The Intelligence Community in Counterinsurgency:

Historical Lessons and Best Practices

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Historical Lessons and Best Practices

Andrew C. Albers

Samuel G. Binkley

Mariam F. Chaudhry

Kimberly Craswell

Jordan S. Freeman

Carrie E. Lytle

Tristan L. Myers

Rami Naser

Peter T. Sloan

The recently updated counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine for the U.S. Army (FM 3-24) includes a lengthy discussion of the role of intelligence in COIN, but does not give the U.S. intelligence community useful guidelines for operations.[1] Instead, the field manual provides an all-inclusive laundry list of information to be collected without any useful guidance on priorities and methods. The manual acknowledges the crucial role of the intelligence community in COIN, but leaves out an actionable set of standards to guide its operations.

To lay the groundwork for an intelligence doctrine, or a set of best practices, for COIN, this report reviews the literature on both the role of intelligence and how counterinsurgency operations are fought and won. We use this literature to create a framework outlining how

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[1] U.S. Department of the Army and U.S. Marine Corps, *Counterinsurgency,* FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007).

intelligence operations can contribute to counterinsurgencies. To draw lessons from the framework, we apply it to six COIN case studies: The Philippines (1899-1902), Malaya (1948-1960), Algeria (1954-1962), Vietnam (1964-1975), Afghanistan (1979-1989), and Northern Ireland (1969-1998). Case selection was based on variation on important characteristics, such as COIN success or failure, intelligence methods, geography, and time period. From these analyses, a series of best practices are drawn in order to facilitate further discussion and debate on the role of intelligence in COIN.

We found that collection and analysis at the strategic level should focus on identifying the motives of the insurgent groups, obtaining information from a cross section of the population, reevaluating the COIN strategy, and coordinating intelligence gathering and sharing. Failure to consider motivations has left policymakers unprepared to combat an insurgency. Often, strategic failures can be linked to an overemphasis on collection from certain samples of the population. When the intelligence community neglects to collect information from a cross section of the population, the resulting analyses are often misleading. The intelligence community also has the responsibility to reevaluate the COIN strategy as the campaign progresses. When the strategy is not having the policymakers' desired effects, the intelligence community needs to warn them so the strategy can be adapted. The intelligence community should also coordinate its efforts to avoid wasting resources through redundant efforts and operations interfering with one another.

At the operation level, we found that intelligence efforts can be aided by decentralizing collection and analysis efforts, coordinating regional efforts, focusing on logistics rather than personnel, considering the costs of interrogations, and using human intelligence to direct technical collections. Decentralization of collection efforts has aided the intelligence community by allowing it to adapt to local circumstances. As intelligence efforts become increasingly

decentralized, coordination of those efforts becomes more important. In order to avoid intelligence hoarding, the intelligence community needs to foster trust and communication across agencies. Identifying and monitoring logistics, rather than personnel, assists policymakers in disrupting and defeating the insurgency's ability to continue fighting. The intelligence community should also consider the costs of interrogation methods before they are implemented. While harsh interrogations can provide useful operation intelligence, there are often strategic costs, such as the loss of public support. Finally, technical collections can be made more effective when directed by human intelligence, because human intelligence can tell the intelligence community where to focus imagery and signals intelligence. Human intelligence can also provide information about context, which technical collections are unable to provide.

In covert action, we found that information operations should be credible and targeted at specific actors, local paramilitary groups can be useful when directed by intelligence personnel, and covert action should be driven by intelligence, particularly human intelligence. Information operations are most effective when they target specific individuals or groups to break them away from the insurgency. This is made more effective by using credible information. When paired with intelligence personnel, local paramilitaries can be successful at neutralizing local insurgent groups and collecting local intelligence. Lastly, covert action is most effective when driven by intelligence, particularly human intelligence. This allows the intelligence community to have a greater effect on specific individuals, groups, and areas.

The Counterinsurgency Literature: Keys to Success

To understand the role of intelligence in counterinsurgencies, it is important to first understand what a counterinsurgency is. FM 3-24 defines counterinsurgency as "military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat an insurgency."[2] An insurgency, on the other hand, is defined as "an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict."[3] These definitions are most likely left so broad because of the complexity and variation inherent in insurgencies around the globe. Countless factors, such as population support, external support, terrain, grievances, and culture, all combine to create unique scenarios that are often difficult to fit into a single, coherent definition.

For now, FM 3-24 guides the U.S. Army's when conducting COIN campaigns. This document, however, is only one of many existing strategies for COIN. Although there is a rich debate in the COIN literature about the best strategy to defeat an insurgency, adjudicating that debate is not the goal of this report. Instead of focusing on the correct strategy to defeat an insurgency and the role of the intelligence community within that strategy, we drew a set of nine specific goals that the literature identified as a crucial to success in counterinsurgencies.[4] We look at goals because we want to understand the kinds of contributions the intelligence community can make to different COIN goals.

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[2] Ibid., 2.

[3] Ibid.

[4] The COIN pathways were primarily influenced by FM 3-24; Ian F.W. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies: Guerrillas and Their Opponents Since 1750* (London: Routledge, 2001); James S. Corum, *Bad Strategies: How Major Powers Fail in Counterinsurgency* (St. Paul MN: Zenith Press, 2008); John A. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 2002); and Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse* (Dulles VA: Potomac Books Inc., 2005).

- Consider the operational environment – Understand all aspects of the environment, including terrain, culture, demographics, history, and politics, that may affect COIN strategy.

- Identify the insurgent organizational structure – Identify command structure, lines of communication, support networks, membership, and common methods and operations.

- Target and neutralize insurgents – Focus resources on monitoring insurgents and eliminating their ability to function within the insurgency.

- Sever insurgent support networks – Stop the flow of resources to the insurgency.

- Reduce or disrupt operations – Prevent, interrupt, or mitigate the effects of insurgent attacks.

- Shift loyalties away from the insurgency – Convince local populations, external actors, or portions of the insurgency itself to end their active or passive support of the insurgency.

- Empowering the existing government – Assist the existing government in improving its ability to govern its territory and provide services.

- Coordinate the interagency process – Coordinate activities of the many actors conducting or supporting COIN operations, including soldiers; local, foreign, and multinational groups; and U.S. agencies.

- Protect the population – Provide security to the population.

- Control the population – Relocate the population to gain better control over their actions.

The Intelligence Literature: Outlining Key Functions

After policymakers have chosen pathways for the counterinsurgency effort, it is up to the intelligence community[5] to support those decisions. It is the intelligence community's responsibility to take the direction given by the policymakers, collect and analyze the relevant information, and disseminate intelligence products back to their customers who then give new directions.[6] Collection of raw information is primarily done through the collection disciplines, the most common of which are human intelligence (HUMINT), signals intelligence (SIGINT), imagery intelligence (IMINT), and open source intelligence (OSINT).[7] Collection can also be done through liaisons with other agencies or organizations. These groups can be intelligence organizations, government organizations, or even non-government organizations.

Though the primary role of the intelligence community is to collect and analyze intelligence for policymakers, it is occasionally tasked to perform covert action. This includes activities, such as paramilitary action; information operations; and undermining, overthrowing, or supporting a regime, in which the sponsorship of the activities is covert.[8] Though the intelligence community performs covert action far less frequently than collection and analysis, it is this type of activity that is often reported on and ingrained in the minds of the public as one of

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[5] Across time and between cases, the intelligence community is structured differently. For the purposes of this report, the intelligence community includes any actor engaging in intelligence functions, regardless of membership in any specific organizations, such as CIA or KGB, or lack thereof.

[6] James B. Bruce and Roger Z. George, "Intelligence Analysis – The Emergence of a Discipline," in *Analyzing Intelligence: Origins, Obstacles, and Innovations*, ed. Roger Z. George and James B. Bruce (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 2.

[7] There are many more collection disciplines, including financial intelligence (FININT), document exploitation (DOCEX), and measurement and signature intelligence (MASINT). These and many others are discussed in greater detail in Jeffrey T. Richelson, *The U.S. Intelligence Community* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999).

[8] A more detailed description of the various forms of covert action can be found in Richelson, *The U.S. Intelligence Community*, 3.

the primary roles of the intelligence community. In reality, covert action is often very controversial, which may further limit its use.[9]

Another function of the intelligence community is counterintelligence. This includes all efforts "…concerned with understanding, and possibly neutralizing, all aspects of the intelligence operations of foreign nations."[10] Counterintelligence is focused heavily on understanding enemy intelligence services and disrupting their operations, but it also includes evaluating defectors to ensure that they are not falsifying information or their credentials.[11]

A Framework for Understanding the Intelligence Community in COIN

From these two distinct literatures, we derive a framework that helps us understand the historical best practices of the Intelligence Community in COIN. Our framework divides intelligence operations into three categories: strategic collection and analysis, operational collection and analysis, and covert action. We do not, however, consider counterintelligence in our framework. Although counterintelligence is clearly an important function of the intelligence community, this report does not analyze its role in COIN. In order to draw best practices for counterintelligence, it would first be necessary to focus on insurgent intelligence operations against the COIN forces. We recognize that there are very important lessons to be drawn regarding counterintelligence and insurgent intelligence operations in COIN, but that discussion would provide better lessons as a separate research project.

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[9] Bruce D. Berkowitz and Allan E. Goodman, *Strategic Intelligence for American National Security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 183.
[10] Richelson, *The U.S. Intelligence Community*, 332.
[11] Ibid., 332-348.

We consider collection and analysis separately from covert action because of their different functions. As functions, collection and analysis seeks to inform policy decisions, while covert action aims to implement policy. Even though covert action is performed less often than collection and analysis, it is still worth analyzing because of its ability to influence individuals, groups, and events. Still further, the strategic and operational divide is useful because intelligence impacts both the policymakers looking at the insurgency as a larger entity and the operators combating insurgent groups at regional and local levels. Because of the drastically different viewpoints, intelligence requirements and products may often be quite different at the strategic and operational levels.

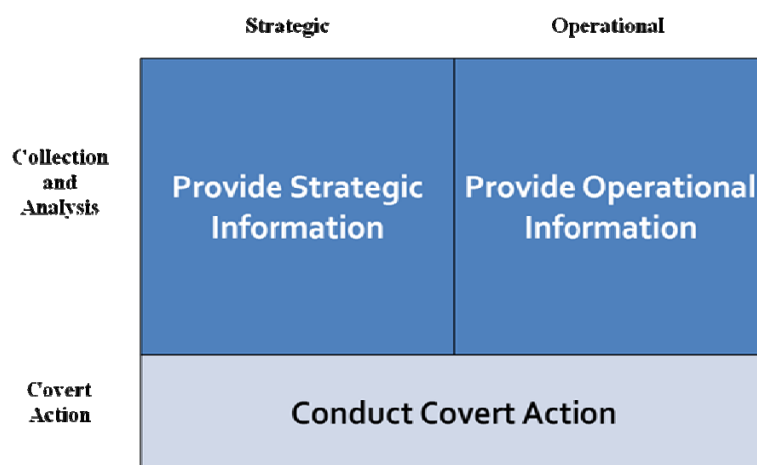|	Strategic	Operational
Collection and Analysis	Provide Strategic Information	Provide Operational Information
Covert Action	Conduct Covert Action	

Figure 1: Understanding the role of the intelligence community in COIN.

We use this framework to assess the performance of the Intelligence Community in our six historical case studies of counterinsurgencies. In each case, the efforts of the intelligence community are judged using the three categories of the framework. The primary consideration

for success or failure in each category was whether the intelligence efforts contributed to the success or failure the policymakers' chosen COIN goals.

Because intelligence efforts can sometimes be successful without having any influence on the success or failure of COIN goals, flexibility, coordination, and initiative were also considered in the grading of intelligence efforts. This leaves open the possibility that intelligence efforts may be judged successful even in the absence of any effect on COIN goals. An example of flexibility can be found in the Philippines case. An overreliance on intelligence from the elites of the Philippines led to policymakers being surprised by the outbreak of an insurgency. The intelligence community shifted its focus to the local population, and soon began gathering useful intelligence.[12] In the case of Northern Ireland, the British intelligence community's initial efforts faced major coordination problems. To improve coordination, the British created Tasking Coordination Groups to manage coordination and intelligence sharing. This relieved these problems and increased the effectiveness of further intelligence operations.[13] Initiative is another important aspect of intelligence operations. In Vietnam, civilian intelligence analysts began reevaluating the COIN strategy, even though that was an unpopular choice, and found that it was not being effective.[14] Although this initiative did not contribute to the success or failure of COIN goals, it is an important success of the U.S. intelligence community in Vietnam. Using this framework to grade case studies helps the hidden lessons within each history to be drawn out. This, in turn, will help guide the intelligence community in the creation of its own doctrine for COIN.

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[12] Brian M. Linn, "Intelligence and Low-Intensity Conflict in the Philippine War, 1899-1902," *Intelligence and National Security* 6, no. 1 (1991): 91.

[13] Brian Jackson, "Counterinsurgency Intelligence in a 'Long War': The British Experience in Northern Ireland," *Military Review* (Jan/Feb 2007).

[14] Bruce Palmer, Jr., "U.S. Intelligence in Vietnam," *Studies in Intelligence* 28, Special Edition (1984): 115-116.

The Philippines, 1899-1902

The United States began its half-century occupation of the Philippines with Admiral Dewey's destruction of the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay on 1 May 1898.[15] Spain and the United States signed the Treaty of Paris on 10 December 1898, and the U.S. subsequently declared sovereignty over the Philippine Islands. The tenuous relationship between the U.S. and the Filipinos, led by Emilio Aguinaldo, broke out in hostilities on 4 February 1899 and was followed by a nine-month conventional campaign that destroyed Aguinaldo's nascent government and dispersed his Army of Liberation.[16] The U.S. failed, however, to capture Aguinaldo who escaped into the mountains of northern Luzon and declared guerilla war on 13 November 1899.

