Defense Policy and Low-Intensity Conflict

The Development of Britain's "Small Wars" Doctrine During the 1950s

Bruce Hoffman, Jennifer M. Taw

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PREFACE

The research presented here was undertaken within the Policy and Strategy Program of the Arroyo Center at RAND for the Deputy Chief of Staff for Doctrine, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). This report examines the planning and conduct of three counterinsurgency campaigns waged by Great Britain in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus during the 1950s. Although none of these campaigns by itself required a major commitment of British forces, between 1955 and 1959 Britain was simultaneously fighting all three, in addition to fulfilling a variety of other overseas defense commitments (particularly in Western Europe as part of the NATO alliance) and developing a credible nuclear deterrent. This report should be of interest to Army planners and analysts concerned with the development of low-intensity conflict doctrine in the context of general defense policy, and the individual analyses should prove useful to those interested in counterinsurgency and low-intensity conflict.

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SUMMARY

Following World War II, Great Britain not only faced manpower shortages and a fiscal crisis but was unable to develop a comprehensive military strategy and foreign policy suitable to both its interests and its capabilities. In the following decade Britain increased military personnel through conscription with the intention of building up a large European reserve. This proved impossible as increasing numbers of troops were sent overseas to meet Britain's responsibilities to NATO and in its scattered territories. In the face of this dilemma, and as a means of saving money, in the late 50s and early 60s Britain chose to further emphasize the development of its nuclear deterrent and made serious cutbacks in military personnel.

With the end of conscription and the creation of a nuclear deterrent, it was assumed that British men could return to the factories to increase productivity while British soil remained completely defended. None of these considerations over the two decades took into account the many counterinsurgencies the British were fighting in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s.[1] Indeed, it was not until the Suez debacle in 1956 that the British fully realized the extent to which they had gutted their low-intensity conflict (LIC) capabilities. However, before both this realization and the subsequent steps that were taken to ameliorate the situation,[2] the British Army had to respond to many insurgencies occurring abroad, and its response was surprisingly generally strong and effective.

In the initial stages of the counterinsurgency efforts in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus, available British military personnel were extremely limited, and troops deployed were poorly trained and had no experience. Authority was dispersed among the various arms of the security forces, there was little coordination of intelligence and no existing doctrine to guide action. Recognition of and reaction to each emergency was expensively slow. These problems resulted directly from the turmoil in Britain itself, as conscription, the lack of a strategic doctrine, and wrangling for the limited funds among the various political and military interests in the country took their toll.

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[1]1945–1948 Palestine; 1948–1960 Malaya; 1948–1951 Eritrea; 1950–1953 Korea; 1952–1956 Kenya; 1953 British Guiana; 1954–1983 Cyprus; 1956 Suez; 1957–1959 Muscat and Oman; 1961 Kuwait; 1962 British Honduras, Brunei, British Guiana; 1963–1966 Borneo; 1969–present Northern Ireland. For a more complete list of British operational deployments since World War II, see Michael Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars: Minor Campaigns of the British Army Since 1945*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1984, pp. 186–187.

[2]Improvement of strategic mobility capabilities by air and sea, as well as improved training, etc.

Fortunately for the British, many of the initial problems in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus were overcome with the implementation of a single policy: Authority over the course of each conflict was delegated to a single British representative. This solved the problems of bureaucratic infighting and procrastination and permitted the coordination of the civil administration, the military, and the police; the coordination of intelligence; and, most critically, the flexibility to respond quickly, with often novel tactics, to the problems at hand. Such flexibility was possible because existing strategies and tactics were lacking.

Even with these improvements, certain mistakes were repeated in each conflict, and these deserve attention. For example, large-scale formal operations were repeatedly emphasized in lieu of early use of special forces. This was costly not only in terms of time, manpower and materiel, but in intelligence as well. Had mobile strategic reserve forces been available, or had special forces teams been trained for jungle reconnaissance and penetration, more could have been done at a lower cost. Rather than relying on large-scale sweeps, which had only a limited (or no) effect on the insurgents, more concentrated surgical strikes could have been used earlier in the conflict.[3] Another problem was the neglect of routine police work at the inception of each conflict, as the police were forced into a paramilitary role with the army crowded into a support role. This not only created a schism between the army and police leaderships but failed to take advantage of each service's special capabilities. Routine police work allows the police to keep good relations with the civilian population; maintain contacts with people who could provide intelligence; and observe, recognize, and prevent insurgent subversion of urban and rural areas. Moreover, maintenance of routine police work frees the army to play a more aggressive role against the insurgents, particularly if the brunt of the insurgent attack is in the rural areas rather than the urban ones.

