WHAT'S WRONG IN IRAQ? OR RUMINATIONS OF A PACHYDERM

Colonel John D. Waghelstein, U.S. Army, Retired

[G]uerrilla warfare is so incongruous to the natural methods and habits of a stable and well-to-do society that the American Army has tended to regard it as abnormal and to forget about it whenever possible. Each new experience with irregular warfare has required, then, that appropriate techniques be learned all over again.—Russell F. Weigley[1]

If anyone is stunned and amazed that the U.S. Army is having difficulties in Iraq, they should not be. There is seemingly something in the Army's DNA that historically precludes it from preparing itself for the problems of insurgency or from studying such conflicts in any serious way until the dam breaks.

Most armies, when they lose a war, go back to the drawing board (for example, the Germans). In contrast, regardless of the outcome of a war in which we have been involved, we have been institutionally preoccupied with "big war" and have shown habitual disdain for studying "little war" requirements such as restraint in campaigning, patience over the protracted nature of the contest, and the need to minimize rather than maximize the use of firepower in pursuit of limited goals.

Recent events, however, have forced the military to reassess the way it is doing business, so it is in the process of combining 3 principles from military operations other than war—perseverance, restraint, and legitimacy—with the traditional 9 principles of war to create an altogether new category called the 12 principles of joint operations. For Army veterans of previous small wars, combining these principles is, in some measure, a bittersweet admission of long-overlooked shortsightedness; it recognizes, albeit belatedly, that what we have been saying all along about the applicability of these three principles to military operations in general was important.

However, no doubt, some in the Army will still insist on distinguishing between principles of so-called traditional war and those of counterinsurgency (COIN), as if conflicts on the lower end of the spectrum are aberrations, not proper for the Army to address. This view persists in the face of history itself, which clearly shows that most U.S. wars were at the spectrum's lower end.

I therefore submit the following thoughts as both a reminiscence and as a warning—especially to younger officers—of the dangers that can be posed by a military culture's biases as I have personally observed and experienced them. I hope that in some way these ruminations will influence the current as well as future Army from going down the dead-end road we have traveled several times before.

Bona Fides

I begin with my bone fides in this area. I had 30 years of operational experience in low-intensity conflict (LIC), special operations, and security assistance. This stemmed from two tours in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) and five tours in Latin America. During this time, I commanded U.S. Army Special Forces (SF) at every level from "A" detachment (captain) to group (colonel).

I have also commanded a mobile training team in the Dominican Republic, advised an airborne infantry battalion in Bolivia, commanded the U.S. Military Group in El Salvador, and served as executive officer to the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Southern Command. In addition, I have taught at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC), the Army War College, and for the last 15 years, the Naval War College. I have an M.A. in international relations from Cornell and a Ph.D. in history from Temple University. As a student and teacher, I have focused primarily on small wars, military theory, American military history, and U.S.-Latin-American relations.

Big War Fixation

In my 30 years of exposure to counterinsurgency, I have consistently encountered military leaders who believed that the proper warrior should study mainly for the next conventional war; they viewed all other kinds of military engagements as mere side events. I believe this view persists even though the U.S. Army has fought the majority of its wars against irregulars, guerrillas, partisans, insurrectos, Native Americans, and other unconventional foes. Nor is this historical obliviousness new. Beginning with General George Washington, who had a notorious disdain for irregular forces and partisan operations, the institutional Army has in the main tended to regard small wars as distractions from the main task of preparing to fight great conventional engagements.

True to this trend, when the Army came out of Vietnam—despite 12 years of continuous involvement (longer than its involvement in World Wars I and II and the Korean conflict combined)—it nevertheless decided that studying all that recent unpleasantness was somehow not worth the effort, as if ignoring the experience of Vietnam would somehow inoculate it from having to get involved in such messy and complicated conflicts again. As a result, those of us who were called on to fight America's small wars after Vietnam largely had to play it by ear, learning and relearning lessons in a haphazard way without the benefit of either updated COIN

doctrine or formal education from the Army's school system.