The U.S. Army did not recognize this shift in strategy, assumed victory, and quickly set to work garrisoning the major cities and establishing civil government throughout the archipelago.[17] By February 1900 all of Luzon was occupied with the remaining islands following shortly thereafter.[18] It was quickly apparent, however, that victory was not yet secured and that the battle for the Philippines would continue. What followed was a counterinsurgency campaign by the U.S. Army that would ultimately cost the lives of 4,234 U.S. soldiers, over 16,000

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[15] Historians still dispute the reasons behind U.S. expansion in the Philippines. Explanations include geostrategic, economic, and religious justifications. The simplest explanation is provided by Welch who argues that the U.S. went to the Philippines because naval contingency plans for a war with Spain called for an attack on the Spanish fleet in Manila. It was only after Dewey's success that McKinley sought justification to annex the islands. See, Richard E. Welch, *Response to Imperialism: The United States and the Philippine-American War, 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 4; and Julius W. Pratt, *Expansionists of 1898: The Acquisition of Hawaii and the Spanish Islands* (Chicago: Quadrangle Paperbacks, 1936).

[16] The best account of U.S. Army actions in the Philippines is found in Brian M. Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000).

[17] John Morgan Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags: The United States Army in the Philippines, 1898-1902* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1973), 170.

[18] Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 111.

insurgents, and at least 200,000 Filipino civilians.[19] Overall, the counterinsurgency campaign in the Philippines from 1899-1902 was successful because the U.S. shifted loyalties away from the insurgency, severed insurgent support networks, and neutralized insurgents through population control and protection.[20]

STRATEGIC COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: FAILURE

The U.S. Army knew virtually nothing of the Philippines prior to its deployment to Manila.[21] An effort was made to understand the operating environment prior to the deployment of U.S. troops to Manila, but still very little was known concerning the terrain of the Philippines or the motives and capabilities of the Filipinos.[22] The earliest information about conditions in the islands was obtained almost solely from wealthy Filipinos in Manila.[23] This led to a number of fallacies including the belief that Filipinos would welcome U.S. rule and that resistance to the U.S. was isolated in the Tagalog population.[24] This initial failure to obtain accurate intelligence about the conditions in the Philippines did little to hamper U.S. effectiveness during the initial

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[19] Ibid., 125.

[20] Boot, *Savage Wars of Peace*, 126. Boot argues that the U.S. success "may be ascribed to the skillful employment of carrot and stick, 'chastisement' and 'attraction.'" Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*. Gates similary argues that it was the combination of benevolence and pacification that defeated the insurgency. Stuart Creighton Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation"* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982). Miller argues that it was ultimately U.S. benevolence that won the war, though U.S. cruelities almost cost the U.S. the victory. Leon Wolff, *Little Brown Brother: How the United States Purchased and Pacified the Philippines* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1991); and William Henry Scott, *Ilocano Responses to American Aggression, 1900-1901* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1986). Wolff and Scott, on the other hand, highlight the repressive nature of the U.S. occupation.

[21] Linn, "Intelligence and Low-Intensity Conflict," 91. A popular anecdote recalls that a classified report sent from the Military Information Division in Washington D.C., to General Wesley Merritt before he embarked for Manila was "nothing more than the *Encyclopedia Britannica* entry for the Philippine Islands."

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Linn, *The Philippine War*, 29. While it is true that the majority of insurgent leaders, including Aguinaldo, were Tagalogs, the assumption that non-Tagalogs would openly support U.S. efforts at pacification proved to be almost entirely false.

conventional military campaign against Aguinaldo's army. It did, however, lead to miscalculations during the subsequent occupation of the islands.

Following the destruction of Aguinaldo's army the U.S. believed that the war was over and all that was left was the establishment of civil government.[25] As reports of engagements from the field increased, the military commanders in Manila slowly came to recognize that the war had not been won but had just entered a new, more dangerous, phase.[26] The U.S. Army was no longer fighting a conventional war; it was now fighting a widespread insurgency. The slowness to respond to this shift in the enemy's strategy can be attributed to the overreliance on intelligence from a small sector of the population, Manila elites, and the lack of a centralized intelligence apparatus that could collect and analyze intelligence at the strategic level.[27]

OPERATIONAL COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: SUCCESS

Despite the lack of intelligence at the strategic level, the U.S. Army proved remarkably adaptive at the operational level. The commanders in Manila granted district commanders remarkable freedom to conduct their campaigns in the manner they saw fit. As a result, local commanders quickly developed their own intelligence networks to collect and analyze intelligence. Analysis

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[25] Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, 170.

[26] "Between June and November 1899, a period of active warfare, the Army lost 481 men, 104 through battle deaths. In the next six months, December 1899 to May 1900, a period of supposed quiet, it lost 674, of which 150 were battle deaths." Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, 171.

[27] For an account of efforts to collect intelligence on shadow governments, see Brian McAllister Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 43. While MacArthur had recognized the development of shadow insurgent governments as early as December 1899, it was Lt. Johnston, commander of La Union province, who first drafted a detailed report on the extent and organization of these governments. These governments reported on U.S. troop movements, collected taxes for the insurgency, recruited soldiers, and punished those who assisted the U.S. In many cases, the same civic officials assigned by the U.S. Army to govern were also serving as officials for the insurgency. For the role played by the secret governments, see Linn, *The Philippine War,* 191.

was conducted at district headquarters with the district commander often acting as his own intelligence analyst.

The greatest challenge facing the U.S. Army was identifying insurgents and the logistical structure supporting the insurgency. Many insurgents lived and worked among the general population and shifted quickly from the role of insurgent to that of *amigo*, or friend.[28] Three sources for identifying insurgents proved most useful to the U.S. in the Philippines: agents and informants, captured documents, and captured insurgents. The U.S. employed agents to penetrate the insurgency and identify insurgents.[29] Agents were difficult to recruit, however, because the insurgents terrorized or assassinated those who collaborated with the U.S.[30] The local population often served as informers as well, usually after growing tired of insurgent terrorism.[31] Captured documents proved most valuable to the U.S. Army. Letters from insurgent leaders to their civilian supporters served to positively identify those who were actively supporting the insurgency. In some instances, the captured documents included complete rosters of the insurgent forces in the area.[32] The interrogations of captured insurgents also proved a valuable source for insurgent identification.[33]

More significant than identifying insurgents was identifying the logistical structure supporting the insurgency. The insurgents were supported by shadow governments that operated alongside the civil governments established by the U.S. Army. While Arthur MacArthur had

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[28] Linn, *The Philippine War,* 190.

[29] Linn, "Intelligence," 97 and Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, 228.

[30] For a discussion of the role that guerilla terror played in swaying public opinion to the insurgents, see Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, 166-169. For descriptions of guerilla terrorism against U.S. agents, see Linn, *The Philippine War*, 195 and Linn, "Intelligence," 95.

[31] Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, 227-228.

[32] The capture of insurgent rosters, as one soldier described it, allowed the U.S. to "pick up insurrectos like chickens off a roost." Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency*, 43.

[33] Ibid., 43-44, 76; also see Linn, "Intelligence," 97.

recognized the development of shadow governments as early as December 1899, it was Lt. William T. Johnston, commander of La Union province, who first drafted a detailed report on the extent and organization of these governments. Beginning with interrogations of captured insurgents and couriers, Johnston was able to detail the organization of the shadow governments. These governments reported on U.S. troop movements, collected taxes for the insurgency, recruited soldiers, and punished those who assisted the U.S. In many cases, the same civic officials assigned by the U.S. Army to govern were also serving as officials for the insurgency.[34] Having detailed the organization of the shadow government, Johnston began replacing the civic officials loyal to the insurgency with those loyal to the U.S. Eventually, the insurgent support structure fell apart and the insurgents abandoned the province. General MacArthur later adopted Johnston's report as the basis for the strategy that eventually won the war. No longer did the U.S. simply patrol the jungles in search of insurgents, but they identified and attacked the logistical support networks in the villages. This directly attacked the insurgents' ability to survive and fight in the jungles, and eventually forced thousands to surrender. [35]

COVERT ACTION: SUCCESS

The U.S. took little covert action. Most action taken by the U.S. was purposely overt as it was intended to demonstrate U.S. might in combating the insurgency or to prove the benefits of U.S. rule. The covert action that was taken in the Philippines focused on information operations that

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[34] For an account of Lt. Johnston's efforts, see Linn, *U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency*, 43. For the role played by the secret governments, see Linn, *The Philippine War,* 191.

[35] MacArthur declared martial law in November 1900 turning the military's focus from the insurgents to the civilian population. As MacArthur's plan was implemented, more and more insurgents surrendered. In March 1901 alone, almost 7,000 insurgents surrendered followed by more than 6,000 in April and more than 1,000 in each of the months of May, June, and July. By July, all provinces but Batangas, Tayabas, Laguna, and Samar had been pacified. See Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, 229-230; also see Linn, *U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency,* 26.

declared the benefits to be had by cooperating with the U.S. The benefits ranged from official positions for Filipino elites to public goods, such as healthcare, security, and education, for the general populace.[36] The U.S. also supported the efforts of the pro-U.S. Filipino Federal Party. Largely composed of wealthy Filipinos from Manila, the Federal Party traveled throughout the provinces holding rallies in support of U.S. rule.[37]

LESSONS OF THE PHILIPPINES

The role of intelligence in the Philippines was unique in that there was no distinct intelligence community at that time. The U.S. campaign in the Philippines demonstrates the enduring challenges of fighting a counterinsurgency, and the important role that intelligence can play in a successful campaign. Going into the war, the U.S. Army had very little intelligence on the Philippines, and the early intelligence that was gathered mostly came from the elites in Manila. This overreliance on the elite distracted the U.S. from the real challenges that it faced in conquering the islands. Eventually, through the important intelligence work of its district commanders, the U.S. Army was able to identify and isolate the true source of the insurgents' strength, the shadow governments. The initiative and adaptation demonstrated by these soldiers helped make the campaign in the Philippines "the most successful counterinsurgency campaign in U.S. history."[38]

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[36] Boot, *Savage Wars of Peace*, 126.
[37] There is disagreement as to the actual effectiveness of the Federal Party in swaying public opinion. Wolff, *Little Brown Brother*, 322. Wolff argues that "The party attained its peak the day it was organized; from then on it went downhill." Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, 218-219. Gates argues that the Federal Party was essential to the pacification campaign. See also Linn, *The Philippine War,* 215.
[38] Linn, *Philippine War*, 328.

Malaya, 1948-1960

After 12 years of counterinsurgency operations, the British and Malayan Governments were finally able to declare victory over the Chinese communist insurgency that had violently threatened the political authority on the Malayan peninsula since 1948. The COIN campaign successfully controlled the ethnic Chinese population through a resettlement campaign and food denial programs, empowered the Malayan government with assistance and support for formal independence, and targeted the organizational structure of the insurgency. This "long-haul, low-cost strategy" effectively coordinated a slew of civil and military programs[39] and won the "hearts and minds" of the Malayan people.[40] The intelligence community was largely successful in Malaya because it contributed to the overall COIN goals while adeptly exercising a coordinated and flexible approach to its operations over time.

STRATEGIC COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: FAILURE

Overall the intelligence community failed at collection and analysis at the strategic level in Malaya. Despite later signs of improvement in this area,[41] the initial failure by the intelligence community to collect comprehensive intelligence or analyze whatever intelligence it did possess on the Chinese community prior to the outbreak of the insurgency failed to inform COIN

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[39] For more detail on the British COIN organization and its reliance on civil-military coordination, see R.W. Komer, *The Malayan Emergency in Retrospect: Organization of a Successful Counterinsurgency Effort* (Santa Monica: RAND's Advanced Research Projects Agency, 1972), 25-33; and Walter C. Ladwig, III, "Managing Counterinsurgency: Lessons from Malaya" *Military Review*, May-June 2007: 56-66.

[40] Richard Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds in Guerrilla Warfare* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1989), 1-7. Stubbs specifically differentiates the successful "hearts and minds" approach in Malaya (as opposed to an unsuccessful "hearts and minds" campaign in Vietnam) because the COIN strategy adequately addressed the political, social, and economic effects on the Malayan population in its operations.