Six general "lessons" can be learned from the British actions in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus:

1. The administration, police and military should be coordinated under a single individual.
2. The value of intelligence should not be underestimated, and intelligence-gathering and collation should be coordinated under a single authority as well.

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[3]This lesson was learned early during the Rhodesian counterinsurgency efforts of 1965–1980, where government forces quickly took control of the countryside, refusing to let the insurgents dominate in that terrain. The comparison between Rhodesian counterinsurgency efforts and British is apt because the Rhodesian police and army were so closely modeled on the British forces. See Hoffman, Taw, and Arnold, forthcoming.

3. Late recognition of an insurgency is costly, insofar as the insurgents have the opportunity to gain a foothold before facing any organized opposition.
4. Large-scale formal operations should not be emphasized in lieu of special forces operations.
5. Routine police work should continue.
6. Without sufficient LIC-training for troops and appropriate materiel, the conflict will last longer and cost more to fight.

Application of these lessons can result in increased advantages against the insurgents and increased security force efficiency and effectiveness. These lessons can be applied broadly to almost any low-intensity conflict and are not dependent on the specific circumstances of the insurgency.

Some of the lessons drawn from the British experiences in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus make it clear that many of the tactics developed were responsive—and situationally appropriate—and cannot be generally applied. The tactics developed in the Malayan conflict were directly applicable to that in Kenya, but the insurgency in Cyprus required the development of new tactics and approaches.

The insurgents in Malaya and Kenya fought in the rural areas; in Cyprus, the brunt of the attacks were in urban areas. The insurgents in Malaya and Kenya represented only a minority of the population; in Cyprus, the insurgents represented the broad majority, as well as the interests of a neighboring and actively supportive country. The populations in both Malaya and Kenya were receptive to mandatory government counterterrorist measures and restrictions and indeed responded positively to governmental efforts that separated them from insurgents and made it easier to prevent reprisals. In Cyprus, where reprisals took the form of terrorist actions in heavily congested areas, the government was unable to defend the population; the population did not respond favorably either to government attempts to woo it or to the increasingly harsh terrorist countermeasures applied.

Clearly, in the face of an insurgency, situational factors must be taken into account. These include the nature of the population, the true (rather than popularly perceived or manipulated) nature of the insurgency, the existence (or not) of any external aid, the potential for bases in neighboring countries, the insurgents' battlefield (rural, urban, or both), and the targets of the insurgents' attacks and overall strategy. If the population is supportive, the government has greater leeway in using restrictive measures without fear of alienating the citizenry. The government can also reap great dividends from actively defending the population against insurgent reprisals in the form of increased civilian

cooperation and the attendant provision of enhanced intelligence. Finally, under such circumstances, the government can even employ the indigenous population against the insurgents as government troops, in Home Guards, or in other types of popular militias. The population's receptiveness to these measures will depend upon the ethnic or religious composition, the political interests of various subsets of the population, etc. The British had the advantage in both Malaya and Kenya because of the nature of the populations, but were at a distinct disadvantage in Cyprus.

Also critical is the nature of the insurgency, especially the broadness of its appeal. If, as in Malaya and Kenya, the insurgents' cause is political and does not appeal to the majority of the population, then the government is at an advantage and can either make limited political concessions or fight the insurgents in the name of the majority interest. If the insurgents' cause is political and has a broad appeal, then the government will have to offer more substantial political concessions, as in Cyprus. If the insurgents' cause is ethnic (or religious) and does not represent the majority of the population, the government can use resettlement and civil restrictions to limit the insurgents' access to their crucial popular base of support. If the insurgents' cause is ethnic and represents a majority of the population, then the government will have to use very different tactics and incentives, as in Cyprus. The tactics used by the government have to be appropriate to the circumstances, and the government can benefit from early recognition of precisely what it is facing (foreign financial or media support, bases in neighboring countries, sophisticated or unsophisticated insurgent tactics, etc.).

