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Daesh (also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, ISIS or ISIL), may seem to be in its death throes with the loss of Dabiq and the ongoing operation to take back Mosul. The European Police Office (EUROPOL) already predicted that terrorist attacks linked to Daesh will continue as the organization declines.[5] Coordinated planned attacks such as the Paris attacks in November 2015 have been rare. Unlike al-Qaeda, Daesh created a strategy to encourage self-radicalization and self-started attacks. In essence, Daesh outsourced terrorism. The group has been effective when it comes to radicalizing people through the internet. Some have been driven to becoming foreign fighters, many of which have come from Europe. Canadians, too, have seen media coverage of our own migrating jihadists with headlines such as “He is from Windsor”.[6] It can also drive some towards homegrown terrorism, such as the recent case of Aaron Driver who plotted to target a transportation hub in London, Ontario.[6] For many Canadians, this brought online radicalization closer to home.

Due to Daesh’s success and its use of the internet and social media, a third by-product of online radicalization has been introduced – that of the non-violent supporter. Non-violent supporters offer material and financial support, but also spread Daesh’s message through means of social media and internet message boards. They proselytize these messages at the ground level and that is what makes it more dangerous than al-Qaeda.

Non-Violent Support
Non-violent support does not attract the same amount of mainstream attention that the prospect of radicalization and self-started terrorism do. The reasons are obvious, as the threat of an attack and potential casualties far outweigh a simple re-tweet of a Twitter post or the sending of a pre-paid credit card. However, such non-violent support, albeit material or not, creates a wider sense that Daesh has a semblance of support around the globe. By creating a wider international community of supporters, Daesh feeds into itself. For instance, Daesh sympathizers in Europe can communicate with other sympathizers across the globe and find like-minded individuals nearby and create digital communities. These digital communities offer a place for radical dialogue as their own communities at home would not condone their beliefs. It also provides a space where the digital community can encourage others to radicalize and either engage in self-started terrorism or travel abroad to join the jihad.[4] The reality is that many Daesh supporters either do not have the financial means to travel abroad and join the group, or that they lack the will to do so. Non-violent support has been more prevalent for Daesh as its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, called for assistance to help build an Islamic caliphate.[5] This open appeal for support created opportunities for those who were unwilling to join a violent jihad.

Non-violent support does not just exist in the digital world, but has real-life implications. The reality is that many Daesh supporters either do not have the financial means to travel abroad and join the group, or that they lack the will to do so. Non-violent support has been more prevalent for Daesh as its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, called for assistance to help build an Islamic caliphate.[5] This open appeal for support created opportunities for those who were unwilling to join a violent jihad.

Online Influence
The social media savvy of Daesh was proven even in its early days when it was still the al-Qaeda affiliate in Iraq (AQI). A video of the beheading of American civilian, Nick Berg, by a group of masked jihadists and their leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, received worldwide attention and the condemnation of al-Qaeda Central. Within 24 hours of posting, the video was downloaded more than 500,000 times and mirrored onto other sites.[11] It did not take long for that download number to reach into the millions. Since then, Daesh has created professionally styled propaganda videos through its three main “media outlets”, which are then disseminated through their official Daesh Twitter channels and other social media platform accounts.[12] Through social media and internet forums, Daesh (and other terrorist organizations) carry out their recruitment campaigns. Foreign fighters in Daesh ranks are estimated to be more than 36,500, including at least 6,600 from Western countries.[13]
This surge of foreign fighters has swelled Daesh ranks and as a result, the group has incorporated a social media strategy to further heighten its impact. Daesh encouraged all of its fighters to post tweets from the frontlines, as well as provide images and short films. This would generate a tidal wave of propaganda from all fronts and ranks within the Daesh sphere. All of this is then systematically proliferated and shared around the globe.

This is demonstrated by the inordinate amount of Twitter and social media accounts that are supportive of Daesh. Last year, Rob Wainwright, Director of EUROPOL, stated that Daesh had up to 50,000 Twitter accounts and sent out approximately 100,000 tweets daily. At one point, Pro-Daesh supporters “posted an estimated 133,442 messages on social media every day on Twitter.” In February, Twitter claimed that the company had shut down 125,000 accounts that were linked to Daesh.

Unfortunately, shutting down an account for Daesh-related activities has the unintended consequence of providing the user a ‘badge of honour’ and actually encourages many to create a new account and continue with new fervor.