Even as I began a 3-decade career that would give me virtually continuous experience with so-called low-intensity conflicts, I became keenly aware that there was something wrong: The system did not seem to benefit from hard-earned lessons about countering insurgencies, nor did it seem to want to. A few experiences illustrate the syndrome.

Vietnam: A Failing Grade

When I came out of Vietnam the first time, in 1966, I had 4-plus years in the COIN business—3 years in Latin America with the 8th Special Forces and a year with the 5th Special Forces. We were just a year into our major, conventional involvement in the war. Realizing that with my background and experience I would be sent back to Vietnam at some point, I felt an urgent need to get back to Fort Benning, Georgia, and the light infantry training it offered. I wanted to develop the professional skills I would actually be using in war—the men I would command deserved at least as much.

For an SF officer, Fort Benning was as close as you could get at the time to training for COIN, the kind of war that we were actually fighting at the time. Nevertheless, the infantry Branch tried to send me to Fort Knox, Kentucky, to prepare me for "the real Army in Europe," where mechanized infantry and armor dominated. However, after raising a fuss I was sent back to Fort Benning. I thought that common sense had actually prevailed until I got to Georgia, where two things occurred that convinced me I was out of step with the mainstream military and that the mainstream military was clueless regarding the war in Southeast Asia.

First, despite our involvement in an actual war, little had been done to adjust the course curriculum for the realities of the conflict many students would shortly be facing. And, what little instruction there was on irregular warfare and insurgency was being passed to the class through the filter of "conventional wisdom." In other words, the instructors dealt with COIN as though it were an exercise in small-unit tactics. For example, we were told that the complex threat of subversion, assassination, and intimidation posed by a well-concealed, entrenched Viet Cong could be dealt with by "ambushing the infrastructure!" As a recently returned subsector/district advisor, I felt this approach bordered on criminal stupidity and had no reluctance in saying so.

About a third of the class had been to Vietnam and the remainder was on its way. A number of us who had been to Vietnam thought it might be useful to our classmates to take advantage of some real-world experience, as opposed to what the instructors, few of whom had been there, were putting out. Consequently, we decided to offer some lunchtime seminars on an array of useful subjects, such as counterpart relations, RVN realities, employment of indirect fire weapons in swamps, the *real* role of the advisor, indicators of insurgent activity in villages, and so on.

To initiate these discussions, I obtained use of an empty classroom, published an informal schedule, and started to "pack 'em in." The discussions were well attended and, from all appearances, gratefully received. Panelists made candid, if irreverent, comments and gave the bulk of their time to questions. Something like a sense of urgency prevailed among those who were going for the first time. The sessions seemed so useful and were so well attended that I decided to tape them in case someone missed them or wanted to see any given session.

About a month into the program, I was called out of class by one of the commandant's assistants and questioned about the program. The "boss" wanted to know what we were doing. I explained to him our purpose and the subjects we were dealing with, and I gave him a list. He asked if I would object to someone from the commandant's office sitting in, and I said I did. I told him that the seminars were freewheeling, not for attribution, were often painfully honest, and probably a tad out of sync with approved doctrine. I said the whole purpose was to give our classmates a dose of reality and a commandant's rep would hamper the project. He asked if I could provide a copy of the tapes. I said yes, and did.

As graduation neared, I asked how the tapes had been received and, after some more time, was told that I could pick them up. It was with some trepidation that I opened the box of tapes (they were of the old four-track/reel-to-reel technology) and read the "evaluation and critique" memos: "Tape Number One, Track One—background noise. . . . Tape Number Two, Track Three—some volume-level variations. . . . " I wasn't sure whether I was angry or amused. After all the apparent fuss and concern that an insurgency was being orchestrated against the Infantry School and its doctrine, what they were really concerned about was a technical critique of the tapes, not their substance.