Britain was successful in Malaya and Kenya in the face of its own domestic fiscal problems, because of a combination of tactical flexibility and fortunate circumstances in each country. In each instance, the British started off weakly, partly because of the situation in Britain itself, which left the military ill-prepared to wage counterinsurgencies. But, in each case, the British were able to adapt militarily and politically to end the insurgency. In Cyprus, where the situation was quite different, Britain showed some tactical flexibility but very little political flexibility and was unable to bring the insurgency to a successful close. This was partly because of immutable British interests and partly because of the broad political and ethnic appeal of the insurgency, making it difficult to suppress completely.

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I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In assisting the development of counterterrorist and low-intensity conflict (LIC) doctrines for the United States, previous RAND studies have argued that combating international terrorism and armed insurgencies today entails fighting many conflicts in many places as well as aiding indigenous governments against a variety of adversaries, rather than fighting a single war in one place against a lone adversary. These studies contend that since such phenomena surface and flourish at various times and in different places because of an idiosyncratic combination of factors—historical, ethnic, religious, political, and economic, to name but a few—policy responses must be innovative and adaptive enough to address the peculiarities of specific conflicts.

Few countries have had as varied an experience in combating terrorists or guerrillas as Great Britain, and few have achieved its success. Among the most important reasons for its success is the experience that Britain amassed as an imperial power throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. Counterrevolutionary tactics developed to suppress earlier colonial insurrections were often readily adaptable to subsequent twentieth century counterinsurgency campaigns.[1] Nevertheless, when the British found themselves embroiled in overseas internal security commitments after World War II, they were completely unprepared. Training exercises for troops sent to Malaya and Kenya, for example, continued to be based on lessons drawn from the conventional campaigns of the European conflict. The little time devoted to counterinsurgency training mostly consisted of executing outmoded "cordon and search" operations (which had been discredited by Britain's experience in Palestine during the late 1940s, though this passed unnoticed) or performing riot control duties. As one senior commander observed, units arrived in Malaya "not knowing what it was all about."[2]

The apparent dichotomy between British counterinsurgency capabilities and actions at the onset of the postwar counterinsurgencies in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus was due in large part to the situation Britain found itself in after World War II. Forced to respond rapidly to successive domestic and international crises, the British acted with neither adequate comprehension of the manpower and fiscal constraints

[1]Pimlott, "The British Army," in Beckett and Pimlott, 1985, pp. 16–17.

[2]Quoted in Darby, 1973, p. 51.

facing them nor with coherent foreign or defense policies. And although the British eventually were able to formulate a series of responses adaptable to various contingencies, they nevertheless repeated the same errors in judgment and organization at the onset of each new insurgency.

To its credit, Britain was ultimately able to cope with the unexpected and simultaneous commitments in Malaya and Kenya (and to a lesser degree in Cyprus). Honing the techniques and skills derived from its imperialist past and using innovative and cost-effective tactics, the British were able to turn each insurgency around. Indeed, the experience each of the services gained would later enable them to develop generalized strategies for limited conflicts.[3] This was all the more impressive given the severe economic constraints Britain faced after World War II. And those were compounded by the expensive defensive capabilities they considered necessary to develop in light of their desire to remain a Great Power.

Britain's experience in simultaneously evolving a defense policy commensurate with its economic constraints alongside a strategic doctrine appropriate to a changing international environment while waging three counterinsurgency conflicts abroad is not entirely dissimilar to the experience of the United States during the postwar era. The United States has been forced to develop an overarching defense policy and strategic doctrine embracing nuclear deterrence and the maintenance of European security under the aegis of the NATO alliance alongside additional commitments involving the prosecution of limited conflicts in other parts of the world. Indeed, U.S. involvement in Korea during the early 1950s, in Vietnam during the late 1960s and early 1970s, and, most recently, in the Persian Gulf and Latin America are cases in point.

The advent of perestroika in the Soviet Union has again led to the need to redefine the roles and requirements of U.S. armed forces in the future and the international role of the United States in light of the changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the steps being taken toward European unification, and the continuing U.S. involvement in aiding foreign governments against insurgent movements. Lessons can be extrapolated from Britain's experiences to help guide U.S. actions. Although the lessons of the Malayan and Kenyan conflict are generally known, we can reexamine them in terms of the constraints the British faced and the international interests that they were pursuing. Studying the insurgencies in this context is therefore of relevance to U.S. Army policy regarding such broad issues as force preparation and

[3]Ibid., pp. 83–84.

weapons acquisition as well as issues related specifically to LICs. This report emphasizes the roles of intelligence and special operations forces, although suggestions will be made regarding future study of indigenous police forces as well.