In the long run, this may have had an impact, as analysis conducted by the RAND Corporation concluded that there was a clear decline in the number of Daesh supporters that tweet daily. The decline began in early April 2015, “when approximately 2,000 supporters were tweeting per day, to the end of May, when that number declined to approximately 1,300.” A year later, in April 2016, Daesh rallied its social media followers around the globe to wage a social media war to assert their propaganda presence on the internet. Daesh supporters have been estimated to tweet, on average, 60 times a day and utilize a sophisticated understanding of hashtags and other social media multipliers.

In addition to the online propaganda, there is another element to Daesh's online activity. The group inspired the creation of a Cyber Caliphate organization of hackers. The 'Cyber Caliphate Army' attracted the world’s attention when the U.S. Central Command’s (CENTCOM) Twitter and YouTube accounts were hacked. Most recently, Kuwaiti authorities detained a state employee that was implicated in belonging to the Cyber Caliphate Army. A 21-year old hacker, Ardit Ferizi, was also recently sentenced to 20 years in a U.S. prison for providing the information of approximately 1,300 U.S. government officials to the Cyber Caliphate organization. His lawyers argued that, “He was a nonsensical, misguided teenager who did not know what he was doing…He has never embraced [Daesh]'s ideology.” This further establishes Daesh's campaign to inspire others online to embrace its own brand of ‘jihadi cool’.

The Troll Brigade

It has been a long-held belief that terrorist recruits originate from societies that suffer from poor socio-economic conditions. In fact, many recruits are coming from ‘prosperous, ethnically and linguistically homogenous countries’, and a body of empirical literature is confirming that there is a negative correlation from the widely held belief that there is a link between terrorism and a lack of economic prosperity.

There are many that take part in online jihadist activity, albeit by sharing social media posts or taking part in jihadist internet forums. These internet activities are compounded by the fact that Daesh, and other terrorist organizations, create these forums in order to attract potential recruits and sympathizers. Internet communication is also aimed to plan, coordinate, fundraise and data mine. Internet forums and social media accounts are emotionally attractive for what are society’s outsiders. It becomes a place where they are welcomed, everyone is ‘brother’ or ‘sister’, and are given a sense of belonging. This plays into the rising counter-culture phenomenon of ‘jihadi cool’. This counter-culture campaign attempts to make jihad attractive to those who are interested in an adventure, are disaffected with their physical community, and do not have an extensive reading of the Quran. Daesh's internet supporters, for the most part, are not radicalized to the point of wanting to carry out violent attacks, but demonstrate a certain attractiveness to this counter-culture campaign. These supporters, who actively support the jihad but who are neither planning to go
abroad and join the jihad or become self-started terrorists at home, still constitute a threat.

The Bellingcat, an online open-source investigative group, examined Daesh’s alarming social media campaign by attempted to geo-locate where photos of Daesh support were taken. It turned out that many were from places in the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, and Germany. Regardless, the act of sharing photos of support for Daesh across Europe creates a situation where the digital community has become far more physical and demonstrates that there is a circle of Daesh supporters across the continent, as well as in Asia, the Middle East and North America.

The real life implications of a possible non-violent Daesh-sympathetic cell are already apparent in Europe. It is estimated that there may be 30 to 40 Daesh supporters at large in Europe that helped support the Paris attacks. Daesh will eventually be removed from Iraq and Syria, but will still maintain a presence elsewhere in the world through its affiliates in Afghanistan and Libya. The desire to establish a physical Caliphate has been achieved and although diminished, the group will continue to have some attractiveness. The question, of course, is how the group will move forward.

Daesh Going Forward

Non-violent supporters can provide Daesh with an avenue for it to continue its existence. As Daesh has outsourced its attacks on the West by inspiring self-started terrorism, Daesh can recruit Westerners to take a more active role in cyber-attacks and in its propaganda campaign.

Daesh’s media outlets were created by Ahmed Abousamra, who obtained an IT degree and worked in telecommunications prior to his self-radicalization. Under his direction, Daesh created several media outlets for propaganda dissemination, one of which is of particular interest. Al-Ittihad is the film production unit that has been creating slick, high-production quality videos that the group disseminates.