Maybe I should have been more amused than concerned, but this incident struck me as symbolic: Quite clearly, we and the subject we were addressing were not being taken seriously. It seemed the point of view of recently returned veterans of an ongoing shooting war—in which many of us would be engaged again soon—had been readily dismissed by those ostensibly charged with preparing us for that conflict.

The Army's Blind Spot

The other event that convinced me the Army was not taking the insurgency business to heart was how Fort Benning dealt with critiques of our preparation for and performance in Vietnam. Captain Phil Werbisky, a friend of many years and the officer who in 1962 had gotten me into the Special Forces, was back from a 3-year RVN tour. He was in the class ahead of mine and had run afoul of the commandant, who had taken offense at his student writing project proposal: "The Failure of the US-RVN Advisory Effort." So acute was the sensitivity and so obtuse the prevailing mindset that he had been ordered to "cease and desist" with his comments about how poorly we were doing in the advisory business.

This was rather shocking. I had read Werbisky's draft and regarded his comments and analysis as potentially of great value for those seriously studying what needed to be done to win in Vietnam. As a result, I resorted to a little stratagem to get his study accepted and into the hands of those who could benefit from reading it. This included repackaging the project without the inflammatory title.

Taking Werbisky's raw research data, which included input from

Frank Scotton, our expert on the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program in RVN, and from John Paul Vann, a respected but searing critic of the way the war was being conducted, I rephrased and submitted Werbisky's material under the title of "The U.S. Army Sub-Sector Advisor-RVN." It is amazing what the change of a title will do in a politically correct environment: The study made it through the system without comment. Unfortunately, despite the solid data and credibility of the contributors, no one seemed particularly interested in the paper's conclusion that we were failing to prepare our advisors for the total war being fought at the district (grassroots) level.

Three Types of Forces

In my view, these two examples typified a military mindset in a state of institutional denial, hoping the obnoxious "little" war in Vietnam would just go away. As a result, the Army's training program was improperly focused and dysfunctional and its overall approach confused. Thus, we ended up sending three types of forces to the Vietnam War: regular combat units, Special Forces, and advisors in the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV).

Regular combat units. Regular combat units were organized, equipped, and trained to fight a major conventional war in Europe. U.S. decisionmakers assumed these forces were capable of conducting a guerrilla/nonnuclear, low-technology, conventional war in the jungles of Southeast Asia. As a consequence, they sent large, expensive, and extremely destructive combat units to Vietnam under the mistaken belief that these units could, with superior firepower and mobility alone, defeat a poorly armed guerrilla force supported by a third-rate conventional force from the North. This erroneous assumption was, in a vast array of errors, the major mistake of the Vietnam War.

Special Forces. The second group, Special Forces, was well-prepared to accomplish its mission of leading Montagnard tribesmen and other indigenous minorities in the conduct of interdiction and special operations in the border regions of Laos and Cambodia. However, setting romantic legend and Hollywood images aside, the Special Forces were too few in number or too limited in breadth of mission to seriously affect the course of the war.

MACV advisors. The third group, the one with the MACV advisory mission, consisted of two types: advisors at the subsector/sector level and advisors assigned to Vietnamese combat units. In my view, these men were the keys to victory, but they were never fully employed or resourced.

Of these two types, the unit advisors were better prepared because their missions were military in nature. A combat unit advisor's success depended on his ability to deliver U.S. air and artillery support. The subsector/sector advisor had the more difficult mission, one for which he was ill-prepared. Vietnamese sector and subsector chiefs held tremendously important political positions. They were fighting a total war at the grassroots level and facing myriad tasks, of which only 20 percent were purely military in nature.

U.S. advisors to the chiefs were limited by charter to assisting in *only* the purely military portion of those missions. Thus, even if an advisor operated at 100-percent efficiency, he could assist his Vietnamese colleague only part of the time. The focus of the U.S. advisory effort at this critical political/military level remained locked on the purely military until 1967, when Ambassador Robert W. Komer established the CORDS program.