II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF POSTWAR BRITISH DEFENSE STRATEGY

DISCONTINUITY IN BRITISH INTERESTS AND CAPABILITIES: 1945–1955

In the aftermath of World War II, Britain faced severely depleted financial reserves and a ten-fold increase in indebtedness to other countries. By 1945, Britain was spending approximately £2,000 million abroad, while her overseas income was only £800 million. Accordingly, Britain's sterling reserves amounted to only one-sixth of the short-term foreign debt,[1] with the country's balance of payments deficit £298 million.[2] Nonetheless, approximately one-fifth of the gross national product was being spent on defense, or £1,736 million. The net cost in terms of maintaining British forces overseas alone amounted to a loss of some £225 million in foreign exchange.[3] In response to these high defense costs in the face of severe economic constraints, the British government cut defense spending in 1947 by 5 percent (resulting in a military budget of £899 million) and set a ceiling of a £600 million defense budget to be attained by 1949–1950. Yet the size of these budget cuts reflected economic rather than military considerations: The Chiefs of Staff estimated that Britain would require a minimum of £825 million to be able to discharge its defense commitments in 1948, but the military was forced to make do with a budget of less than £700 million that year and, moreover, to make provisions for additional reductions in succeeding years.[4]

Despite these fiscal constraints, three ineluctable commitments shaped postwar British defense policy: the commitment to European security (NATO); the development of a credible, independent nuclear deterrent; and the maintenance of security both in Britain's overseas strategic bases and its various other imperial possessions.[5] These commitments required British defense planners and strategists to develop a

[1]Bartlett, 1972, p. 9.

[2]Morgan, 1984, p. 511.

[3]Bartlett, 1972, pp. 13 and 23; Harris, 1982, p. 213.

[4]Bartlett, 1972, p. 24. Even with these reductions, in 1948–1949 British defense expenditures still accounted for one-fifth more than all the other NATO member-states were spending combined and greater than what the United States was spending as a proportion of its national income. Ibid., p. 52.

[5]William Wallace, "World Status Without Tears," in Bogdanor and Skidelsky, 1970, p. 194; Darby, 1973, p. 18; Snyder, 1964, p. 228.

range of military response options at almost every level of possible conflict: strategic nuclear war with the Soviet Union, general war in Europe, and limited "brush fire" wars anywhere in the Empire. The nuclear weapons program in particular was a new and expensive commitment, accounting during the early postwar period for 10–15 percent of the defense budget, thus further constraining the resources available for the country's nonnuclear defense requirements.

In addition to Britain's economic weakness and attendant constraints on defense spending, coupled with the military's multifaceted responsibilities, a plethora of immediate domestic and international problems forced the postwar government and defense establishment to take action on individual issues without assessing strategic priorities or overall British defense policy.[6] Institutional inertia also prevented reassessment; the Chiefs of Staff, lacking governmental guidance, simply began to rebuild the prewar imperial strategy.[7] Government and military officials clung stubbornly to the image of Britain as a Great Power. "So far as foreign policy is concerned," Ernest Bevin Foreign Secretary declared before the House of Commons in May 1947,

> we have not altered our commitments in the slightest. . . . His Majesty's Government does not accept the view . . . that we have ceased to be a Great Power, or the contention that we have ceased to play that role. We regard ourselves as one of the Powers most vital to the peace of the world, and we still have our historic part to play.[8]

In keeping with this philosophy, Britain not only sought to maintain its imperial chain of strategic bases doctrine, despite the granting of independence to India (which undermined the legitimacy of the whole system), it also passed the 1947 National Service Act. For the first time in British history, peacetime conscription was initiated, largely in response to arguments that World War II had clearly indicated the need for a large standing army supported by a readily available and trained reserve.[9] Accordingly, between 1949 and 1950, in a series of government decisions, the army was authorized to increase its strength by more than 100,000 men and the period of conscription was extended to 24 months.[10]

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[6]Pressing international issues included the administration of those parts of Europe liberated by British troops, the question of Indian independence, the communist-backed civil war in Greece, the Jewish terrorist revolt in Palestine, and the nationalist agitations in Egypt and Malaya. Dewar, 1984, p. 13.

[7]Darby, 1973, pp. 15–16.