However, Daesh’s video propaganda production has been in decline since late 2015. One of the reasons attributed to this is that Daesh has not been successful in the battlefield and has put a strain on its media services. But this production of future videos and materials can be outsourced, just as its social media campaign and even lone-wolf attacks have been. If Daesh decides to pursue this, it will be taking another lesson from the Pakistani terrorist group, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). Many compared the 2015 Paris attacks to that of 2008 Mumbai attacks, which was carried out by LeT operatives. LeT also outsourced part of its propaganda operation. Following the Mumbai attacks, Talha Saeed, the son of the LeT leader, came into contact with Jubair Ahmad over the internet. Ahmad, a Pakistani-American who lived in Virginia, agreed to create and disseminate LeT propaganda and recruitment videos on YouTube and did so in September 2010. Ahmad was arrested in 2013 after a two year FBI investigation. He pleaded guilty in December of the same year.

“JIHADI COOL”, ATTEMPTS TO MAKE JIHAD ATTRACTION TO THOSE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN AN ADVENTURE, BUT ARE DISAFFECTED WITH THEIR PHYSICAL COMMUNITY, AND DO NOT HAVE AN EXTENSIVE READING OF THE QURAN.

The online component for Daesh could also continue to inspire people like Ardit Ferizi to conduct cyber-attacks. These attacks do not have to be the sophisticated attacks on nuclear power plants that have caused sleepless nights for many officials, but can be as unrefined as publishing a Daesh hit list of randomized citizens as it had done so in June. The objective of imbuing fear on a population can be achieved in many different ways. Unfortunately, in the 21st century, creating such an atmosphere does not necessarily require a physical presence.

Cyber Battle

Daesh is not the only combatant on the internet waging a pitched cyber battle. The UK Ministry of Defence set up a new cyber-unit to counter propaganda on social media sites. The U.S. State Department has also been waging a social media war with Daesh. Twitter, Facebook and other internet companies have joined the fight, although after some prod- ding from the U.S. Government. The battle between insurgent or terrorist versus a govern- ment is always one of adaptation – who can adapt the quickest and be the most efficient? In September 2016, Google launched an ini- tiative that they believe will combat radical- ism. In theory, it does seem practical and effective. Google’s think tank, Jigsaw, believes that this can be achieved by playing ads that contrast Daesh propaganda and messages. It will do this by utilising 1,700 keywords that are used for Daesh-related searches. There are already possible counter-measures that Daesh supporters can implement, as one of the jihadi-approved web browsers, Opera, contains an ad-blocker and free VPN service.

As the degradation campaign draws to an end and Daesh is thrown out of Iraq and Syria, we need to look toward the next insurgency. Lessons will be learnt on either side, but if another insurgent internet campaign begins – we need to be many steps ahead and have tools to stymy the threat.

STEWART WEBB

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THE ABU SAYYAF GROUP: BACKGROUND AND ORIGINS

The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) – also known by its more formal name, Al-Harakatul Islamiya (Islamic Movement) – is an Islamic terrorist organization established in the southern Philippines in the early 1990s. Better known for its kidnapping-for-ransom (KFR) activities, the ASG has also engaged in bombings, assassinations, and extortion activities. The range of its depredations has not been limited to the Philippines alone, however. It has undertaken kidnappings in Sabah, Malaysia and on the high seas between the southern Philippines, Sabah, and Indonesia.

Concerted efforts have been expended by the Philippine Government to eliminate this group, a campaign aided by the U.S. military starting the early 2000s and recently by Malaysia and Indonesia. Despite the claims of the Philippine Government that its forces have been substantially degraded, after 25 years, the ASG still very much exists, and in many ways seems to be more of a threat than ever.

SO, WHO ARE THE ABU SAYYAF? WHAT ARE THEIR MOTIVATIONS? AND WHAT CAN BE DONE?

THE HISTORY AND INFLUENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES’ ISLAMIC TERRORIST GROUPS

By Victor Taylor
The principal founder of the Abu Sayyaf Group was a charismatic Islamic preacher from the island of Basilan by the name of Abdurajak Abu-bakar Janjalani. Janjalani is said to have studied Islamic theology and jurisprudence in Saudi Arabia, Libya and Pakistan, and was influenced by the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam. He was allegedly one of the thousands of foreign mujahideen who fought in the Afghan war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. It is said that he met Osama Bin Laden during his time in Pakistan. Subsequently, a link was established between al-Qaeda and the Abu Sayyaf Group. Upon his return from the Middle East in the late 1980s, Janjalani, who was a member of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), expressed his disenchantment with the peace talks which had been revived between the MNLF under the leadership of Chairman Nur Misuari and the Philippine Government. These talks eventually led to the signing of a Final Peace Agreement between the MNLF and the Government in 1996. Janjalani and other members of the MNLF felt that the talks (and the subsequent Agreement) were a betrayal of the cause which the MNLF had fought for over the last twenty years, which was the establishment of an independent Bangsamoro State. As a result, Janjalani and a handful of these disgruntled MNLF members broke away and set up the Abu Sayyaf Group. This is generally agreed to have taken place in the early 1990s.