That we were there to advise the Vietnamese district chiefs was a silly idea anyway. In 1965 I commanded the SF detachment at Khe Sanh, with an additional duty of district/subsector advisor. I was supposed to help my counterpart with the business of fighting the war. That meant firepower, air support, and "army business." I was warned by the MACV sector chief to stay away from the nonmilitary side of the war. All that "other stuff" was not in my charter, and if I got involved in the political side of the war, I would be in "big trouble" and run the risk of a truncated career.

My counterpart was a major in the Vietnamese Army and one of the finest officers with whom I ever served. Not only did he work well with the predominantly Montagnard population, but he had none of the usual low-land Vietnamese prejudices regarding the hill people. This officer ran the best district I saw in two tours there. He made the Montagnard chief his deputy; worked tirelessly to address social, political, and economic issues; and turned the Khe Sanh district into a dangerous place to be for the Viet Cong. He also educated me in the intricacies of counterinsurgency at the basic level. I had come from 3 years of COIN in Latin America where the insurgents demonstrated chronic, terminal stupidity in slavishly following the Che Guevara/Fidel Castro model and could be dealt with by better trained combat units. In Southeast Asia we were dealing with a smart, well-organized, highly motivated opponent. COIN in Vietnam was a quite different business. It required applying all the elements of national power, not just that of the military.

So, I got much more from the officer I was to advise than he ever got from me. What I came to understand from this experience was that the U.S. Army was not really interested in getting beyond the purely military (if there is such a thing) aspects of counterinsurgency.

My Fort Benning experience convinced me we were in trouble, not only because of the curriculum's conventional orientation, but because of the Army's misguided approach to the war. What I concluded was this: Advisors, who should be the first team, were not; the nonmilitary aspects of the conflict we were in had been singled out as not being part of our job description; and there was an overall assumption that U.S. combat units would win the war primarily with firepower.

Back to School

After graduation, I was fortunate to be sent back to Latin America for another go at the Castroites. That tour included advising a Bolivian airborne battalion, doubling as an instructor in the Bolivian equivalent of our Infantry School, serving as operations officer of the 8th Special Action Force in Panama, and commanding the 9th Psychological Operations Battalion, also in the Canal Zone. Another tour in Vietnam followed, and then one in Panama.

In 1977 I asked for and received an assignment as an instructor at Fort Leavenworth's CGSC. Using as a point of reference my previous experience with the institutional bias against COIN instruction, I assumed

COUNTERINSURGENCY ANALYSIS

Issues

- What are the population's grievances? Are they valid?
- What issues have the insurgent groups/forces articulated as the causes of discontent?
- Are the articulated grievances of the insurgency and those of the population the same? Compare these grievances with the government or counterinsurgents' views of the causes of discontent.
- Has the government made genuine efforts to address these issues?

Objectives (Strategic Objective[s])

- What is the insurgency's desired end state?
- What political, social, economic, religious objectives have been articulated?
- Are there other assumed but unarticulated objectives?

Catalyst (Forces)

- What is the socio-political-religious-cultural makeup of the insurgent leadership? Of the insurgency's rank and file?
- What is the socio-political-religious-cultural makeup of the counterinsurgency leadership? Of the population? Are there differences? Are these differences important?
- Is there more than one insurgency? If so, are they coordinated or in competition?
- How is the insurgency organized? What are the strengths of the organization? Are the political/leadership elements distinct from the coercive elements? Are there "fault lines" or divisions/weaknesses in or between the insurgent organization(s)?
- Are there competing institutions for social/political mobilization?

Legitimacy

- What efforts have the insurgents made to establish or maintain legitimacy? What has been the response of the population? Of the international community?
- What efforts have been made to internationalize the conflict? What has been the response to those efforts?