[41] Anthony Short, *The Communist Insurrection in Malaya, 1948-1960* (New York: Crane, Russak & Company, Inc., 1975), 360.

strategy. Specifically, the intelligence community lacked strategic intelligence on the intentions, motives, capabilities, and strategy of the Chinese communists.[42] This was due in large part to a dearth of Chinese speakers and experts in the security forces. One analyst succinctly noted, "A critical weakness was the lack of competent Chinese linguists who could develop information in the clannish and self-isolated Chinese community, and a special effort was made to recruit more talent."[43] In fact, the numbers are quite demonstrative of this weakness: the police forces had only 24 Chinese inspectors and 204 rank and file police officers in a country where over 2 million people were Chinese.[44] Moreover, the analysis on the information that had been collected was disjointed and lacked warning for the government leaders that an incipient threat was looming.[45]

Without accurate strategic intelligence, the resulting COIN efforts by the British and Malayan government tended to be wild and unfocused. The emphasis was placed on jungle sweeps and air bombardments to initiate contact with the insurgents, but the results were poor. Instead of strategic intelligence informing an overall COIN strategy, the "military effort to defeat the insurgents had an auspicious beginning."[46]

OPERATIONAL COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: SUCCESS

The intelligence community in Malaya fared much better in its collection and analysis at the operational level. In many ways, the intelligence community's success in operational collection

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[42] Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds*, 67-69.
[43] Komer, *Malayan Emergency in Retrospect*, 42.
[44] Riley Sunderland, *Organizing Counterinsurgency in Malaya, 1947*-1960 (Santa Monica: RAND, 1964), 18-19.
[45] Short, *Communist Insurrection in Malaya*, 77-90. While Short concludes that the Chinese insurgents may not have had a well-formed and coordinated attack plan, he outlines the overly cautious and contradictory analysis performed by the intelligence community on the intentions of the insurgents.
[46] Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, 68 and 73.

and analysis was a direct result of an adapting strategy in which the mistakes of the initial COIN efforts were addressed. As part of the Briggs Plan in 1950, the British instituted two new initiatives: resettlement and food denial operations.[47] While the effectiveness of these controversial enterprises can be debated to no end, there is little doubt that the intelligence community capitalized as a result of these programs, increasing its collection of operational intelligence. Collection in the New Villages rose as the intelligence community more freely interacted with the broader Chinese community and, in particular, the Min Yuen, which was the primary support network of the Chinese communists.[48] The isolation of the Chinese community from the British and Malayan authorities, which plagued previous collection efforts, had been broken. Food denial operations, whether by squeezing information out of the Chinese community through collective punishment[49] or by starving the insurgents in the jungle and thereby inducing them to surrender,[50] also enabled greater collection of operational intelligence. The importance of the surrendered enemy personnel (SEP) cannot be underestimated, with one expert writing, "The most valuable single source of operational intelligence was the surrendered guerrilla."[51]

The Briggs Plan also refined the manner in which increased collection of intelligence was analyzed and shared. Instead of the previous competition between the police, military, and intelligence community over collection prerogatives and the mutual suspicion of motives, the

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[47] For more detail on the Briggs Plan, resettlement and food denial operations, and the reorganization of the COIN campaign, see Richard L. Clutterbuck, *The Long, Long War* (New York: Praeger, Inc. Publishers, 1966), 55-64; Donald Mackay, *The Malayan Emergency, 1948-1960: The Domino that Stood* (London: Brassey's, Inc., 1997), 86-92; and Short, *Communist Insurrection in Malaya*, 231-253.

[48] Riley Sunderland, *Antiguerrilla Intelligence in Malaya, 1948-1960* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1964), 34.

[49] Mackay, *Malayan Emergency*, 126-127 and Sunderland, *Antiguerrilla Intelligence in Malaya*, 35. In March 1952, in response to recent insurgent violence, General Sir Gerald Templer employed strict collective punishment on the town of Tanjong Malim, including reducing its food rations. Information flowing from the punishment led to the killing of a wanted communist insurgent.

[50] Sunderland, *Antiguerrilla Intelligence in Malaya*, 35. Evidence compiled through questionnaires of surrendered enemy personnel shows "hunger" as a growing reason for insurgents who surrendered to authorities.

[51] Short, *Communist Insurrection*, 364.

new found district, state, and federal war executive committees (WECs) created an atmosphere of trusted liaison.[52] Information gathered by the intelligence community, military, police, and civilian leaders, both British and Malayan, was collated into a more comprehensive picture of the insurgency. Moreover, while the tiered structure of the WECs helped organize the flow of intelligence, it also emphasized the necessity of collection and analysis at the district and local level, fulfilling a key directive of the adapting COIN strategy.[53]

The intelligence community in Malaya was largely successful in collection and analysis efforts on the operational level not only because of its increased collection on the Chinese community population but also for its ability to be flexible and adjust within a new organizational framework to process and analyze increased flows of intelligence. In concrete terms, the improved collection and analysis had the effect of fulfilling the intelligence community's role in COIN: identification of the insurgency's organizational structure. On this front, the intelligence community had remarkable success.[54]

COVERT ACTION: SUCCESS

Covert action in Malaya was most effective when it complemented current military operations and civilian programs.[55] Employing information operations, the most prolific form of covert action in Malaya, based on credible intelligence and effective government programs undermined

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[52] For more on the chaotic pre-Briggs intelligence sharing, see Mackay, *Malayan Emergency*, 81. For more on the process and success of intelligence sharing in the WEC system, see Ladwig, "Managing Counterinsurgency," 61-62.
[53] Sam C. Sarkesian, *Unconventional Conflicts in a New Security Era: Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), 143-145.
[54] For more detail on the intelligence community's focus and success in identifying insurgent organizational structure, see Sunderland, *Antiguerrilla Intelligence in Malaya*, 30 and 62; and Komer, *Malayan Emergency in Retrospect*, 45.
[55] Colonel Pennell J. Hickey, *Counterinsurgency Operations in Malaya, 1948-1960: The Role of Regular Forces* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College, 1971), 37-42.

the insurgency and empowered the Malayan government. In this respect, covert action played a supplementary, but important, role in the COIN campaign by reinforcing the larger strategy.

The intelligence collected, analyzed, and disseminated by the intelligence community was vital in shaping effective information operations. Hand-written appeals, recorded voice messages, and personal declarations of the benefits of having surrendered by SEPs now cooperating with the intelligence community had a chilling effect on the remaining insurgents in the jungle.[56] It bolstered the feeling that the COIN momentum was clearly in favor of the government, while at the same time undercutting the communist propaganda about British treatment of SEPs. In this way, covert action success was a result of successful operational intelligence. One particular anecdote that targeted an individual insurgent offers a vivid demonstration of this relationship. Through collection and analysis, the intelligence community tailored a specific leaflet and loudspeaker message to a pregnant insurgent in the jungle, urging her to surrender and promising a better life for her and her child in the welcoming confines of the Malayan government.[57] It is this type of intelligence-driven information operation that helped to increase insurgent surrenders and inform both the insurgent and general population alike that the British and Malayan governments were defeating the insurgency.[58]

LESSONS OF MALAYA

Three important lessons emerge from evaluating the performance of the intelligence community in Malaya. First, strategic collection on the intentions and motives of a potential insurgent group is essential to inform and shape initial COIN strategy. Understanding that penetration of such

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[56] Short, *Communist Insurrection in Malaya*, 418-420.
[57] Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, 94.
[58] Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds*, 121; Sunderland, *Antiguerrilla Intelligence in Malaya*, 47; and Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, 94.

groups is often difficult, the intelligence community needs to invest in language and subject matter expertise to improve its strategic collection and analysis efforts, thus preventing a deleterious start to the COIN campaign. Second, collection and analysis of operational intelligence must emphasize human intelligence at the local or district level and be shared with relevant COIN agencies and actors. The intelligence community is better equipped to collect and analyze on the often decentralized nature of an insurgency when its organization rewards local, flexible action. Third, covert action must be based on solid and credible intelligence to improve its effectiveness. Information operations, in particular, require a basis of success in government programs or military operations in order to convince the insurgents and the general populace of the government's authority and legitimacy.

While specific to the British COIN in Malaya, these lessons remain relevant to understanding intelligence in today's COIN operating environment. Intelligence preparation of the battlefield, strategic warning, methods for increasing intelligence collection, organizing efficient ways to share information across disparate agencies and multiple governments, and using intelligence effectively in covert action operations are all issues that the intelligence community must address as it supports and informs any COIN campaign. Challenges, successes, and lessons learned from the Malaya intelligence community offer historical yet germane insight into how to consider these matters.

Algeria, 1954-1962

From 1954 to 1962, the French military waged a bloody counterinsurgency (COIN) to defeat the National Liberation Front (FLN) and maintain French rule over Algeria.[59] France considered Algeria part of Metropolitan France and the crown jewel of the French colonial empire.[60] Prior to the outbreak of the insurgency, French officials were warned of the potential uprising in Algeria based on previous violent acts and rebellions.[61] As the FLN insurgency threatened to create an independent Algeria, the French government granted the military complete authority to oversee the counterinsurgency.[62]

The bloody conflict, coupled with the lack of civilian oversight, led the military to adopt harsh interrogation methods to gain intelligence on the FLN's personnel, organizational, and support structure.[63] This yielded useful intelligence at the operational level but had important strategic consequences. Once this collection method became public, French citizens turned against the COIN campaign. When conducting covert action, the French applied psychological warfare and waged an information war to shift the loyalties of the Algerian Muslim population

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[59] In this case, the intelligence community is largely composed of the French military forces.

[60] William R. Polk, *Violent Politics: A History of Insurgency, Terrorism, and Guerrilla War, From The American Revolution to Iraq.* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007). Algeria was a colony administered and ruled by French officials. France pursed an economic policy toward Algeria that largely benefited the French economy. Also, after withdrawing from Indochina and subsequently granting independence to Morocco and Tunisia, the French were determined to keep a hold of Algeria and regain the international prestige it had prior to the World War Two. Also see Ian Lustick, *Unsettled States, Disputed Lands: Britain and Ireland, France and Algeria, Israel and the West Bank/Gaza*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 81-186 and 239-351.

[61] Corum, *Bad Strategies*, 42.

[62] Gil Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars: State, Society, and the Failures of France in Algeria, Israel In Lebanon and the United States in Vietnam* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 90.

[63] Tony Smith, *The French Stake in Algeria, 1945-1962* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 147.

and damage the legitimacy of the insurgency, albeit at a limited success.[64] Studying the role of intelligence in the Algerian insurgency enables the intelligence community to evaluate the effectiveness of the French intelligence community, and the methods employed, when dealing with a rural and urban insurgency.

STRATEGIC COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: SUCCESS

The majority of French officials and European settlers in Algeria (*Colons*) were shocked when the FLN waged an insurgency against French rule and began using terrorist attacks against the European population in major cities. Policymakers failed to recognize that the Algerians viewed the Europeans as occupiers and wanted their independence.[65] This is despite the fact that, prior to the launch of the FLN-led insurgency in 1954, the French intelligence community repeatedly warned policymakers about the possibility of violent unrest erupting in Algeria.[66]

Strategically, the French intelligence community was effective in predicting future unrest. For example, after suppressing a rebellion in March 1946, General Henry Martin, commander of the French Army 19th Corps, warned that an insurgency in Algeria was imminent and the French government should begin planning to address Algerian grievances.[67] Furthermore, another General warned the French government, "I have given you peace for ten years. But let us not

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[64] Ted Morgan, *My Battle of Algiers: A Memoir* (New York: First Smithsonian Books, 2005), 127; and David Charters and Maurice Tugwell, *Armies In Low-Intensity Conflict: A Comparative Analysis* (London: Brassey's Defence Publishers, 1989), 90.

[65] James Gannon, *Military Occupations In the Age of Self-Determination: The History Neocons Neglected* (Westport: Praefer Security International, 2008), 44. The French politicians and European population never understood why the Algerians opposed or resented French rule. In other words, they failed to comprehend the stakes of the uprising and what was motivating the insurgency.

[66] Corum, *Bad Strategies*, 42. In March 1946, the Army General Staff wrote a report on the uprisings that occurred in Algeria. The report stressed the importance of considering the political, social, and economic disfranchisement of the Algerian Muslim population. The authors of the report understood the stakes and realized that after suppressing the rebellions there were indicators illustrating that future rebellions would be bloodier and last longer.

[67] Ibid.

deceive ourselves. Everything must change in Algeria."[68] The French intelligence community understood the strategic operating environment and did not solely focus on the European settlers to provide them with a picture of the Algeria. The intelligence community was effective in analyzing the future intentions of the Algerian population and recommended the French government adopt a new strategy toward Algeria to prevent a new insurgency from occurring. Had the French government paid attention to the reports, they could have implemented policies to decrease the likelihood of the FLN waging an insurgency.

OPERATIONAL COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: SUCCESS

To prevent the FLN from waging terrorist acts, capture leaders, and to suppress the insurgency, the French military adopted harsh interrogation methods. The torture methods adopted by the French military included beatings, forced bloating with water, and electric shock treatments.[69] Especially after the Battle of Algiers, the French military used torture of captured prisoners as a means to obtain excellent tactical intelligence, which enabled the French military to capture insurgent leaders and dismantle bomb networks.[70] The French depended on this intelligence method because the FLN was a mobile insurgency, continually carried out terrorist and guerrilla attacks (hit-and run strategy), and dispersed its fighters amongst the local population.[71]

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Smith, *French Stake in Algeria*, 148. Smith discusses how top military leaders in Algeria attempted to cover up the torture issue and established a commission to report if there was widespread use of torture. The commission findings did not have an impact on the how the French military used torture as a collection method to gain information and intelligence on the FLN.

[70] Morgan, *My Battle of Algiers*, 154. Morgan argues that after the Battle of Algiers, the use of torture was not counterproductive and provided the French paratroopers with excellent tactical intelligence.

[71] Abder-Rahmane Derradji, *The Algerian Guerrilla Campaign Strategy and Tactics* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1997), 113-114.

The FLN's unconventional warfare and the French military's inability to protect the population and collect actionable intelligence, led the French military to subsequently view all Algerians as having ties with the FLN.[72] According to Martha Crenshaw Hutchinson, an expert on revolutionary terrorism, "In the absence of spontaneous information about the FLN [from the Algerian population], the French army resorted to brutal interrogation methods to extract information about the FLN."[73] As result of these methods, the FLN reacted to the torture of their captured fighters by increasing the urban terrorism against the European population.[74]

The widespread use of torture would eventually cause unrest with certain French officials in Algeria and lead to several high-level resignations. For instance, the Police Commissioner of Algiers, Paul Teitgan, who was tortured by the Nazi's Gestapo during World War Two, resigned because he could not end the use of torture in Algiers.[75] Furthermore, once the French public learned of the interrogation methods, the support for the COIN campaign in Algeria suffered and led to a rise of an anti-war coalition. The French media turned against the war and described how the systemic use of torture was prevalent and that this intelligence method did not represent French morals and values.[76] Operationally, the use of torture was effective in gaining actionable tactical intelligence on the FLN. However, this method alienated the French and local population, which undermined the French COIN campaign on the strategic level.