In order to enhance its links with supporters in the Middle East, the ASG also adopted an Arabic name, Al-Harakatul Al-Isliamiya or The Islamic Movement. The preaching by Christian missionaries connected with a floating bookstore, the MV Doulos, which docked in Zamboanga City in August of 1991 precipitated the start of the ASG’s terror activities. The missionaries allegedly spread pamphlets in a convocation at a local university that declared Allah was a false God, that the Prophet Mohammed was a liar and that the Quran was a man-made book. To avenge this perceived insult, the ASG bombed a public presentation held by the crew members of the MV Doulos on the evening of August 11, 1991, killing two members of the ship’s crew, four locals, and wounding over 30 other persons. Subsequently, a number of other bombings, assassinations and kidnappings raised the profile of the ASG as a terrorist organization.

In April of 2016, the group holding the hostages beheaded Ridsdel and two months later, beheaded Hall. Both incidents were videotaped for propaganda purposes.

Ideology
During its early years, the ASG appeared to be guided by an ideology propounded by Abdurajak Janjalani in a series of khutbas or lectures/discourses presented to his followers. This was also reiterated in a number of documents issued by Janjalani and a few other ASG leaders. Essential elements of this ideology are as follows:

1. The Islamic beliefs and practices are of the Salafi-Wahhabist strain. The Abu Sayyaf maintains that this is the purest form of Islam and the only true practice of Islam.
2. The stated aim of the Abu Sayyaf is to establish an Islamic State in the southern Philippines based on the Quran and the Hadith (Bangsa meaning nation or people, Moro being the term adopted to refer to Filipino Muslims).
3. The establishment of an Islamic State is needed to address the condition of severe oppression (pamissukuh) being suffered by Filipino Muslims in their homeland.
4. The establishment of this Islamic State can only be done through Jihad Fi-Sabil-lillah, a struggle in the path of Allah. The type of Jihad required will be Qital, or armed fighting.
5. Dying while undertaking Jihad, becoming a martyr or Shaheed, will open the gates of Paradise to the Mujahideen.
6. Because of the exploitation of the Moro homeland for centuries by non-believers and the draining of its resources, kidnapping-for-ransom emerged as a way of regaining what has been stolen from the Bangsamoro.
7. Non-believers have three choices. They can either convert to Islam, continue to practise their faith but pay a Jizyah (tax imposed on non-believers living in Muslim territory), or if they refuse either of these options, be considered enemies of the people.

Many have said that this ideology of the Abu Sayyaf is a veneer masking its true character of being primarily a bandit or criminal group. Other analysts have described how the Abu Sayyaf has gone through ideological and criminal stages. In the beginning, while Abdurajak Janjalani was alive and directing the activities of the group, the ASG was guided by its ideology. It was this ideology which attracted a number of MNLF members to join Janjalani in establishing the ASG, disillusioned as they were by what they believed was the betrayal by the leadership of the MNLF to the original goals of their revolution. However, upon the death of Abdurajak Janjalani in 1998 in an encounter with police forces, the ASG broke up into disparate groups and degenerated into kidnap-for-ransom gangs. For many years – and even up to today – it could be said that there is no single ASG organization, just a loose coalition of gangs loyal to their respective leaders, each planning their own operations aimed at raising funds for themselves and their followers. These individual gangs coalesce with each other to help out their opponents and to their aid when a particular group comes under attack from security forces, but then quickly disperse when the threat has dissipated.

In recent months, there has been a disturbing unification of some of these groups – along with a few new ones – called the Islamic State (IS). The ASG in Basilan, under the leadership of Isnilon Hapilon, appears to have banded together with several groups. A group from Sulu, known as Ansar al-Ansar, the Katibat Ansar al-Shariah, and the Ansar al-Khilafah based in South Cotabato and Sarangani have all pledged allegiance to the Islamic State and its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Earlier this year, IS (or Daesh) encouraged its followers in Southeast Asia to go to the Philippines rather than the Middle East if they wished to join the struggle. Hence, the ASG may be morphing into a new creature with an IS ideology, a development that should be watched carefully.