Support (Center of Gravity)

- To what degree does the insurgency depend on local popular support? What type of support does the population provide? Is that support a reflection of popular identification with the goals of the insurgent?
- Is there an ethnic, religious, racial, tribal, or other variable at work? Is the support critical to the insurgency?
- Is support freely provided or is it coerced? Is domestic popular support vulnerable to interdiction?
- How do geography and demographics affect the distribution of support; that is, does support differ between city and countryside; do some regions offer more support and others less?
- Does the insurgency enjoy outside support? What is the nature of that support? What are the sources of that support? Is outside support critical to the maintenance or success of the insurgency? Is that support vulnerable to interdiction?
- What is the financial structure of the insurgency? Are there opportunities for interdiction?
- How well-armed are the insurgents?

Coercion Factors (Forces)

- What is the coercive strategy of the insurgency? What are the strengths and weaknesses inherent in that strategy?
- What types of force/coercion do insurgents use (guerrilla warfare, terrorism, tactics, weaponry, and so on)?
- What is the net effect to date of the force/coercion used by the counterinsurgency forces?

Other Factors (Time and Space)

- **History**
  - How long has the insurgency been underway?
  - Is there a historical experience/legacy of previous insurgencies in the area of operations/country/region?
  - What are the implications of that legacy?
- **Environment (Space)**
  - What are the principal spatial factors; for example, geography, topography, climate, and so on?
- **Public Affairs**
  - What is the public affairs climate?
  - Who is doing what in this arena?
  - What mechanisms (print, TV, radio, other) are in play?
  - Who is winning the propaganda/information campaign?
- **Other Issues**
  - Are there any other factors/variables/issues that should be included in this analysis?

*Colonel John D. Waghelstein, U.S. Army, Retired, developed this analytical tool for the Joint Militaries Operations Department of the U.S. Naval War College as a classroom aid to support case studies of insurgencies and COIN.

responsibility as the faculty lead for that miniscule fragment of the curriculum still devoted to counter-insurgency (although the name had since been changed to LIC). By this time America was out of Vietnam. Having expended through "decisive" firepower more ordnance than we had during World War II, we abandoned our allies to the North Vietnamese and left in disgrace.

In 1977, LIC instruction at CGSC consisted of 40 hours out of the 1,000-hour curriculum, reflecting the Army's interest level. We LIC instructors were an entertaining bunch, not a serious threat to General Don Starry's AirLand Battle crowd, and we were pretty much left alone. We used Jeffrey Race's little book *War Comes to Long An* and looked at the Third World as our playground of the future.[2] We analyzed insurgent models, spoke "Mao" and "foco," and kept the flame alive.

Our LIC team had area experts, so we had some credibility in assessing the arenas of the future. The commandant, General Robert Arter, enjoyed our lectures and let us dabble with our little piece of the curriculum. However, what largesse we enjoyed was short-lived. When General William Richardson arrived in 1979, the LIC portion was cut to 9 hours. AirLand Battle dominated everything else, and our Vietnam and COIN experience became non-subjects.

A slow awakening. The post-Vietnam syndrome played out in a strange way. In the years immediately following the end of the war, criticism from within of the Army's focus on the European big-war scenario was rarely evident. This was true of the Army's professional journals and of what was being taught in the Army's educational institutions. However, as the war receded from the Army's consciousness and from its curricula, and as guerrilla movements increased around the world, a critical article would occasionally surface. These were a rarity, however, until the rediscovery of the Vietnam War during the 1980s. With that rediscovery, articles began to appear in professional journals and other media that criticized the military for failing to train and educate its officers for their most likely challenges: those emerging from the low end of the conflict spectrum.