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[72] Martha Crenshaw Hutchinson, *Revolutionary Terrorism: The FLN in Algeria, 1954-1962* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), 122.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Alf Andrew Heggoy. *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Algeria.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), 232.
[75] Merom, *How Democracies Lose*, 115.
[76] Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962* (Avonmouth Bristol: Western Printing Services Limited, 1977), 232-233. Revelations of torture were increasingly being ingrained into the conscience of the French public by books and newspapers, especially during the Battle of Algiers.

COVERT ACTION: FAILURE

The French military conducted two forms of covert action in Algeria. The first form focused on countering the FLN propaganda that was striking a chord with the Algerian population. To complement its military successes, the FLN used a radio program, *Voice of Algeria*, and a newspaper, *The Warrior*, to cultivate support within the local Algerian population.[77] In order to provide the French perspective on the war, the French military covertly funded and published a weekly newspaper, called *Realities Algeriennes*.[78] The goal of the newspaper was to inform Algerians of the benefits of French rule, help empower the existing government, and be a propaganda tool for the French military. The problem with this information operation was that the majority of Algerians were illiterate, and that the French military assumed it understood the mindset of the Algerian masses.

The French also used psychological warfare methods on displaced Algerians in internment camps. The psychological methods were designed to make the Algerians lose faith in the FLN ideals and leadership, and to shift their loyalties to the idea of a French-Muslim Algeria. As part of the indoctrination, the French used loudspeakers to bombard the Algerians with slogans and also handed out pamphlets to the Algerians. The French military controlled this process and established a reward system for Algerians who were successfully indoctrinated.[79] The goal was to strengthen and empower the existing government. This covert action may have

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[77] Polk, *Violent Politics*, 138. Polk discusses how the FLN knew the Foreigner (the French) would eventually leave and that they needed the local population's support.

[78] Morgan, *My Battle of Algiers*, 154. Morgan would write for the paper and dress up as a civilian. He was aware that the paper would not influence the minds of the Algerians or Arabs. He would publish articles, such as "Calm Has Returned to Algiers," to illustrate how the Casbah was safe again, (p. 182). Morgan would also write about topics supporting the new electoral laws in Algeria and informing the Algerian masses to go support it (p. 238).

[79] Edgar O'Ballance, *The Algerian Insurrection, 1954-1962* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1967), 96. O'Ballance claims the were successful even though most Algerians resented living in the internment camps and the FLN was effective in coercing the population to support its independence movement.

been more effective than the newspaper information operation, but the majority of Algerians resented living in the internment camps, and many were recruited by the FLN.

LESSONS OF ALGERIA

Several important lessons emerge from evaluating the effectiveness of the intelligence community in Algeria. First, strategic collection and analysis by the intelligence community should evaluate a cross section of the population. The French intelligence community analyzed more than just the opinions of the French settlers and was able to warn the French government of the growing possibility of an insurgency. Had it not analyzed the motives and grievances of the Algerian population as a whole, the intelligence community would not have seen the insurgency coming. Second, the intelligence community must evaluate the COIN strategy and determine if it is achieving the COIN goals. Third, the use torture is not an effective form of intelligence collection over the long term. In Algeria, the intelligence community gained short-term tactical intelligence that proved advantageous to their military operations but came at a high audience cost, which undermined their counterinsurgency campaign. Lastly, information operations are effective when they are credible and resonate with the local population. The French military carried out information operations but did not tailor them to Algerian concerns and motivations.

Vietnam, 1964-1975

The counterinsurgency in Vietnam failed because U.S. and allied South Vietnamese forces were unable to prevent the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) from infiltrating the South, and Republic

of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) were unable to withstand the North's attacks.[80] The Allies made progress in separating the insurgents from the local population,[81] but they were unable to cut off support from the North or withstand large-scale attacks.[82]

STRATEGIC COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: SUCCESS

The intelligence community successfully performed collection and analysis at the strategic level in Vietnam. With the caveat that sharp disagreement and competition within the intelligence community led to differing assessments on several key issues, civilian analysis in Washington produced generally accurate estimates on issues relating to weakness within the South Vietnamese government, Hanoi's will to fight, and the futility of air attacks against targets in North Vietnam.[83]

CIA reports,[84] National Intelligence Estimates, and Special National Intelligence Estimates consistently testified that, despite allied advances and operations, North Vietnam maintained the troop strength, logistical structure, and the will to continue battling the South. Furthermore, aerial attacks against North Vietnam and logistics interdiction might result in considerable damage but would not materially alter the North's perseverance or capabilities,

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[80] The assessments of Vietnam remain numerous and diverse, but a few key histories that were helpful in understanding the conflict include George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001); Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History* (New York: Penguin, 1997); and Lewis Sorley, *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and Final Tragedy of America's Last Years in Vietnam* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1999).

[81] Lewis Sorley, *A Better War*, 217-218. Sorley considered the rural South "widely pacified" by the end of 1970.

[82] Palmer, "U.S. Intelligence and Vietnam," 115-116.

[83] Palmer, "U.S. Intelligence and Vietnam," 124-126. This is not to say, however, that civilian intelligence was always right—for an example of an overly-optimistic report from Saigon Station, CIA, see Palmer, p. 106.

[84] Harold P. Ford, "Unpopular Pessimism: Why the CIA Analysts Were So Doubtful About Vietnam," *Studies in Intelligence*, No. 1 (1997): 85-87. Harold P. Ford reports that, in general, the CIA expressed doubts about the Vietnam campaign, but its advice was not heeded (pp. 89, 91).

particularly given the preponderance of Soviet and Chinese aid.[85] This included a pessimistic view towards the mining of North Vietnamese ports.[86]

Analysts also reported accurately on weaknesses within the Government of South Vietnam (GVN) and the RVNAF. Various reports indicated that the RVNAF would be unable to withstand the NVA and continue operations without continued U.S. support.[87] Reliable strategic intelligence, however, was ultimately handicapped by the politicized atmosphere in Washington and competition within the intelligence community.[88]

OPERATIONAL COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: FAILURE

Much of operational collection and analysis focused on identifying the Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI) in the South and on stopping infiltration from the North, especially through the Ho Chi Minh Trail.[89] The Phoenix/Phung Hoang program was an initiative devised to organize the myriad intelligence programs operating within Vietnam.[90] American advisers were a critical component of the Phoenix program, which established interagency committees at the national, regional, province, and district levels to combat the VCI.[91]

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[85] For summaries of supporting memoranda, see Palmer, pp. 37, 43-4, 47-8, 63, 75-6. Palmer further praises the CIA for understanding the limited utility of air attacks against the Ho Chi Minh Trail and the futility of attempting to restrict land routes to and from China (p. 124). See also Richard J. Kerr, "The Track Record: CIA Analysis from 1950 to 2000" in *Analyzing Intelligence: Origins, Obstacles, and Innovations*, ed. Roger Z. George and James B. Bruce (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 44.

[86] Palmer, "U.S. Intelligence and Vietnam," 98. While the DIA's 1973 report explained the considerable damage that these operations produced, it did not evaluate that damage within the context of the North's ability to continue operating. The CIA's estimate, on the other hand, weighed potential damage against the North's ability to rebuild logistics and receive supplies through China.

[87] Palmer, "U.S. Intelligence and Vietnam," 72, 97, and 107; and Kerr, "The Track Record," 44.

[88] Ford, "Unpopular Pessimism," 90-1 and Palmer, "U.S. Intelligence and Vietnam," 13, 124.

[89] Sorley, *A Better War*, 66, describes the VCI as "a kind of covert shadow government in the villages and hamlets of South Vietnam."

[90] Ralph William Johnson, "Phoenix/Phung Hoang: A Study of Wartime Intelligence Management," (PhD diss., The American University, 1985), 2.

[91] Dale Andradé, *Ashes to Ashes: The Phoenix Program and the Vietnam War* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990), 87-9. Sorley, *A Better War*, 64.

Despite the effort at coordination, Phoenix faced many bureaucratic problems. Allied Vietnamese agencies continued to suffer from inadequate intelligence sharing because of concerns about leaks, VC moles, and other agencies stealing sources and credit.[92] U.S. advisors attempted to rectify these problems through initiatives such as Target Folders, which were dossiers on VCI, but these efforts met with little success.[93]

The CIA led the development of PICCs and DICCs (Province and District Intelligence Coordination Centers) to plan, collect information, and identify and target infrastructure elements. These centers were based on the Malayan counterinsurgency and served as the precursors to the Phoenix centers.[94] Phoenix and ICEX[95] established District Intelligence and Operations Coordination Centers and eventually formed Province Operations Coordination Centers (PIOCCs) from combined PICCs and Province Phoenix Committees.[96] Referred to collectively as Phoenix centers, these centers and committees at both district and province levels suffered from various problems, such as insufficient personnel allocation, focus from the South Vietnamese on tactical military intelligence rather than intelligence on the VCI, poor intelligence

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[92] Mark Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey: Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorism in Vietnam* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 142, 340. Even U.S. advisers avoided intelligence sharing at times for the same two reasons (pp. 143-3). Much of the sharing that did occur actually took place outside of the Phoenix centers, giving the agencies involved the ability to exchange information more quickly and funnel intelligence directly to trusted and relevant organizations. Johnson, "Phoenix/Phung Hoang," 266-267, writes about mistrust and political competition and highlights the "strong sense of regionalism," identifying many of the cultural and political rifts between different groups of Vietnamese. Andradé, *Ashes to Ashes*, 49-50 confirms the Vietnamese's proprietary approach to intelligence and adds that even "over-compartmentalization" left much to be desired from intelligence sharing among US agencies (pp. 49-50). Stuart Herrington, *Silence Was a Weapon: The Vietnam War in the Villages* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982); and Orrin DeForest with David Chanoff, *Slow Burn: The Rise and Bitter Fall of American Intelligence in Vietnam* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990). In their respective memoirs, Herrington and DeForest discuss the difficulties that advisers faced in trying to motivate cooperation and intelligence sharing among Vietnamese bureaus.

[93] Johnson, "Phoenix/Phung Hoang," 336-42, refers to a series of MACV/MACCORDS reports. An unwillingness to share data and misunderstandings of the folders and their relevance contributed to this failure.

[94] Andradé, *Ashes to Ashes*, 42.

[95] Ibid., 59, 68. Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation (ICEX) was the Phoenix program's immediate, experimental predecessor.

[96] Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 52-53. ICEX officials worked in particular to effect better coordination at the district level since province level cooperation was already superior.

sharing, and, eventually, the loss of CIA leadership.[97] Uneven implementation across different locales also resulted in limited success.[98]

The U.S. tried several different measures to get intelligence on the Ho Chi Minh trail. Aside from reconnaissance efforts, which were unsuccessful with Lao and Montagnard tribesmen but considerably more so with allied special forces,[99] the IGLOO WHITE system of electronic sensors resulted in only debatable success[100] and a recent NSA publication on Vietnam admits that both SIGINT and IMINT were of limited utility except in conjunction with interrogations.[101]

COVERT ACTION: SUCCESS

Various information operations that targeted specific members of the VC or their families were successful. Johnson gives examples of two such operations, one in which the names of known VCI cadre were broadcast via loudspeaker, and another in which names and images of several VC were publicly posted. While some neutralizations from these efforts were arrests, others came from ralliers who turned to the government, concerned that the GVN already knew too

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[97] Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 127-135.
[98] Truong Nhu Tang, David Chanoff, and Doan Van Toai, *A Vietcong Memoir* (New York: Vintage Books, 1986), 201. Tang, a former Minister of Justice within the VC, describes Phoenix as varying between regions: frequently "lackadaisical," sometimes "indiscriminate," and other times "dangerously effective." Dale Andradé and James H. Willbanks, "CORDS/Phoenix: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Vietnam for the Future," *Military Review* (March-April 2006): 19-20. Andradé and Willbanks cite decentralization as a key problem that led to variable results between districts and frequent incompetence and corruption.
[99] William Rosenau, "U.S. Air Ground Operations Against the Ho Chi Minh Trail, 1966-1972," *Special Operations Forces and Elusive Enemy Ground Targets* (Monograph, The RAND Corporation, 2001), 8-10.
[100] Rosenau, "U.S. Air Ground Operations," 11-14. Terrain and weather made targeting difficult, and the North Vietnamese likely tampered with the sensors.
[101] Robert J. Haynok, *Spartans in Darkness: American SIGINT and the Indochina War, 1945-1975* (Center for Cryptologic History, National Security Agency, 2002, Series VI Volume 7), 104, 106. Information from SIGINT often arrived too late for action and was usually unspecific. IMINT from aerial reconnaissance suffered from speed, altitude, and terrain. Only the adoption of unsecured voice communications by the North Vietnamese allowed the allies to eventually obtain specific infiltration data from SIGINT (pp. 110-12).

much about them.[102] The allies also sent letters to the families of VCI with offers to join the Chieu Hoi program, and these also resulted in successes.[103] Other operations aimed to discredit known VCI that could not be located by spreading rumors of their defection or leaving conspicuous gifts with their families.[104]

In addition to information operations, the intelligence community experienced success with paramilitary units. Provisional Reconnaissance Units (PRUs) were paramilitary groups assigned to neutralize the VCI in rural areas.[105] The PRUs were particularly successful against the VCI because of they effectively used intelligence, the bulk of which was provided either by the CIA or their own collection.[106] Concerns about maintaining quality within the ranks of the program and secrecy to the public kept the PRUs from ever totaling more than 6,000.[107]

LESSONS OF VIETNAM

Intelligence agencies played a vital role in providing strategic intelligence throughout the war that identified motives and strengths of the North and weaknesses in the South. The intelligence

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[102] Johnson, "Phoenix/Phung Hoang," 286, 289.