Social Context
The condition of oppression that the ASG claims Filipino Muslims experience does have some legitimate basis. Official census figures indicate...
that Muslims constitute approximately 5% of the Philippine population, 94% of whom live on the island of Mindanao. Muslims constitute the majority of the population in five provinces there – which have been legally organized into the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) – with 96% of the population of Sulu being made up of Muslims, 97% in the province of Tawi-Tawi, and 80% in the province of Basilan.

An interesting nationwide survey undertaken in 2005 showed that there was a significant level of discrimination and bias against Muslims in the Philippines. While only 14% of the survey’s respondents admitted to having had direct experience dealing with Muslims, a majority (55%) expressed the belief that Muslims are more prone than others to “run amok.” A very large proportion (47%) said that they believe Muslims are terrorists or extremists. The survey concluded on the basis of several indices tested, that at least a third of Filipinos (up to 40%) exhibited a high degree of bias against Muslims.

Another study showed that the incidence of poverty – the proportion of people living below the poverty line – was at a level of 60% in the ARMM provinces compared to 26% for the Philippines as a whole in 2003. The province of Sulu, the center of ASG kidnap-for-ransom activities today, was at the bottom of the heap with an average life expectancy of 51 years, Sulu third from the bottom at 53 years, and Basilan fifth from the bottom at 61 years. In comparison, the top ten provinces had life expectancies ranging from 71 to 73 years.

These are but a few indicators of the conditions in areas where the ASG thrives.

So How Do We Address It?

The traditional response of the Philippine Government has principally been a military one. Starting in 2002, these efforts have been augmented with the participation of U.S. Special Forces under the Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines (JSOTF-P), starting in Basilan then subsequently in Sulu. Today, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has deployed 8,000 soldiers to the province of Sulu to hunt down the ASG, with possibly another three more battalions forthcoming.

A military response, while necessary, will not and has not solved the problem. The key to any program which aims to address an insurgency is working with the communities concerned – communities which the ASG bands use as their bases of operation. The AFP has recognized this need, and has defined its concept of operations as consisting of intelligence, combat operations, and Civil-Military Operations (CMO); the latter consisting of activities aimed to bring the soldiers closer to the communities in which they operate.

This effort must be led by a group that will work with the community, and must be a party that has the trust of the community or can reasonably be expected to gain that trust. Conversely, the community’s partner must be prepared to listen to the community, to be able to view the situation from their perspective, and to understand where they are coming from. It must not be a party that has preconceived notions of where the problems lie and what needs to be done about them. At such, the partner must have an open mind and be prepared to change its own views based on what it hears from the community.

The community’s partner must realize that the community is as important as, if not more important than, achieving a concrete output. Obviously, achieving an output is important, but how one does it is essential. Too often, governments and donor agencies insist on having concrete outputs completed at the end of a particular time frame that tangible achievements can be recorded and cited as a basis for new budgetary requests.

Moreover, the community’s partner must see its role as being that of a guide and an enabler, with the community being the one to take the lead and carry the burden of responsibility in whatever activity is undertaken, rather than the partner directing the entire affair. The partner must realize that the process of working with a community is a long-term project. It must be prepared to stick it out and maintain consistency in its dealings with the community. The military establishment is ill-suited to be the long-term partner of a community. It can continue to undertake CMO, but this must be complemented by a long-term program of working with the community. To begin, its motivations are subject to being suspect from the outset. Communities could rightly suspect the military of having the underlying intention of gathering intelligence regarding the target of the military’s operations. Military doctrine has ingrained preconceived notions of what the threats are, where they lie and what needs to be done about them. For career reasons, military personnel stay for a limited period of time in any particular area of operations, thus necessitating the rebuilding of trust every time a rotation occurs. Appropriate partners need to be identified to work with particular communities, partners that embody the characteristics described earlier. With these partners, the community can then reflect on their situation and fashion a program to address their most pressing needs.

Moreover, one must involve local institutions as much as possible, which will garner respect in the community. Religious leaders, village elders, and traditional leaders like members of the Sultanate or royal family have a major role to play.

EARLIER THIS YEAR, DAESH ENCOURAGED ITS FOLLOWERS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA TO GO TO THE PHILIPPINES RATHER THAN THE MIDDLE EAST IF THEY WISHED TO JOIN THE STRUGGLE. THEN, DAESH MAY BE MORPHING INTO A NEW CREATURE CONSISTENT WITH DAESH IDEOLOGY: A DEVELOPMENT THAT SHOULD BE WATCHED CAREFULLY.
Many believe that something more pernicious is happening with the local government officials as they are, in fact, complicit in the activities of the ASG.