The Army's lack of understanding and preparation for the Vietnam War was the subject of Komer's book *The Bureaucracy Does Its Thing*, in which he wrote: "What we did in Vietnam cannot be fully understood unless it is seen as a function of playing out our military repertoire doing what we were most capable and experienced at doing. Such institutional constraints as the very way our general-purpose forces were trained, equipped, and structured largely dictated our response. The fact that U.S. military doctrine, tactics, equipment, and organization were designed primarily for NATO or Korean War type contingencies—intensive conventional conflict in a relatively sophisticated military environment—made it difficult to do anything else."[3] Thereafter, other insightful works on small wars began to appear, perhaps the best of these is *The Army and Vietnam,* in which Major Andrew Krepinevich details the Army's failure to train and equip its Soldiers to fight the war in progress.[4]

Back to Big War. Although the Army paid little attention to the lessons of COIN in general and Vietnam in particular during the late 1970s and early 1980s, nagging evidence of Soviet support for people's revolutions in such places as Africa, Asia, and Central America gave us practitioners of the "occult" some hope that this important area of study would not be completely ignored. Moreover, once the Berlin Wall came down, the Soviet Union fell apart, and Cuba stopped active exportation, we thought there would be less reason for continuing the single-minded obsession with preparing for great conventional conflicts.

But the entrenched view that countering insurgencies was a "silly distraction from what real armies did" persisted in the face of changing world circumstances. Subsequent events further reinforced this predisposition, and Operation Desert Storm, of course, validated what has come to be known as "the American Way of War." Professional journals, particularly of the airpower and AirLand Battle variety, sang paeans to "the way of the future" and declared that "this is the way wars are supposed to be fought."

Prognosis

So what is the prognosis of the antismall-wars syndrome today? The Iron Curtain has been down for some time, we are not threatened by a peer power, and yet again we find ourselves locked in a violent insurgency ill-prepared in many respects to deal with a host of dimensions endemic to such conflicts. To a great extent, this is because the institutional military still seems to think that the current conflicts are mere temporary distractions from some future main showdown with an as-yet-undefined peer force.

Meanwhile, current realities and even our relatively recent past should be sending up red star clusters about our education system. These wars are killing Soldiers and Marines, not to mention bushels of civilians, at a seemingly methodical pace, resulting in the same kind of visible erosion of public faith and political will we observed in Vietnam. We have every reason to believe we will lose in Iraq unless we do everything we possibly can—and quickly—by applying lessons learned about winning small wars.

Service school responses. The services should be asking themselves, What are our trade schools doing about preparing our leaders and troops to win not the war of the future, but the war we are in *now*? I have many deep concerns about the answers to that question.

The gold standard for how seriously our senior leadership takes any given subject is the number of hours dedicated to that subject in the core curricula of schoolhouses. This stems from my experience as a mentor and teacher trying to help fellow Soldiers prepare for the Vietnam War and conflicts in Latin America. For those who take them, electives are good and useful, but those who take them tend to be the already converted—they are the choir and do not need preaching to. Moreover, in an environment often viewed by the students as a time for family respite and recuperation from deployment, it is human nature to gravitate to elective courses—most of them conventional in nature—about which one already knows a lot to help ensure good marks with minimal study. As a result, elective courses on counter-insurgency are inherently bound to get short shrift.

USMC in the lead. Two institutions that in my view lead the way in addressing the pressing needs of the current battlefield and the vagaries associated with a military school environment are the Marine

War College and the Marine Staff College. In November 2005, the former introduced a 2-month course that included 69 core hours on small wars, insurgency, and terrorism. The Marine Staff College, too, is apparently transforming its entire core curriculum, and now requires more than 170 hours of study focused on small wars out of a 765-hour core curriculum. In conjunction, all Marines are required to take more than 300 hours of Arabic-language training. I emphasize that these are not elective hours; they are core requirements for all Marine officers attending these courses.

The other services would be well advised to retool the curricula of their own schools in a similar manner to meet the COIN threat we are facing today. As a lifelong supporter and advocate for the Army and its Soldiers, I respectfully suggest that if the Army is serious about transforming to win the current war, common sense should dictate making prosecution of small wars the centerpiece of the core curricula in all its schools and commissioning sources.

