
[101] Ibid., pp. 8-9.
[102] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

6　Conclusions

In our modern world, the need for a coordinated and integrated cooperation between civilian and military capabilities, in rebuilding a post-conflict state, has increasingly been recognized. Despite the somewhat common view that both capabilities are required for a successful result, the schisms between the civilian and the military communities seems hard to get rid of. The military answer to this altercation has been to convert part of its organization to include non-military activities like reconstruction and development. The military community has taken responsibility for conducting activities that civilian organizations previously have had exclusive right to, which has given rise to criticism, mainly from the civilian community, that soldiers do not possess the necessary skills to conduct these activities adequately. Provincial Reconstruction Teams have become the centerpiece in trying to fuse together these civilian and military components into a functioning tool in COIN campaigns. What problems and benefits have emerged in this use of PRTs as a tool within COIN strategies, in the context of Afghanistan and Iraq?

The insurgency that sparked up in Afghanistan, and later in Iraq, as a result from the invasion by U.S. troops, was after a while recognized for what it was, and countermeasures where taken accordingly. The U.S. doctrinal shift from a focus on conventional warfare to that of counterinsurgency gave birth to the PRT. With a recognized need within counterinsurgency to win over the population, their *Hearts and Minds,* in order to quell the insurgents once and for all, PRTs were viewed as a tool for achieving this objective. The use of PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq has both contributed to the overall goal of stabilizing the countries, and hampered the progress towards this goal.

　　The U.S.-led PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq have suffered from somewhat same problems, despite being different regarding usage and structure. A common feature of the PRT structure is its lack of a clear strategy from the start. When PRTs were established no expressed strategy or guidance on how to reach the objectives were formulated. This absence has led to own, differing, interpretations by the involved nations, which in turn has affected the population by making them confused over the purpose of PRT. Despite having learned this lesson in Afghanistan, the PRTs in Iraq have suffered from same lack of strategy from the start. This problem has in both cases affected the interaction with the civilian aspect of the PRTs. Since no clear mandate were formulated in the beginning it was hard to decide what efforts were to be conducted by civilian or military personnel. The need to reach a *unity of effort*, proclaimed in FM 3-24, became harder as no guidance in how to reach this were formulated. A good relationship to the population is of vital importance, especially in a COIN campaign, but the

relationship, coordination and interaction within the camp of the counterinsurgent becomes equally important if you are to portray a *unity of effort*, and win the populations *Hearts and Minds*. Another common feature of the PRT program in Afghanistan and Iraq is the staffing issue. What seems to be an inherent problem with PRTs is its lack of capable and sufficient personnel. This makes the PRT program counterproductive as a tool for COIN operations. As Kalyvas explained, the population's support follows strength, which makes the PRT personnel issue a significant problem. *The Surge* in Iraq, in 2007, served as an effort in trying to mitigate this problem, and it gave results.

The priority scheme for the PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq has been the same. The largest focus has been on improving the government's legitimacy and reach. On this objective the PRTs in Afghanistan has been more troubled with the question of legitimacy, although this concern also has been present in Iraq. The lack of legitimacy has impeded on the PRTs mission to connect the government with its population. The security issue has, in regards to a COIN perspective, been undervalued. Both in Afghanistan and Iraq the security role of the PRTs haven't been extended to include more than force protection. The protection of the population hasn't been mandated. The PRT program, in both cases, has relied on their mere presence as a provider of a secure environment for the population. According to commentators it has been somewhat successful in both Afghanistan and Iraq, as SSR has been the PRTs largest contribution to the security issue. QIP has been the PRTs choice of activity in their reconstruction efforts. These projects aim at establishing quick and visible results to be able to convince the population of its usefulness.

One clear distinction between the objectives for PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq is the program's outspoken objective of supporting COIN operations in Iraq. This clarifying of COIN purpose weren't put forward in Afghanistan until the new doctrine was implemented. And even after the doctrine's implementation the connection between COIN and PRTs were only established in the manual, not in the Afghanistan PRT mandate.

Despite it not being an outspoken objective of the PRT program, you can within the structure and use of PRTs discern both correlations and discrepancies with Kilcullens *Twenty-Eight Articles*.

When the PRT program was first initiated in Afghanistan in 2003, the U.S. armed forces didn't recognize the insurgency being conducted. This meant that the *preparation* phase weren't being used. The mental preparation before entering a COIN campaign weren't performed. As the U.S. has learned its lessons this phase has gotten more attention by the soldiers on the ground and the PRT program, but still issues remain. The difficulty in getting capable leaders that understands the concept of COIN to serve in the PRTs has impacts on the whole *preparation* phase. As evidenced from the PRTs inability to meet the populations real need in the provinces also proves the shortcomings in recruiting political/cultural advisers.

The mandated security role of the PRTs has affected the contact to the locals. Many of the articles emphasizes the need to provide a secure environment for the population in order to be able to extract intelligence out of them, intelligence that

is crucial to defeat the insurgents. This trust building can be hard to achieve if you're only mandated for force protection. In regards to intelligence gathering the PRTs have recognized the importance of building trusted networks, just as Kilcullen suggests, in their interaction with local and international organizations. Kilcullen recognizes the need for the armed section of PRTs to protect the civilian one in order for them to be able to adequately perform their tasks. As we have seen this has been an issue of controversy, as relief workers feel more insecure when being "followed" around by soldiers. Again the interagency issue becomes the dividing question within PRTs when it comes to conducting military COIN operations in the name of reconstruction.

The complexity factor in insurgency and COIN has been recognized by the PRTs who understand the need to have local solutions to their provincial problems. They are well aware of the paradox *what works in one province might not work in another*. Although the discrepancy between the lead nations home governments attitude to R&D have somewhat served this purpose, it has also served as an obstacle when not all have the same attitude towards COIN; its use, need and connection to civilian reconstruction.

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