In the Philippines, local government units are divided into provinces made up of cities and/or municipalities that are, in turn, broken up into barangays or village. Each unit is headed by an Executive – a Governor in the case of provinces, a Mayor in the case of cities or municipalities, and a Chairman in the case of barangays – each with a legislative arm formulating local ordinances. While security functions are vested in the Philippine National Police (PNP), Governors and Mayors exercise supervisory functions relative to the activities of the PNP forces in their areas of jurisdiction. These include the right to choose Police Chiefs from a shortlist prepared by the PNP, formulate mechanisms for coordination among various sectors relative to security matters, formulate three-year Peace and Order and Public Safety Plans, chair the respective Peace and Order Councils, and exercise operational supervision and control over PNP units in their areas.

Hence, the Local Chief Executives (LCEs) can and should be held accountable for the peace and order conditions in their respective areas of responsibility. Where there is an egregious breakdown of law and order in a locality, the respective LCEs should be made answerable, and where clear dereliction of duty is established, steps should be taken to suspend or even remove the concerned LCEs from their positions.

Security Agencies
In their defense, the LCEs point to the military and/or police as being the ones who provide protection to the ASG. Undoubtedly, the military and the police have agents or assets embedded with some of the ASG gangs, providing them with valuable information on the activities of these groups. A prominent example of this was Edwin Angeles (aka Ibrahim Yacob), a very close associate of Abdurajak Janjalani during the early days of the ASG and who was in fact a member of a KFR gang is “turned around” – i.e., made into an asset – and is allowed to continue to ply his trade, he provides his handler a share in the “fruits” of the gang’s labour, but is then subsequently eliminated along with the rest of his gang when their activities become too brazen to ignore.

Whether the use of assets to provide intelligence later transforms into something more insidious is a matter that needs to be investigated. Of graver concern are situations where assets go beyond the bounds of their mandates and begin to strike out on their own, believing that their connections with the security agencies will protect them from punitive action.

This whole area of the use of assets, Deep Penetration Agents (DPAs) or action agents is a sensitive and complex matter. Security agencies need to remind themselves that it is an area that subject to abuse and that needs to be constantly reviewed. In Sulu and Basilan, this type of response leads to mistrust by residents of the security agencies that are supposed to be protecting them.

Unity of Governance
A major area of concern in underdeveloped areas facing insurgency problems is how to effectively deliver essential services to the populace while at the same time providing the needed level of security essential for people to lead normal lives. As noted earlier, in the Basilan/Sulu/Tawi-Tawi (BaSuTa) provinces, the state of governance is severely inadequate, which is undoubtedly linked to the abject living conditions in these areas. These two factors clearly fuel the criminality and insurgency one finds there.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that the governance and security services are undertaken by units of government which are tenuously linked. Under normal circumstances, security services would be provided by the police forces over which the Local Government Executives have a degree of supervisory control. (AFP) which are taking the lead in addressing the security situation.

However, given the severity of the security problems in these areas, it is the military units within the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) which are taking the lead in addressing the security situation. Unfortunately, the local governments have little, if any, control over the AFP and while coordination by way of exchange of information exists, this is clearly not enough to effectively address the problem.

Hence, it has been observed that there is a need to somehow come up with a mechanism that will effect a unity of command among the political, social, economic and security sectors in these troubled areas. Coordinative mechanisms like consultative committees such as the Peace and Order Councils, which exist at the provincial, municipal and even barangay levels are clearly inadequate. The need is for a system which will ensure that the plans for the delivery of needed social and economic services are in sync with the plans for addressing the security threats, and that these are all marshaled or deployed in a seamless manner.

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Canadian federal, provincial, and municipal authorities routinely request access to data that are either stored or processed by telecommunications service providers. A slew of laws authorize such requests including recently passed legislation expanding security intelligence activities and establishing new data preservation and production powers. Furthermore, these laws have authorized government agencies' use of malware, and legalized the voluntary sharing of telecommunications data between corporations and government.