[103] Andradé, *Ashes to Ashes*, 113-114. Andradé also agrees that many VCI were reluctant to operate once their identities were known.

[104] Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 1997, 150-1. The former was infrequently used because of the difficulty and danger of enacting it. Allies could also plant gifts and notes at the homes of VCI members after failed capture attempts.

[105] Andradé, *Ashes to Ashes*, 3. PRUs began as Counter Terror Teams (CTTs), vestiges from the Diem regime that were taken over by the CIA in 1964. In 1966, the CIA rechristened the CTTs as PRUs, and the forces quickly became an integral part of anti-infrastructure strategy (pp. 41, 172).

[106] Andradé, *Ashes to Ashes*, 1990, 174. The PRUs worked closely with American advisors to review intelligence and prepare operations, collecting much of their own intelligence from observations during previous operations and interrogations. Furthermore, precise intelligence allowed small PRUs to complete raids and operations quickly. They generally upheld high standards of performance and discipline, but poor leadership could greatly reduce these qualities (p. 42). Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 165 and 170, agrees that excellent intelligence and local knowledge distinguished the PRUs above other anti-infrastructure forces. Andradé and Willbanks, "CORDS/Phoenix," 19, refer to the PRUs as "the best action arm available to Phoenix," but unfortunately limited in size.

[107] Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 167. Andradé, *Ashes to Ashes*, 45, sets the upper limit at 5,000, and Andradé and Willbanks, "CORDS/Phoenix," 19, estimates 4,000.

community also supported the campaign operationally by identifying the VCI elements that allowed the VC to operate in South Vietnam. Covert action succeeded through targeted information operations and by taking advantage of the local expertise of paramilitaries. Anti-infrastructure successes in the South owed much to military operations that picked up VCI members along with VC guerrillas.[108] This counterinsurgency presents valuable lessons for developing COIN intelligence doctrine because it addresses the difficulties of fighting a campaign alongside a disorganized, unstable local ally and the problem of foreign support for an insurgency.

Afghanistan, 1979-1989

The Soviet campaign in Afghanistan ran from December 1979 to February 1989. In that time the 40th Army lost 13,833 personnel and failed to secure the Afghan government,[109] which eventually fell to mujahedin forces in April 1992. The insurgents were ethnically diverse, politically fractured, religiously divided, and lightly equipped, yet they defeated a superpower. Examining collection, analysis, and covert action in this case, however, is a challenging task. Many documents are still classified by the Russian Federation. Soviet wartime information operations have also clouded certain issues.[110] However, open sources offer valuable insight into Soviet intelligence activities and suggest avenues for future research.

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[108] Sorley, *A Better War*, 146; and Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 151.

[109] Mark Galeotti, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Union's Last War* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 28.

[110] Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is a good example. For a portrayal of him as a brutal but effective commander, see Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004); as fratricidal and counterproductive, see Peter Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden* (New York: Free Press, 2002). This discord is due in part to

STRATEGIC COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: FAILURE

The fundamental failure occurred prior to the COIN campaign. The KGB vehemently advocated military intervention in Afghanistan by pairing realistic evidence of mounting anti-Soviet feeling in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) government with unrealistic evidence of Iranian, Chinese, Pakistani, and American involvement in both the Afghan government and the mujahedin.[111] In particular, the agency claimed Hafizullah Amin was a CIA agent and that the United States intended to reestablish its lost Iranian SIGINT bases in Afghanistan and support mujahedin terrorism in the Soviet Muslim republics.[112]

However, even if the KGB had not believed in a foreign-backed mujahedin, they would still have advocated intervention. Primary sources demonstrate that the agency's goal in 1979 was a Czechoslovakia-style invasion to prevent Afghan rapprochement with the West.[113] The COIN campaign that followed was a second-order effect, albeit a foreseeable one which should have been planned for. Instead the mujahedin were mentioned only in passing as tools of Amin and his secret American allies.

This mistake was due in part to the growing prominence of the KGB and exclusion of the GRU in decision making in 1979. Andropov controlled the flow of information to Brezhnev,

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a KGB information operations unit that was tasked with undermining major mujahedin leaders; see Milton Bearden and James Risen, *The Main Enemy: The Inside Story of the CIA's Final Showdown with the KGB* (New York: Presidio Press, 2004), 236.

[111] Soviet Union, Politburo, *Minutes of the CC CPSU Politburo Session March 17-18, 1979.* Kosygin accepted and the KGB concurred with a claim by Taraki that Iran was sending troops into Herat disguised as returning refugees, a claim not validated by modern open sources and unlikely given political volatility in Iran at the time. For a description of covert actions, see Diego Cordovez and Selig S. Harrison, *Out of Afghanistan: The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal* (New York: Oxford UP, 1995), 15-16.

[112] Bearden and Risen, *Main Enemy*, 220-221. Ironically, the portrayal of Amin as a CIA pawn was part of a KGB black propaganda effort but later became official KGB policy.

[113] Dmitri Ustinov, Yuri Andropov, Andrei Gromyko, and Boris Ponomarev, *Andropov-Gromyko-Ustinov-Ponomarev Report to the CC CPSU on the Situation in Afghanistan, October 29, 1979* (Soviet Union, Politburo), 1; Alexander Lyakhovsky, *The Tragedy and Valor of Afghan* (Moscow: GPI Iskon, 1995), 109-112.

stunting GRU criticism.[114] As a military agency, that organization had different sources, particularly inside the Khalq-dominated Afghan Army.[115] These sources painted another picture of affairs in Afghanistan,[116] but their comments were ignored by Defense Minister Ustinov and did not reach Brezhnev.[117]

In addition to sidelining its fellow agency, the KGB also fundamentally misunderstood the motives of the insurgency and failed to prepare for it.[118] The tenacity and fluidity of most mujahedin groups counteracted Soviet war-fighting doctrine, which called for quick, overwhelming victory through mechanized assaults.[119] This resolve was grounded in strong tribal and religious beliefs that the KGB failed to take into account.[120]

Soviet intelligence planners should have known better. The KGB conducted "Operation Zenith" in October 1979 to determine popular reaction to an intervention.[121] It also controlled the Afghan intelligence service (KHAD) and had penetrations across the government and armed forces.[122] But Andropov and Ustinov still advocated a military intervention that failed to anticipate and prepare for a COIN campaign.

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[114]Soviet Union, *Personal Memorandum from Andropov to Brezhnev, Early December 1979*. This is reflected in a December 1979 memorandum from Andropov to Brezhnev that, according to Anatoly Dobrynin, changed the General Secretary's mind regarding armed intervention in Afghanistan. For Brezhnev's beliefs prior to the memo, see Soviet Union, Politburo, *Excerpt from Transcript, CPSU CC Politburo Meeting, September 20, 1979*.

[115] Cordovez and Harrison, *Out of Afghanistan*, 18-19.

[116] Bearden and Risen, *Main Enemy*, 222.

[117]Georgy M. Kornienko, *The Cold War: Testimony of a Participant* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya, 1994), 193.

[118] Lester W. Grau, *The Bear Went Over the Mountain: Soviet Combat Tactics in Afghanistan* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 201.

[119] Robert Cassidy, *Russia in Afghanistan and Chechnya: Military Strategic Culture and the Paradoxes of Asymmetric Conflict* (North Mankato, MN: Storming Media, 2003), 33.

[120] Grau, *Bear Went Over the Mountain*, 75.

[121] The findings of that operation are not available in open-source literature, but the fact that the Soviets did intervene, with tactics mirroring those of the Fulda Gap, suggests that either the study did not survey rural Afghans (the "core" of the mujahedin) or its findings were ignored. See Vasiliy Mitrokhin, *Working Paper No. 40: The KGB in Afghanistan*, working paper (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2002), 11.

[122] M. Hasan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and the Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 154; for the extent of Soviet penetration of the Afghan government, see A.Z.

OPERATIONAL COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: FAILURE

HUMINT was vital to Soviet operations in Afghanistan. IMINT was restricted by limited

technical capabilities, priority tasking, and the difficulty of identifying mujahedin positions.[123]

SIGINT was ineffective because insurgents rarely communicated by radio, although it played a

larger tactical role after the introduction of radio-direction-finding teams in 1984.[124] The failure

of Soviet and Afghan operatives to penetrate and recruit from Islamist groups was the most

significant operational intelligence failure, as it prevented them from targeting the insurgency's

decentralized command, control, and infrastructure.

The Soviets had a mixed record in penetrating the Afghan insurgency. While they

managed to co-opt or ally with several small mujahedin units, they mainly failed to acquire

HUMINT sources close to the seven major mujahedin commanders. The largest success here

came through a GRU officer code-named "Advisor" who negotiated a truce with Ahmed Shah

Massoud in 1983,[125] temporarily securing the Salang Pass. Given Massoud likely had high-level

connections in the DRA Defense Ministry, and the KGB suspected as much,[126] it is no surprise

the agency negotiated with him to protect vital lines of communication.

KHAD's HUMINT record was better but still inadequate.[127] Some scholars suggest the

force was a cornerstone of the Afghan government that became instrumental in penetrating the

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Hilali, "The Soviet Penetration into Afghanistan and the Marxist Coup," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 18, no. 4 (December 2005).

[123] For a discussion of IMINT problems in COIN, see David J. Clark, "The Vital Role of Intelligence in Counterinsurgency Operations" (thesis, Army War College, 2006), 16. Resembling light infantry at best and part-time militia at worst, the mujahedin, like most insurgent groups, were difficult to locate with IMINT resources owing to their lack of heavy weapons and military vehicles.

[124] Grau, *Bear Went Over the Mountain*, 178.

[125] Bearden and Risen, *Main Enemy*, 233.

[126] Ibid., 232.

[127] KHAD was under effective KGB control from its establishment following the Soviet invasion, so its operations are analyzed here alongside those of the KGB. See Grau, *Bear Went Over the Mountain*, 42; See also United States of America, Department of State, *Country Reports for 1982* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1982), 1072.

insurgency,[128] while others argue KHAD could not sustain penetrations.[129] The organization likely had effective penetrations of urban mujahedin units given the falling number of urban terrorist operations early in the conflict, [130] although this probably had much to do with military occupation of urban centers. Either way, this did not extend to rural areas where most of the mujahedin resided. No training camps on the rural Pakistan-Afghan border were attacked by Soviet or DRA forces in the period 1986-89, [131] and this was likely due in part to the poor quality of HUMINT sources recruited by KHAD.

The nature of the Afghan insurgency presented two major challenges for HUMINT. First, insurgent units were small, tight-knit, and decentralized. Penetrating a single unit was difficult and offered little insight into other units.[132] Second, mujahedin groups planned most operations very quickly, offering little time to preempt or prevent attacks.[133] It is therefore unsurprising that the Soviets and KHAD failed to cultivate significant HUMINT sources among the mujahedin.

COVERT ACTION: SUCCESS

The major covert actions of the Afghan war involved subversion of local paramilitaries, information operations, and sabotage. Subversion of local paramilitaries occasionally succeeded but was not large enough to change the course of the campaign. The most notable success in open sources was the KGB doubling of Hodzha Shir-Age Chungara and his insurgent group in April 1981. Chungara's 250-man unit acted under KGB direction for 11 months, participated in

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[128] Joseph Collins, "Soviet Policy toward Afghanistan," *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* 36, no. 4 (1987): 202. Edward Girardet, *Afghanistan: The Soviet War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1986), 128.
[129] Edgar O'Ballance, *Afghan Wars* (London: Brassey's Book International, 2002), 124.
[130] William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 65.
[131] Bearden and Risen, *Main Enemy*, 256.
[132] United States of America, Department of the Army, *Lessons from the War in Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1989), 13.
[133] Ibid., 7. This constituted a significant strategic limitation but acted as an operational advantage.

21 major operations, and killed an estimated 20,500 other mujahedin.[134] At least three other units of similar size were co-opted, although their battlefield successes are not openly known.[135]

The KGB and KHAD also conducted information operations during the Afghan campaign. The most successful were conducted by the Afghans themselves. A 1987 study shows that approximately 70% of feuds between mujahedin groups were instigated by KHAD operatives.[136] In this case, local operatives had the cultural and political knowledge to exploit rifts between insurgent factions.

One complaint against intelligence agencies in Afghanistan was their failure to sabotage logistics and support networks in Pakistan. Milt Beardon identifies only one major act of sabotage against logistics in Pakistan during the period between 1986 and 1989.[137] However, Operation Cyclone, the CIA effort to arm the Mujahedin, was massive and would have required overt military action against Pakistan to interrupt. Covert "surgical strikes" against logistics were simply impossible against a decentralized, well-entrenched, well-supplied opponent on foreign soil; these failed when attempted.[138] Given the environment, the Soviets and KHAD instead targeted supply routes inside Afghanistan, and the CIA's focus on supplying mujahedin along the Pakistani border suggests the agencies were at least somewhat effective in interdicting supplies further inland.[139]

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[134] Mitrokhin, *KGB in Afghanistan*, 145.

[135] These were Dir Oraz Heldy in Akch, Jozjan; Dir Abdullah Jan in Faiz, Jozjan; and Iao Abdullah Khanai in Alboraz, Balkh. See Mitrokhin, *KGB in Afghanistan*, 147.

[136] Rosanne Klass, *Afghanistan: The Great Game Revisited* (New York: University Press of America, 1990), 222.

[137] Beardon and Risen, *Main Enemy*, 333-337.

[138] Lester W. Grau and Ali Ahmad Jalali, "Forbidden Cross-border Vendetta: Spetsnaz Strike into Pakistan during the Soviet-afghan War," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 18, no. 4 (December 2005). The most significant example was a covert cross-border raid by Spetsnaz at Krer in 1986 that ended with the unit being pinned down and requiring air strikes to cover their retreat.