Change or Be Told to Change

It might be too much to expect the services themselves to rectify this critical issue from within. Again, history is instructive. In the 1980s, the conventionally minded services—including the Army—fought tooth and nail against legislative reforms that led to the establishment of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict and the U.S. Special Operations Command. It took Congress to force these vitally needed changes on an intransigent military. Subsequent events have shown that such change was absolutely essential for dealing with the rise of implacable enemies such as those we now face in Afghanistan and Iraq. But what time has also shown is that those changes, as sweeping and radical as they were regarded at the time, were not nearly substantial enough to allow us to defeat our new enemies quickly. As a consequence, confronted by continuing setbacks on the battlefield that appear to derive in part from fielding midgrade leaders with the wrong educational preparation, the military's leadership should not be shocked or surprised when Congress decides to take matters into its own hands and mandate by law the necessary adjustments to service school curricula.

Accounts of our lack of preparedness because of generational and institutional inertia and lack of vision are almost as numerous in the annals of Army history as wars. Unfortunately, this historical tendency is still in evidence within the services today. Before 9/11, the services could make a plausible case that, in the absence of any specific enemy, their time was best spent preparing to defeat a worst-case peer adversary in the next big war. But the luxury of peacetime has long passed. The immediacy and nastiness of the small wars in which we are now engaged increasingly demonstrate that these wars are not sideshows—they are this generation's main event, one that is ours to win or lose, but which some assert we are already losing because we are not adjusting fast enough. The current operational environment demands immediate transformation of our educational systems, training programs, and doctrine to focus on small wars.

A Modest Proposal

Let me offer a modest proposal. Let us accept that the United States has had a difficult time in the past refocusing from fighting conventional wars to dealing with low-end unpleasantness when it arises. Defining the problem could help. Before undertaking any such mission, the first step should be to figure out the nature of our involvement in such conflicts. For example, we should ask: Is this someone else's insurgency, such as that in El Salvador, or one in which we have a more palpable national claim, such as the Philippine Insurrection?

We need to make this distinction to determine who pays the bills and who does most of the bleeding. Such a determination could help clarify how we should proceed. If we are a major player in someone else's insurgency, we need to steel ourselves for a costly experience until our clients have developed sufficient motivation to deal with the root causes of the conflict and fight on their own behalf. On the other hand, if we are in the position of helping-advising-supporting a client in the conduct of his war, we must find leverage and not be afraid to use it to press our client to do the hard stuff (for example, reform and fight smarter).

In either case (ours or theirs) the problem is, and has always been, to get the analysis right *before* prescribing cures. Such protracted small wars as the Second Seminole War, the Philippine Insurrection, and Vietnam have meant difficulty at home and on the battlefield. Case-study analyses of such conflicts before commitment can provide big benefits.

To conduct analyses and to aid in the study of insurgency and COIN, see the **analysis tool in the sidebar** to this article. The tool can help us or a client look at an insurgency as something beyond the commander's estimate process for conventional combat operation. This tool might serve at least as a start for development of more sophisticated models. ***MR***

NOTES

1. Russell F. Weigley, *The History of the United States Army* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1967), 161.
2. Jeffrey Race, *War Comes to Long An* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).
3. Robert W. Komer, *The Bureaucracy Does Its Thing: Institutional Constraints on US-GVN Performance in Vietnam* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, R-967-ARPA, 1972), 45.
4. Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988).

Colonel John D. Waghelstein, U.S. Army, Retired, is an instructor at the U.S. Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. He received a B.A. from Western Maryland College, an M.A. from Cornell University, a Ph.D. from Temple University, and is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the Army War College. He has served in Special Forces command and staff positions in Panama, El Salvador, Bolivia, Vietnam, and the continental United States.