Surveillance-enabling laws are well-used by authorities, to the point that hundreds of thousands of requests for telecommunications data are made each year and affect hundreds of thousands of Canadians. And as discussed in this article, f
More than 15 years after Western states first occupied Afghanistan, 13 years since the American-led invasion of Iraq, and at a time when Canada’s new Liberal government is assessing whether civilian casualties caught in areas of conflict. The test of military necessity is vital for determining whether civilian casualties, however tragic, conform to the laws of war. The challenge is that unconventional military operations such as COIN invert certain classical war-fighting principles, resulting in a paradoxical meaning of military necessity. The goal of successful COIN is to provide physical security for the civilian populace, since only by winning popular support and denying it to the enemy can COIN succeed.[5] In this sense, minimizing civilian casualties from both insurgent and counter-insurgent activities is vital for the ultimate success of the mission. But operational success is only one necessary component for victory. The SWORD model of COIN, for example, identifies seven strategic dimensions that must be won for counter-insurgency to succeed. One of these is “the war to stay the course and be won for counter-insurgency operations.” The heightened risks assumed by counter-insurgents, therefore, have negative implications for a successful outcome, given that relatively small numbers of counter-insurgent casualties can translate into significant changes in domestic support. The maintenance of domestic support thus becomes a necessary military objective in itself, complicating the doctrinal emphasis on shifting risk from civilians to counter-insurgents. The result is the paradoxical conclusion that minimizing civilian casualties and maintaining domestic support by minimizing counter-insurgent casualties are both militarily necessary for successful COIN.

Military Necessity and International Humanitarian Law
International humanitarian law (IHL) doesn’t seek to prevent war, but to curb war’s worst excesses by moderating combatants’ conduct so that it conforms to a shared standard of civilized warfare. Going back to the industrial phase of war in the 1860s, “the principle has been more and more acknowledged that the unarmed civilian is sacred, property, as well as the exigencies of the war will admit.”[6] Between the mid-19th century and the First World War, IHL experienced a proliferation of treaties and statements which sought to restrict the use of military force only to that which was necessary for victory, such as the First Geneva Convention of 1864, the St. Petersburg Declaration of 1868, and the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907. Weapons such as soft-nosed bullets, explosive projectiles, or chemical and biological weapons that inflicted additional pain and suffering became prohibited. This established the precedent that there are restrictions on the conduct of war defined by generally agreed upon standards for military actions.

The modern conception of military necessity draws meaning not just from material considerations of what is necessary to win a war, but also from moral justifications of which actions are acceptable in the pursuit of victory. It is, in effect, a question of legitimacy: are the military methods employed legitimate given the objective they are used to pursue? In the contemporary practices of many states, “military necessity” is a euphemism for perceived “permissible”, based on how significant a combatant considers a military objective to be. In practice, the difficulty rests in the inherently subjective determination of which actions qualify as militarily necessary (and are thus permissible), and which do not.

The Geneva Conventions, for instance, do not precisely define “military necessity”, but instead offer a two-part explanation that informs the conceptual stretching of military necessity to include a variety of military actions and activities.[7] It also enables the concept to be adapted to reflect important changes in the nature of war, the legality and culpability of military and civilian officials, and the distinct victory conditions for waging a counter-insurgency.

Contemporary COIN Doctrine
Contemporary counter-insurgency doctrine embraces the necessity of placing civilians at the centre of military operations. Perhaps the clearest example is the Canadian Armed Forces Counterinsurgency Field Manual, published in 2007, which states: “The cornerstone of any COIN effort is establishing security for the civilian populace.”[8] The Canadian Armed Forces also produced a counter-insurgency manual that drew on lessons learned in Afghanistan, though it was never published.[9] Though more equivocal than its American counterpart, it agreed that the proportionality in combat, and distinguishes legitimate military actions from war crimes.

Because of its inherent subjectivity and the high stakes for soldiers and commanders involved in combat, military necessity has often been interpreted very widely. Policymakers, senior officers, and military bureaucracies have extended what is considered militarily necessary to include their preferred objectives, often by referring to broad strategic goals, rather than discrete tactical ones.[10] This allows for the conceptual stretching of military necessity to include a variety of military actions and activities. It also enables the concept to be adapted to reflect important changes in the nature of war, the legality and culpability of military and civilian officials, and the distinct victory conditions for waging a counter-insurgency.
DISTINCTION REFERS TO THE REQUIREMENT THAT PARTIES TO A CONFLICT DISTINGUISH BETWEEN COMBATANTS AND NON-COMBATANTS, BASED ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT NON-COMBATANTS CANNOT LEGITIMATELY BE TARGETED FOR VIOLENCE.

According to Harvard University’s Sarah Sewall, who wrote the U.S. manual’s introduction and now serves as an Under-Secretary of State in the Obama Administration, “the civilian population is the center of gravity—the deciding factor in the struggle… The real battle is for civilian support for, or acquiescence to, the counterinsurgents.” In the past, western powers have committed many Western casualties because it was considered impossible to redistribute the relative risks faced by civilians and counter-insurgents in order to support the objective of winning local support. This undermines the conventional notion implicit in the concept of military necessity; that some civilian casualties may be acceptable because any civilian casualties are detrimental to the counter-insurgents’ goal of winning local support. The strategic onus to minimize civilian casualties rests squarely on counter-insurgents.