[139] Beardon and Risen, *Main Enemy*.

LESSONS OF AFGHANISTAN

Two relevant lessons emerge from Soviet intelligence operations in Afghanistan. First, innovative HUMINT is critical in COIN. It has no substitute and cannot be conducted solely in secure areas. While the wider issue of controlling urban and rural areas is beyond this study and the purview of the intelligence community, the Afghan case demonstrates that intelligence agencies must make HUMINT penetrations in areas where the insurgents reside rather than seeking access through penetrations in government-controlled areas.

Second, liaison plays a key role in COIN. The KGB and GRU divided their efforts and support throughout the war, and this failure in liaison and capacity building cost them dearly.[140] The decision to become involved was made without regard for all intelligence available at the time. That division carried into the campaign: By patronizing different elements of the DRA and the Afghan communist party, the KGB and GRU undermined the campaign by contributing to instability in the DRA government.[141] Had these agencies liaised with one another and focused on DRA unity, they would have limited operational collisions, strengthened local institutions, and provided better advice to Soviet policymakers. Instead they acted as independent policymakers themselves, with negative consequences for COIN operations.

The Afghanistan case remains relevant to modern COIN operations and merits further study. American and NATO forces will remain in that theater for the foreseeable future, and the best and worst practices of Soviet intelligence operators will be nearly as relevant there today as

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[140]Mitrokhin, *KGB in Afghanistan*, 146. The Soviets attempted to coordinate intelligence-gathering on the national level with meetings between the KGB, GRU, Army, and Ministry of Interior beginning in 1980. For evidence that these efforts were never sufficient to give the Soviets strategic initiative in the campaign, see Abdulkader H. Sinno, *Organizations at War in Afghanistan and Beyond* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 149.

[141] By 1985, many Soviet commanders were compartmenting their operations to avoid contact with the shaken KHAD; see United States of America, Central Intelligence Agency, *The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: Five Years On* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1985), 9-10; and Sinno, *Organizations at War*, 149-152.

they were twenty years ago. In fact, some of the same mujahedin commanders, such as Jalaluddin Haqqani, are operating in Afghanistan today.

Northern Ireland, 1969-1998

The British counterinsurgency in Northern Ireland shows that success cannot be quantified by the numbers of searches conducted, people interred, or weapons seized. Instead success is found in disrupting attacks, dismantling logistical networks, and marginalizing insurgents in the eyes of the populace. Success in Northern Ireland was achieved once the British allowed intelligence to drive operations.[142] The emphasis on intelligence collection and analysis allowed the British to conduct a counterinsurgency campaign focused on protecting the population of Northern Ireland by making the PIRA ineffective as a terrorist organization.[143]

The Troubles had two distinct phases defined by dramatically different strategies. From 1969 until the early 1970s, failure to focus on intelligence collection and analysis led the military to use heavy-handed tactics including widespread internment, large-scale house searches, and excessive force in order to fight the PIRA. Realizing that this approach would not be effective over the long term, the British shifted their strategy in 1976-1978 and began attacking the logistical network of the insurgency. The British security forces improved their intelligence capabilities and placed a greater priority upon gaining timely and accurate information.[144] Without the intelligence that a thorough collection and analysis effort provided, the PIRA would never have been driven to the bargaining table.

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[142] James Dingley ed. *Combating Terrorism in Northern Ireland* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 146.
[143] Tony Geraghty, *The Irish War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2000), 349-354.
[144] Martin Dillon, *The Dirty War* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 363-366.

STRATEGIC COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: SUCCESS

The intelligence community successfully performed collection and analysis at the strategic level. For nearly a decade, the British forces faced obstacles due to a poor intelligence efforts and the increasing expertise of the PIRA.[145] However, in the late 1970s the tide turned when Brigadier James Glover, head of the Army General Staff's intelligence section, wrote several reports identifying PIRA's new compartmentalized cell-based structure,[146] improved weapons, and evolving strategy.[147] These reports encouraged a greater role for the intelligence community. Lethal military force dropped into the background as undercover operations took the forefront.[148] He also provided direction for improving collection and analysis through intelligence coordination resulting in the creation of Tasking Coordination Groups (TCGs).

TCGs greatly improved interagency coordination among the many intelligence agencies and the greater security community. Prior to their formation, security forces were plagued with poor coordination between military, intelligence, and police operations. There was duplication of efforts, accidental confrontations during operations, and occasionally even the unwitting arrest of valuable informants. TCGs served the joint purpose of preventing operational interference and streamlining information.[149] Another welcome improvement was the purchase of a computer to maintain personal dossiers on suspected PIRA members, replacing the boxes of index cards previously used. [150] Computerization included a new database for vehicle license plates, allowing officers to gain background information on the driver almost instantly.

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[145] Mark Urban, *Big Boys' Rules: The Secret Struggle against the IRA* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1992), 24.
[146] CJM Drake, "The Provisional IRA," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (Summer 1991): 5.
[147] See description of the PIRA's Staff Report seized in the arrest of Seamus Twomey in Kevin Kelley, *The Longest War: Northern Ireland and the IRA* (Westport, CN: Lawrence Hill and Company, 1988), 284-85.
[148] This occurred by 1978; see Urban, *Big Boys' Rules*, 240.
[149] Jackson, "Counterinsurgency Intelligence in a 'Long War'", 4.
[150] Roger Faligot, *Britain's Military Strategy in Ireland: The Kitson Experiment* (London: Zed Press, 1983), 124.

OPERATIONAL COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: SUCCESS

The most critical intelligence component was operational collection and analysis. Specifically, the intelligence community specialized in targeting PIRA logistics, deterring attacks, and identifying insurgents.

The foundation of victory in Northern Ireland was the intelligence community's human penetration of PIRA's ranks.[151] Ranging from low-level gunmen to high-ranking members, agents provided information on weapons shipments, logistical capabilities, and operational plans.[152] This was important because PIRA's diffuse cell structure was connected by its logistics chain and, more specifically, its quartermasters.[153]

The dismantlement of logistical networks had a negative effect upon PIRA's operational ability and its moral.[154] Agent penetration was one of the primary means which the British used to sow dissention within the ranks of the PIRA.[155] Like any insurgency or terrorist structure, internal security was a top priority. When intelligence was used to deter attacks, interdict supplies, or make arrests, PIRA counterespionage teams would ruthlessly investigate and interrogate anyone who may have been connected.[156] These crackdowns destroyed the morale of PIRA cells and tied up valuable resources which could have been used carrying out attacks.

To further diminish the PIRA's capacity for violence, the intelligence community reduced the number and success of attacks. By 1992 many areas reported that five out of six

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[151] Ministry of Defence. Chief of the General Staff, *Operation Banner: An Analysis of Military Operations in Northern Ireland* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2006).
[152] Dingley, *Combating Terrorism in Northern Ireland*, 219.
[153] Ibid., 114.
[154] Ibid., 211.
[155] Dillon, *The Dirty War*, 283-331.
[156] Ibid., 337.

PIRA attacks were abandoned as a result of British action.[157] Using the HUMINT leads to guide IMINT and SIGINT collection and analysis, the intelligence community became adept at identifying, tracking, and neutralizing weapons. The military used RAF Canberra aircraft to map and monitor the movement of weapons equipment. Gazelle helicopters equipped with special cameras filmed activity below. Small planes equipped with thermal imaging devices detected weapons caches and wire bombs. These technical efforts were useful in decreasing the risk to human life on the ground and were highly successful in locating weapons.

Once weapons were located, the next step was to monitor weapons movement. Permanent Vehicle Check Points (PVCPs) not only tracked cross-border movement but also greatly increased PIRA's risk of discovery in transporting weapons, serving as a helpful deterrent.[158] The intelligence community would install motion sensors and cameras to weapons caches to scrutinize activity at the location. One common practice was "jarking," the process of installing mini transmitters inside weapons that would track movement and serve as microphones. This method went undetected by PIRA until 1984.[159]

If functioning weaponry did manage to make its way into the hands of the PIRA, the intelligence community developed creative technological countermeasures. One important technique used upon discovery of weapons caches was to render bomb-making materials ineffective through tampering. As a modern and capable insurgency, the PIRA used a plethora of advanced devices, including IEDs, radio controlled bombs, and surface-to-air missiles. British scientists worked to develop electronic solutions ranging from sweep transmitters to antimissile

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[157] Colonel Richard Iron, "Britain's Longest War: Northern Ireland 1967-2007" in *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*, Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian, eds., (Oxford: Osprey Publishing Ltd, 2008), 177.
[158] Ibid., 176.
[159] Urban, *Big Boys' Rules*, 120.

systems in order to thwart PIRA efforts.[160] This meant maintaining constant technological flexibility and innovation, skills that the PIRA itself possessed.

Identifying and monitoring insurgents went hand in hand with the 1976 COIN strategy of Police Primacy, which gave the RUC authority over all security forces.[161] By placing priority upon protecting the population and criminalizing insurgents, the nature of the campaign was fundamentally altered. This new law enforcement approach helped to delegitimize PIRA actions by portraying members as lawless criminals.

Intelligence collection and analysis at the operational level was absolutely critical for successful criminalization. Local surveillance of people and materials became top priority as the intelligence community served a supporting role by monitoring and reporting illegal activity. One of the earliest and most creative approaches to surveillance was General Frank Kitson's Mobile Reconnaissance Force (MRF), which performed undercover surveillance under the guise of elaborate cover operations in PIRA strongholds.[162] Static observation posts, such as a vacant house or car, allowed security forces to monitor suspected terrorists and their associations. Routine and "pop" vehicle checkpoints allowed officers to inspect cars for weapons and munitions. The Army's Close Observation Platoons (COPs) were critical to acquiring insight into PIRA members' daily activity. Responsible for reporting on any IRA activities within Ulster, they specialized in monitoring the pattern of life of suspected terrorists, reporting on any

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[160]Brian Jackson, Peter Chalk, Kim Cragin, Bruce Newsome, John Parachini, William Rosenau, Erin Simpson, Melanie Sisson, and Donald Temple, "Provisional Irish Republican Army," *Breaching the Fortress Wall: Understanding Terrorist Efforts to Overcome Defensive Technologies* (Monograph, The RAND Corporation, 2007), 96.
[161] Urban, *Big Boys' Rules*, 12.
[162] For the Four Square Laundry example, see Bradley Bamford, "The Role and Effectiveness of Intelligence in Northern Ireland," *Intelligence and National Security* (December 2005): 9.

irregular activity.[163] Additionally, the RUC's Special Branch became adept at technical surveillance and worked closely with MI5 on technological innovation.

COVERT ACTION: MINIMAL

The intelligence community's use of covert action was minimal. Instead, priority was placed upon collection and analysis, which was supported by military and law enforcement units specifically trained for the task, most notably the British SAS. As collection and analysis improved, military and law enforcement operations met with greater success. Accurate and actionable intelligence enabled operations to be better targeted and the use of force was reduced to a minimum.

LESSONS OF NORTHERN IRELAND

The Northern Ireland experience shows that quality intelligence is key in a counterinsurgency campaign against a decentralized force. The effective use of surveillance, technical collections, and informants drove the PIRA into chaos, triggering a slow but steady trend towards demoralization of its ranks and decreased membership. The eventual effect of criminalization, hand in hand with PIRA penetration and deterrence, was marginalization of PIRA goals and operations. This forced the PIRA into the political arena, the last area in which it could still freely operate. This case shows the need for constant reevaluation of insurgent strategy, regular dialogue between intelligence agencies and other security organizations, and reliance upon HUMINT as an important component in directing technical collections.

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[163] Urban, *Big Boys' Rules*, 45.

Conclusions

Although the six cases analyzed differ in many respects, there is a great deal about the role of intelligence in COIN that can be learned from them. By dividing the lessons into strategic and operational collection and analysis, as well as covert action, the intelligence community is able to better understand each lesson as a part of the greater COIN effort. This will facilitate the development of a more coherent and effective intelligence doctrine.

STRATEGIC COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

From the six cases analyzed, four lessons were drawn for strategic collection and analysis: consider the motivations of insurgent groups, gather intelligence from a cross section of the population, reevaluate the COIN strategy, and coordinate intelligence gathering and sharing. These lessons can inform the intelligence community on the most important strategic information to collect, who to gather that information from, and how to behave as an organization.

Motivations of insurgent groups are clearly one of the most important factors for the intelligence community to consider. This information informs policymakers not only of why the insurgents are fighting but also how long and hard the insurgent groups are willing to fight. In the case of the Philippines, the U.S. believed the war was over after the conventional campaign ended.[164] This led the U.S. to be completely unprepared to fight the growing insurgency. In Malaya, the British lacked the capabilities to adequately consider motives of the insurgency. With so few Chinese speakers, it was difficult for the British to predict the looming threat of

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[164] Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, 21.

insurgency, especially given the disjointed nature of the Chinese insurgent groups themselves.[165] The French intelligence community in Algeria knew that the Algerians wanted independence and might revolt,[166] but it was unable to convince policymakers of this fact. In Vietnam, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese were clearly willing to withstand the U.S. attrition campaign and still continue fighting. Finally, in the Afghanistan case, the Soviets did not understand that the mujahedin were more than tools of Amin and the U.S., and that they were willing to keep fighting even after the initial Soviet invasion.[167] Because the need to consider motivations is so prevalent across the cases, this is one of the most pressing lessons for the intelligence community to learn. Although considering motivations may seem like common sense, the historical record shows that intelligence organizations often neglect this aspect.