[8]Debates, House of Commons, vol. 437, col. 1965, 16 May 1947, quoted in Darby, 1973, p. 17.

[9]Bartlett, 1972, p. 25; Jones, in Howard, 1975, p. 313; and Snyder, 1964, p. 35.

[10]Bartlett, 1972, pp. 25 and 48; Blaxland, 1971, p. 6; Snyder, 1964, p. 25. See also Darby, 1973, p. 23.

Yet, despite the buildup, the army remained weak in proportion to its commitments. The manpower increase was ultimately utilized to meet requirements of overseas commitments, and the creation of a large reserve force thus proved impossible.[11] In 1948, Field Marshal Lord Montgomery, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, claimed that he had never known the army to be so weak relative to its commitments; by the early 1950s, the officer corps alone was estimated to be 10 percent below strength, with career soldiers making up only half its number. Conscripts accounted for half of all army personnel.[12] Experienced career servicemen not only became responsible for training and instructing often unenthusiastic draftees, but they were subject to frequent transfers and cross-postings as well as prolonged service abroad. Morale among these remaining careerists suffered, and many chose to leave the service. Under these conditions, the efficiency of active service units was seriously impaired by the lack of continuity and turnover of personnel. Nor was the situation in the other two services any better. Three-quarters of air force personnel in 1949 had served for less than three years, and in the navy, despite the small proportion of National Servicemen, half of all personnel were recent entries, and 25 percent of personnel were in the process of training or being trained. Given this shortage of trained manpower, the Home Fleet was reduced to only a handful of active ships.[13]

The British perception of their role and its requirements and the reality of the costs of pursuing a strategy of general war-fighting capability thus collided during the decade after World War II. As defense spending was being cut, conscription was rising rapidly; as defense capabilities were decreasing, defense commitments were increasing. While the British determined that nuclear development and preparedness for a European war were their top priorities, they nevertheless found themselves confronted by prolonged insurgencies in their overseas territories.

GREATER EMPHASIS ON THE NUCLEAR DETERRENT: 1955

By 1955, after a decade of suffering continued postwar economic difficulties and the attendant constraints imposed on the country's military resources, the British recognized that their original postwar approach was unrealistic and conceded that they could not maintain as diversified a range of military capabilities and deployments as

[11]Darby, 1973, p. 39.

[12]Bartlett, 1972, pp. 28 and 48; Darby, 1973, p. 23.

[13]Bartlett, 1972, p. 26; Darby, 1973, pp. 23–24.

originally attempted. As then Prime Minister Anthony Eden himself later explained, the Combined Staff Committee

> considered our objectives in the light of the transformation of the world brought about by the existence of the hydrogen bomb. It also recognized that since the war the United Kingdom had attempted too much in too many spheres of defence, which had contributed to the economic crisis which every administration had suffered since 1954.[14]

The British thus determined it to be in their economic and defense interests to subsume conventional capabilities to nuclear. Indeed, as Eden pointed out to U.S. President Eisenhower, "It is on the thermonuclear bomb and atomic weapons that we now rely, not only to deter aggression if it should be launched. A 'shield' of conventional forces is still required; but it is no longer our principal military protection."[15] The explicit message in the 1955 Defence White Paper was that further reduction of conventional defense expenditure was necessary and possible, particularly in terms of manpower. It was decided that the total number of armed forces personnel would be reduced from 800,000 to 700,000 men between 1955 and 1958 and to 445,000 by 1960. In 1955 alone, the army was to lose at least 13,000 personnel.[16]

While on paper this shift of priority to the nuclear deterrent was attractive, in practice it took no account of the army's continued overseas commitments, particularly in those three countries—Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus—where revolts were raging.[17] Indeed, by 1956 the army's strength had been reduced by some 45,000 men, though its overseas commitments had not diminished at all.[18] Nor were the remaining conventional forces able to compensate either for the cutbacks or the fact that the types of forces needed for major war and LIC had been steadily diverging since the end of World War II. Moreover, Britain's loss of military manpower included the gradual deprivation of the large colonial military forces that together with small British garrisons had ensured the security and stability of its many distant possessions. With the exception of some native African forces and Gurkha troops, colonial manpower was no longer available, and the burden of protecting the last outposts of the British Empire had fallen entirely on

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[14]Quoted in Rosecrance, 1968, p. 219.