Effective COIN thus contradicts the tactics by which Western states have preferred to fight their recent wars. Although international principles of legitimate military intervention expressly mandate that “force protection cannot be the principal objective,” it was nonetheless a principle of Western combat operations for decades.

The invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq altered this way of war by committing many Western states to the extensive use of ground forces for close combat and COIN operations, in which force protection was counterproductive for winning hearts and minds. This makes counter-insurgents less able to combat insurgents among the population, and suggests to the receiving populace that the counter-insurgents are unprepared to confront the same dangers the people have no choice but to face. COIN doctrine underscores the futility of force protection as a guiding operational principle, since providing security to the civilian population requires that counter-insurgents accept greater danger by performing activities such as foot patrols, establishing forward operating posts, engaging with communities, and maintaining a visible public presence. COIN doctrine thus requires re-balancing the risks borne by soldiers and civilians.

strategists fix the levels of risk that combatants and non-combatants face. Civilian casualties flow from policy preferences in predictable ways. It is therefore possible to redistribute the relative risks faced by civilians and counter-insurgents in order to support the objective of winning local support.

Contemporary COIN doctrine thus inverts the military calculus of valuing most the lives of one’s own soldiers and pursuing enemy fighters as the primary objective of military operations. This calculus does not—and cannot—apply in COIN because the insurgent enemy is not easily distinguishable from the general population. Even if they were, the principal objective of counter-insurgency operations is not ‘defeating’ a conventional enemy. Precisely because the enemy cannot be clearly defined, this calculus does not apply, and material support from the civilian population, is why securing public support is the primary objective. This imposes numerous operational, legal and political challenges upon states fighting counter-insurgencies, and alters the assessment of which actions will likely contribute to strategic success.

However, COIN doctrine is further complicated by the fact that success requires more than just tactical victory on the ground. It requires a popular perception that the intervening counter-insurgents are committed to defeating the insurgency over the long-term. In the case of democracies fighting insurgencies, this commitment and how it is perceived by people in the receiving country can be affected by the main political pressure at home. Since elected officials are often responsive to public pressure, and politicians, not generals, ultimately decide whether to sustain or abandon a military mission, maintaining domestic support is as equally important to the long-term prospects of success for a counter-insurgency as gaining local support. Problematically, domestic support can be undermined by casualty-aversion in the general public.

Although it is difficult to determine the effect of military casualties on democratic policy-making, casualties can awaken voters to the costs of a military engagement and incite resistance to the military mission. In both cases, it is important to recognize that the counter-insurgents. On the other hand, an emphasis on force protection in order to mitigate domestic casualty aversion comes at the cost of military support for the mission in the receiving country. Given the nature of counter-insurgency, losing the civilian ‘centre of gravity’ is, by definition, likely to result in strategies that neglect such cases, it appears that this paradox constrains the ability of democracies to succeed at COIN.

This paradox raises the question of how to balance risks to foreign civilians in order to satisfy one aspect of counter-insurgency doctrine versus the other, to satisfy another. Protecting civilians and protecting one’s own soldiers may both be militarily necessary for successful counter-insurgency, but can they be effectively reconciled? Ultimately, the concept of military necessity suggests that international humanitarian law provides an inadequate set of tools to guide military practice in counter-insurgency. In part, this is due to the inherent limitations of international law, since “the legal framework for regulating war does not contemplate asymmetric warfare waged by non-state actors and thus fail to regulate perhaps the dominant form of warfare for the 21st century.” It is rare that counter-insurgency warfare itself, and the dual yet duelling objectives it demands of counter-insurgents. The provision of security for civilians is the ultimate objective of counter-insurgency,
since only this will garner the local legitimacy that is “the single most important internal dimension of a (counter-insurgency) war”.[15] But as shown by recent examples of COIN operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, counter-insurgency requires some kinetic activities against the enemy. This exposes counter-insurgents and can weaken domestic support, prompting an early withdrawal or compromising the ultimate objectives. The paradox thus exists at the highest level of COIN doctrine. The competing imperatives of successful counter-insurgency indicate that decisions over the appropriate distribution of risk between soldiers and civilians must be reconciled through some standard other than international humanitarian law. [16]

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