Intelligence collection efforts are often concentrated on the wrong individuals and groups in counterinsurgency campaigns. In the Philippines, for example, early intelligence efforts were focused on the wealthy Filipino elites. This led to inaccurate intelligence on the willingness of the Filipino population to accept U.S. rule and the need for counterinsurgency efforts.[168] In Algeria, the Europeans were surprised by the popular revolt. It was only by gathering information from the Algerians themselves that French intelligence was able to predict the insurgency.[169] Although there is a tendency to seek information from those friendliest to the COIN forces, it may not provide a complete picture. For this reason, intelligence should be carefully gathered from a cross section of the population in order to fully understand the environment and insurgent organizations.

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[165] Short, *Communist Insurgency in Malaya*, 77-90. The Chinese did not have a well-formed and coordinated attack plan, making the lack of access caused by the dearth of Chinese speakers in the British forces even more damaging.
[166] Corum, *Bad Strategies*, 42.
[167] Ustinov et al, *Report to the CC CPSU*.
[168] Linn, "Intelligence and Low-Intensity Conflict," 91.; Linn, *The Philippine War*, 29.
[169] Corum, *Bad Strategies*.

Another important lesson on the strategic level is the need to reevaluate the COIN goals and strategy as time progresses. Even though its advice was not heeded, the CIA argued that the COIN strategy in Vietnam would not be effective. The CIA produced reports stating not only that aerial bombardment would not alter the North's logistics and will to fight but also that the mining of North Vietnamese ports would not significantly limit the North's ability to acquire new supplies.[170] The COIN strategy was also continuously analyzed in Northern Ireland, leading to a decrease in the use of force and an increased emphasis on intelligence collection and analysis.[171] Without reevaluating strategy to adapt to the often rapid changes in tactics of insurgent groups, counterinsurgent forces may become unable to address the new challenges posed by the insurgency.

The final strategic lesson is the need to coordinate intelligence efforts. The KGB and GRU were never able to fully coordinate their activities in Afghanistan.[172] This led to decisions being made without the benefit of all the information available within the intelligence community. In Northern Ireland, the initial lack of coordination led to poorly coordinated efforts by the military, police, and intelligence organizations. After the TCGs were created, however, information was shared more effectively and fewer operations were disrupted by redundant efforts or the arrests of informants.[173] The tendency for intelligence organizations to hoard information and engage in turf battles is clearly counterproductive for intelligence efforts as a whole. As intelligence sharing increases, so too will the likelihood of successful COIN efforts.

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[170] Palmer, "U.S. Intelligence and Vietnam," 37, 43-44, 47-48, 63, 75-76, 124.
[171] Drake, "The Provisional IRA," 5; and Urban, *Big Boys' Rules*, 240.
[172] Mitrokhin, *KGB in Afghanistan*, 146.
[173] Jackson, "Counterinsurgency Intelligence in a 'Long War,'" 4.

OPERATIONAL COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The case studies provided five important lessons for collection and analysis at the operational level: intelligence collection should be decentralized, regional coordination and intelligence sharing is necessary, logistics must be identified and monitored, interrogations can carry audience costs, and technical collections should be driven by human intelligence. These lessons should help the intelligence community prioritize its collection and analysis efforts in support of the war fighter.

Because insurgent groups tend to vary by locality, it is important to decentralize intelligence collection efforts so that the intelligence collectors can operate in whatever way best suits their environment. The U.S. intelligence efforts in the Philippines were decentralized at the district level. This allowed intelligence collection to remain adaptive, and local commanders were able to develop their own intelligence networks for collection and analysis. The same practice can also be found in Malaya, where intelligence collection and analysis was performed at the district and local levels.[174] By remaining adaptive at the local and regional levels, the intelligence community is able to respond to changes in insurgent operations more quickly.

Regional coordination becomes important as intelligence is decentralized. In Malaya, the British created district, state, and federal WECs to enhance the willingness to share intelligence by providing a framework in which to share. By reducing the chaos of intelligence sharing, the British were able to better understand the insurgent groups and their operations.[175] Following the British example, the CIA attempted to create intelligence coordination methods and centers,

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[174] Sarkesian, *Unconventional Conflicts*, 143-145.
[175] Mackay, *Malayan Emergency*, 81; and Ladwig, "Managing Counterinsurgency," 61-62.

including Target Folders, PICCs, DICCs, and Province Phoenix Committees.[176] These efforts, however, were not as successful as the WECs in Malaya. Coordination in Vietnam was plagued by uneven implementation, lack of trust, too few personnel, and loss of CIA leadership.[177] The intelligence community as a whole must find a way to foster communication and trust across agencies.

The most important piece of operational information on which the intelligence community should focus is the logistics of the insurgency. This was the most significant focus in the Philippines case, where General MacArthur directed the intelligence community to provide information on the Filipino shadow governments. These shadow governments handled insurgent recruitment and punishment, as well as the collection of taxes, and many of the leaders were actually civic officials the U.S. had trusted enough to include in the government.[178] The U.S. identified and neutralized the insurgent support structure, which eventually led to the insurgency's inability to continue fighting. The British in Northern Ireland identified insurgent logistics by monitoring the movement of weapons rather than interdicting them. Without monitoring insurgent logistics, the British would have found identifying the diffuse cells of the insurgency very difficult.[179] The problem of logistics becomes even more pronounced when there is an external supporter involved, such as in Vietnam. The CIA made efforts to monitor the Ho Chi Minh Trail by reconnaissance and a network of sensors. [180] Although the U.S. made efforts to monitor this logistics artery, the policymakers and war fighters were unable to sever the support. Although the intelligence community is not responsible for the successful use of

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[176] Johnson, "Phoenix/Phung Hoang," 336-342; and Andradé, *Ashes to Ashes*, 42.
[177] Tang et al, *A Vietcong Memior*, 201; and Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 127-135, 142, and 340.
[178] Linn, *U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency*, 43.
[179] Dingley, *Combating Terrorism in Northern Ireland*, 219.
[180] Rosenau, "U.S. Air Ground Operations," 8-14.

intelligence on logistics, it should give priority to identifying these structures in order to assist the policymakers and war fighters in their efforts to sever support.

The intelligence community should always be aware of the audience costs of its actions. This is especially true of interrogations. In Algeria, the French intelligence community obtained excellent tactical intelligence through harsh interrogation methods, including torture, but this operational success came at a high strategic cost.[181] The FLN increased its terror campaign as a response to the widespread use of torture,[182] and the citizens of France turned against the overall COIN campaign when they learned of these methods.[183] The need for operational intelligence should be carefully weighed against the audience costs whenever questionable methods are under consideration.

The final operational lesson drawn from the case studies is that technical collections should be driven by human intelligence. Technology does give the intelligence community certain advantages and allows for collection with fewer risks to personnel, but it is not a silver bullet. Unlike human intelligence, SIGINT and IMINT often cannot provide context. There may be an increased amount of activity around certain buildings, but technical collections cannot always explain why. In Vietnam, the value of SIGINT and IMINT alone was often limited. Pairing technical collections with HUMINT, however, greatly increased their value.[184] The British in Northern Ireland also achieved success by using HUMINT to locate weapons, and then SIGINT and IMINT to track their movements. Although human intelligence can be difficult to obtain in COIN, the case studies show that many intelligence communities have successfully acquired intelligence through human sources and made important contributions to the COIN

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[181] Smith, *French Stake in Algeria*, 148; and Morgan, *My Battle of Algiers*, 154.
[182] Heggoy, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Algeria*, 232.
[183] Horne, *Savage War of Peace*, 232-233.
[184] Haynok, *Spartans in Darkness*, 104, 106, and 110-112.

goals without technical collections. Human intelligence can be effectively used to target technical collections, greatly increasing the value of the intelligence obtained.

COVERT ACTION

Three lessons were drawn from the cases about covert action. First, to conduct information operations successfully, the intelligence community should target them at specific individuals or groups, and base them on credible information. Second, the intelligence community should embed intelligence personnel with local paramilitary units. Finally, intelligence, especially HUMINT, should inform and guide any attempts at covert action.

Information operations are important in influencing the population and the insurgent groups. In order to effectively influence, the intelligence community should use credible information and target the operations at specific individuals or groups to break them away from the insurgency. In Malaya this was accomplished primarily by using surrendered enemy personnel to convince the population and insurgents of the benefits of supporting the British.[185] The British were also successful at targeting specific insurgents and their supporters, namely the anecdote of the pregnant woman in the jungle.[186] While mostly overt, the U.S. information operations in the Philippines were successful in convincing the Filipinos of the benefits of cooperating with the U.S., and the Federal Party was used to rally support for U.S. rule.[187] Many of the information operations in Vietnam were successful at breaking individuals and groups away from the Viet Cong because they were targeted very specifically. By broadcasting the names of insurgents and sending letters to their families, the CIA was able to convince them to

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[185] Short, *Communist Insurrection in Malaya*, 418-420.
[186] Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, 94.
[187] Wolff, *Little Brown Brother*, 322; Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, 218-219; and Linn, *The Philippine War*, 215.

defect.[188] Also, by spreading rumors and leaving conspicuous gifts with Viet Cong members' families, the CIA was able to create distrust and confusion among insurgent groups.[189] Information operations in Algeria were far less successful because the French did not understand the Algerians well enough to influence them. The use of newspapers to influence an illiterate population had little hope of success.[190]

Local paramilitaries can be an effective tool when paired with intelligence personnel. In Vietnam, PRUs were successful not only at neutralizing VCI in local areas but also in collecting local intelligence.[191] The Soviets also experienced success with local paramilitary groups. The use of small, co-opted insurgent groups allowed the KGB to perform many successful operations and eliminate thousands of mujahedin combatants.[192] Because of their local knowledge and ability to blend into the local populations, local paramilitary units can be a very useful part of the intelligence community's covert action arsenal.

The final covert action lesson to consider is that covert action should always be driven by intelligence, particularly HUMINT. The information operations found throughout the six cases were most successful when the intelligence community was informed on specific individuals or groups to target, and when the intelligence community knew the motivations of the insurgent groups. When the French information operations in Algeria are compared to the British operations in Malaya and the U.S. operations in Vietnam, it is clear that the informed, targeted operations are superior. Paramilitaries are also more effective when driven by intelligence. One

[188] Johnson, "Phoenix/Phung Hoang," 286, 289.
[189] Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 150-151.
[190] Polk, *Violent Politics*, 138; and Morgan, *My Battle of Algiers*, 154.
[191] Andradé, *Ashes to Ashes*, 3, 174.
[192] Mitrokhin, *KGB in Afghanistan*, 145.

of the main reasons the PRUs in Vietnam were so successful was because their actions were guided by intelligence.[193]

THE WAY FORWARD

There are many lessons the intelligence community can learn about its role in COIN by examining the existing literature on past counterinsurgencies. By expanding the depth and breadth of case studies, as well as by examining classified materials that were unavailable for the writing of this report, the intelligence community can begin to draw its own lessons about the role of intelligence in COIN. It will be able to test the lessons drawn in this report, as well. The framework of this report should prove useful to the intelligence community in this regard.

Although counterintelligence was left out of this analysis, this is an area of intelligence that is worth exploring further. Insurgent groups tend to have their own intelligence methods and structures, and little has been written on how to detect, monitor, and neutralize them. The lessons available regarding counterintelligence may prove highly valuable to the intelligence community and COIN efforts as a whole.

Before new standards and doctrine are established, the intelligence community should consult with intelligence professionals, policymakers, military officers, and academics in order to refine its findings and draw the most accurate lessons possible. There is a wealth of knowledge and experience available among those communities, which has not yet been tapped for this purpose. The evolution of the intelligence community's best practices is essential in aiding U.S. COIN forces in today's, and future, COIN campaigns.

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[193] Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey*, 165, 170.

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The Intelligence Community in Counterinsurgency (COIN): Historical Lessons and Best Practices

Capstone Project for the RAND Corporation's Intelligence Policy Center (IPC)

What is the Role of Intelligence in COIN?

Intelligence Operations ➡️ Effectiveness in COIN

> Everyone acknowledges the role of the intelligence community in COIN but questions remain:
>
> ▪ What are the best practices for Collection and Analysis?
>
> ▪ What are the best practices for Covert Action?

Goals and Method

Goals

- Help the intelligence community develop a COIN doctrine
- Search for best intelligence practices during COIN campaigns

Method

- Review COIN literature and intelligence literature
- Develop criteria for intelligence success
- Examine performance of intelligence community in historical COIN campaigns

Pathways to Success in COIN

Mainly Intelligence Agencies

Consider the Operational Environment
Identify Insurgent Organizational Structure

Combined Responsibility

Target and Neutralize Insurgents
Sever Insurgent Support Networks
Reduce or Disrupt Operations
Shift Loyalties Away from Insurgency
Empower the Existing Government
Coordinate the Interagency Process

Mainly War-Fighter

Control the Population
Protect the Population

How Does the Intelligence Community Contribute?

Operations in the Intelligence Cycle

__Covert Action__

Direction

Dissemination

Intelligence Cycle

Collection

Analysis

Processing
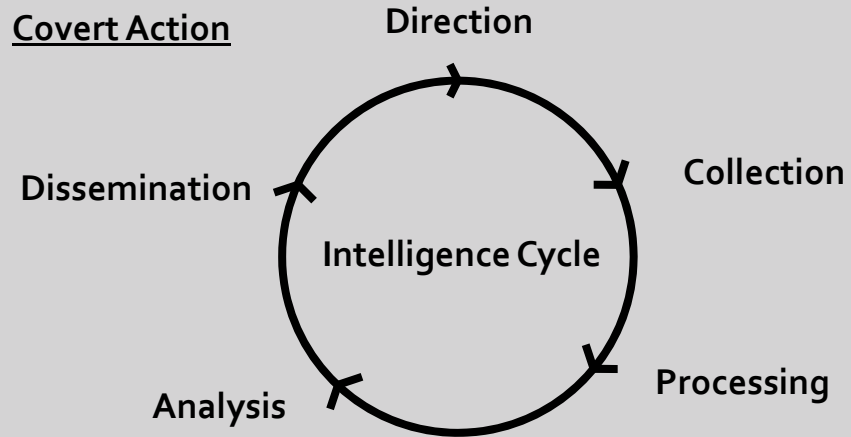
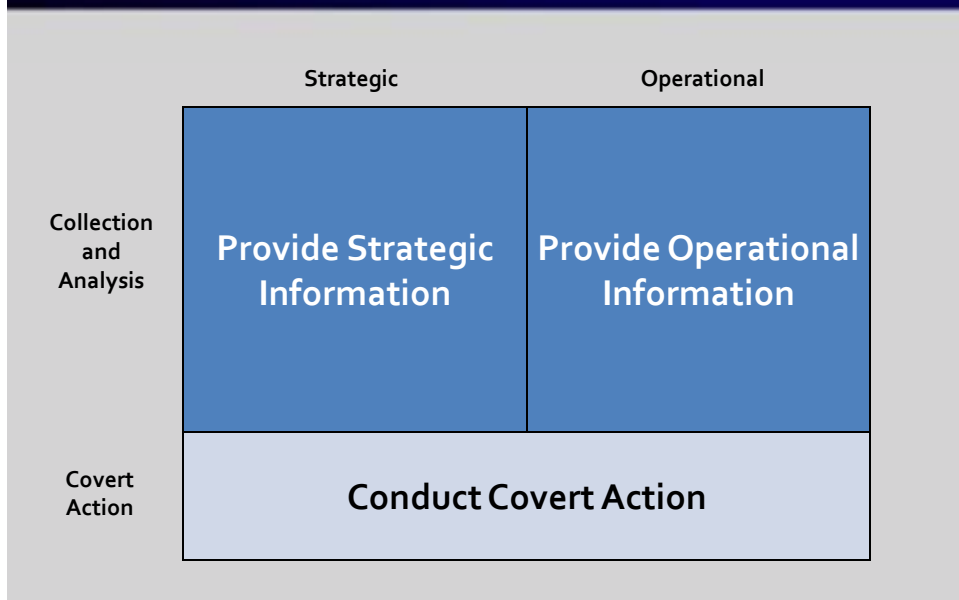## Intelligence Functions in COIN

Collection and Analysis
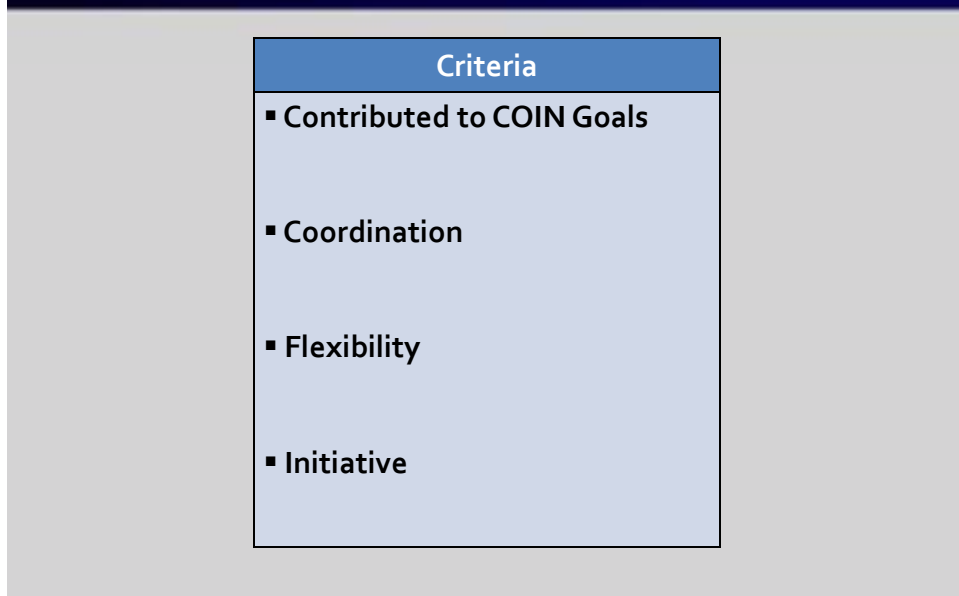- Intelligence Disciplines (INTs)
- Analysis
- Liaison

Covert Action
- Information Operations
- Paramilitary Action
- Rendition
- Sabotage
- Deception
- Subversion

Intelligence Framework in COIN

	Strategic	Operational
Collection and Analysis	Provide Strategic Information	Provide Operational Information
Covert Action	Conduct Covert Action	

Evaluating Intelligence Effectiveness

Criteria

- Contributed to COIN Goals

- Coordination

- Flexibility

- Initiative

Key Themes for Intelligence in COIN

	Strategic	Operational
Collection and Analysis	Prioritize collection and analysis on insurgent motives to shape COIN strategy	Prioritize collection and analysis on logistics and support over manpower
Covert Action	Conduct covert action to supplement, not supersede, collection and battlefield success	

Drawing Lessons from History

- **Intelligence Methods and Effectiveness Vary**
- **Mix of COIN Characteristics**
- **Relevant to Current COIN Campaigns**

The Philippines: 1899-1902	Algeria: 1954-1962
Malaya: 1948-1960	Vietnam: 1964-1975
Northern Ireland: 1969-1998	Afghanistan: 1979-1989

The Philippines
1899-1902

1899   1900   1902

1901

The Philippines
1899-1902

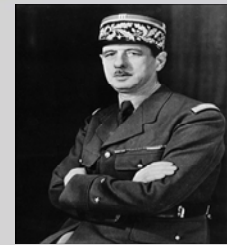|	Strategic	Operational
Collection and Analysis	Reliance on intelligence from Manila elite led to slow response to insurgency	Identification of insurgent support structure targeted insurgents' ability to fight
Covert Action	U.S. support of Filipino Federalist Party won public support for U.S. rule	

Malaya
1948-1960

1949   1957   1960
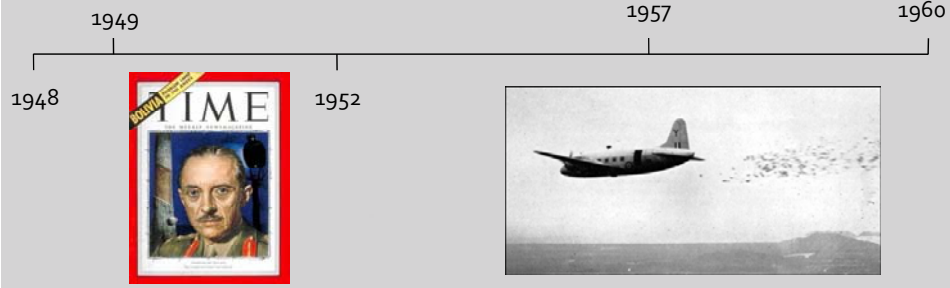
1948   1952

Malaya
1948-1960

	Strategic	Operational
Collection and Analysis	Weak to non-existent preparation for COIN hamstrung initial collection efforts and failed to inform COIN strategy	HUMINT penetration of insurgency by surrendered communists enabled targeted operations on insurgent structure
Covert Action	Targeted, specific information operations discredited the insurgency and empowered the Malayan government	

Algeria
1954-1962

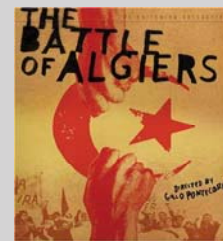1961

1954   1957   1962

Algeria
1954-1962

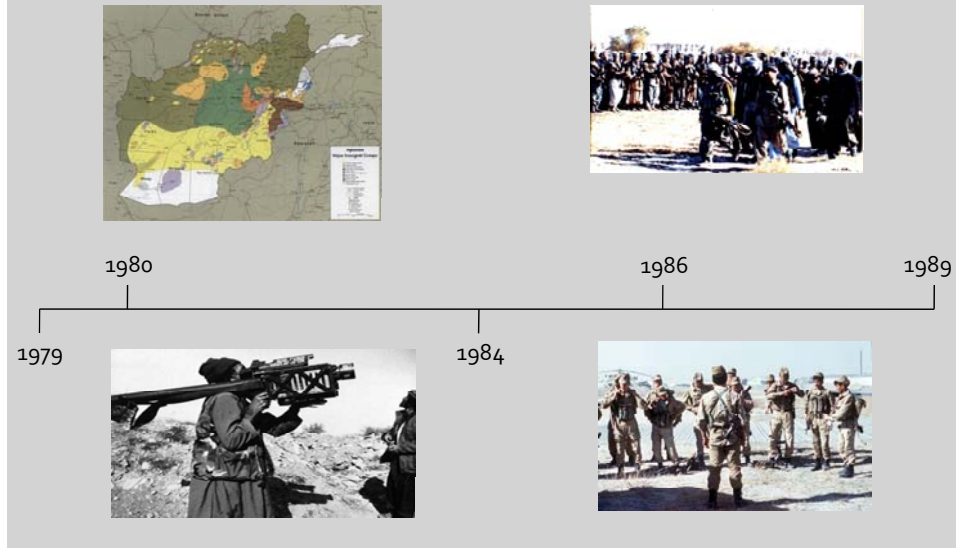|	Strategic	Operational
Collection and Analysis	Intelligence community warned French officials about the possibility of violent unrest in Algeria	The use of torture alienated the population
Covert Action	Conducted poor information operations to shift loyalty of the National Liberation Front (FLN) fighters	

Vietnam
1964-1975

1964   1968   1972   1975

Vietnam
1964-1975

	Strategic	Operational
Collection and Analysis	CIA, INR, and NIE reports identified strengths of North Vietnam and weaknesses in the South Vietnamese government	Poor coordination and analysis limited ability to exploit HUMINT, identify Viet Cong Infrastructure
Covert Action	Elite local paramilitary units neutralized members of the Viet Cong Infrastructure with CIA funding and direction	

Afghanistan 1979-1989

1979 — 1980 — 1984 — 1986 — 1989

Afghanistan 1979-1989

	Strategic	Operational
Collection and Analysis	KGB fundamentally misunderstood the nature of the insurgency and advocated intervention, although they knew it would be very difficult	Failed to identify insurgent organizational structure and locations
Covert Action	Engaged in deception, subversion, and paramilitary action against insurgents inside Afghanistan	

Northern Ireland
1969-1998

1972

1998

1969

1976-1978

Northern Ireland
1969-1998

	Strategic	Operational
Collection and Analysis	Identified PIRA strategy and used TCGs to improve intelligence coordination	Identified logistical structure, designed attack countermeasures, and supported criminalization of the insurgents
Covert Action	Poorly targeted internment resulted in public backlash and strengthened the PIRA	

Lessons for Collection and Analysis: Strategic

Function	Best Practice	Why?
Collection: HUMINT Cross-Section	HUMINT collection should represent a cross-section of the population.	Philippines: gathered from elites Vietnam: Census Grievance Northern Ireland: religious rifts
Collection and Analysis: Insurgent Strategy	Focus HUMINT, SIGINT, open-source, and regional expertise on insurgent motives.	Afghanistan: misunderstood motives Vietnam: IC not heeded Philippines: ignored motives
Liaison: Active Dialogue	Assertively evaluate the COIN strategy.	Northern Ireland: IC reports led to change Vietnam: IC advised, not heeded Philippines: field intelligence not heeded
Liaison : Coordination	Share intelligence across regions and up to a centralized hub.	Malaya: isolated networks allowed insurgent movement Algeria: centralized hub Northern Ireland: TCGs

Lessons for Collection and Analysis: Operational

Function	Best Practice	Why?
Collection: HUMINT	Direct technical collections based on HUMINT.	Northern Ireland: HUMINT provided warning, direction Afghanistan: technical collections difficult in terrain
Collection: Interrogation	Set standards of interrogation based on audience costs.	Algeria: torture led to lost support Afghanistan: tortured extensively Northern Ireland: harsh interrogation fueled propaganda
Collection and Analysis: Population Database	Create a population database to study demographics and movement.	Algeria: records of citizens, locations Vietnam: Census Grievance and Family Census
Collection and Analysis: Primary Target	Target insurgent logistics and support networks.	Philippines: targeted support Northern Ireland: quartermasters Vietnam: targeted VCI
Collection and Analysis: Regional Focus	Decentralize to the regional level.	Afghanistan: Cascade teams Philippines: tailored C&A Northern Ireland: TCGs
Liaison: Coordination	Establish clear authority at the regional level for interagency cooperation.	Malaya: DWECs Vietnam: local competition, mistrust

Lessons for Collection and Analysis: Operational

Function	Best Practices	Why?
Overall: Importance of HUMINT and Analysis	Well-analyzed HUMINT improves the effectiveness of covert action.	Northern Ireland: CA improved with C&A Vietnam: needed intelligence to target neutralization
Information Operations: Success Multipliers	Information operations can't be cheap talk and should be targeted.	Malaya: targeted individuals, offered citizenship Vietnam: Chieu Hoi program Philippines: US provided incentives for cooperation
Paramilitary Action: Local Personnel	Embed intelligence personnel with reliable local paramilitaries to neutralize insurgents.	Vietnam: PRUs knew terrain Algeria: Harkis provided local face Afghanistan: turned certain mujahideen groups

The Way Forward

- Expand the depth and breadth of case studies.

- Examine the tactical level of intelligence operations.

- Solicit further feedback from intelligence officers, academics, policymakers, and military officers to refine these standards.

- Formulate doctrine for intelligence community involvement in COIN.