[15]Quoted in Rosecrance, 1968, p. 190.

[16]Bartlett, 1972, pp. 105–106; Rosecrance, 1968, p. 190.

[17]Even in terms of overall policy, this approach on the part of the British was of questionable utility. Rosecrance (1968, p. 190) notes, "[A]s applied to NATO and on the assumption of rapid escalation of any conflict in Europe, this doctrine was unexceptionable. As applied to cold war battlefields, however, it was less than realistic."

[18]Darby, 1973, p. 76.

British personnel.[19] Although tactics and resources needed to be adjusted to these circumstances, army planning and training nevertheless remained much the same as they had been throughout the postwar period.

THE SUEZ CRISIS: 1956

Not until the short-lived Suez crisis in 1956 did the major reassessment of British defense policy and strategic doctrine, avoided since 1945, take place. Indeed, the brief but persistently problematic campaign underscored both the inapplicability of nuclear weapons to limited conflicts and the inadequacies and unpreparedness of Britain's conventional forces to such types of conflict.[20]

On July 26, 1956, Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser announced Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal. The announcement occurred less than a month after the evacuation of British forces from the Canal Zone under the terms of the 1946 Anglo-Egyptian Agreement. The Egyptian move shocked Britain, which relied on the waterway for 34 percent of all British shipping. Moreover, the nationalization issue represented a dramatic affront to British stature and prestige. The legacy of Britain's prewar policy of appeasement toward Nazi Germany loomed large in the Prime Minister's thinking. Eden, who had resigned as Foreign Secretary in 1938 over that policy, now compared Nasser to Hitler, seeing a similar threat to British interests worldwide if still another dictator were allowed to ride roughshod over Britain.[21]

On July 27, 1956, the British Chiefs of Staff began to plan for the military seizure and occupation of the Canal. Three days later, a military alert was issued and attendant preparations commenced. In early August, some 20,000 reservists were activated. These developments could progress only so far, however, since no plans existed for the type of military operation required. Even had there been one, furthermore, the military lacked the logistical resources needed to execute such an operation. Military action needed to be rapid and depended on the existence of standing mobile forces. Yet, despite all the discussion in the previous years, "the mobile forces available at the outbreak of the crisis were altogether inadequate for the sort of intervention required."[22]

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[19]Snyder, 1964, p. 11.

[20]Wallace, 1970, p. 205; Darby, 1973, p. 99.

[21]See Bowie, 1974; Love, 1969; Thomas, 1969.

[22]Darby, 1973, p. 95.

Previous planning had allowed for the formation of a strategic reserve force of divisional strength; however, the press of overseas commitments had progressively denuded this force to the point where only one brigade remained available for deployment to Egypt. In fact, two battalions and a brigade had to be transferred from Cyprus to Egypt, despite the ongoing conflict in Cyprus.[23] Moreover, the individual units within this small reserve were not entirely combat ready. Some were understrength, most required additional training since previous instruction had not involved air deployment tactics, and all needed to be prepared logistically for service abroad, drawing on the mobilization stores for arms, ammunition, and other necessities. As one contemporary account observes:

> [T]he parachutists had done no parachute training for months, the Commandos had not practiced amphibious warfare or cooperation with tanks for over twelve months. There were no transport aircraft and none of the base organizations or specialists required for an amphibious operation were readily available.[24]

These deficiencies were particularly critical so far as the navy was concerned. Old warships were taken out of mothballs, existing troopships were reassigned to the invasion flotilla, and merchant and passenger vessels were requisitioned for military service.[25] The Royal Air Force's transport capabilities were similarly inadequate: Aircraft had to be chartered from commercial companies. This shortage was so acute that during the airborne assault at Port Said in November, only one parachute battalion (approximately 500 men) could be dropped on their target; the remaining two battalions had to be dispatched by sea.[26] The only bright spot in this dismal picture of inadequacy and unpreparedness was that an independent infantry brigade, part of the strategic reserve, had previously been given special training for deployment on counterinsurgency campaigns in either Malaya or Kenya and was thus up to strength and ready for combat.[27]

The Chiefs of Staff were forced to inform the government that at least six weeks' preparation were required, with a minimum of ten days' advance notice needed to stage an attack. As Eden later noted, "this was the same period of preparation as was required for the

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[23]Reserves were so low that these troops were temporarily replaced on the island with gunner regiments assuming the role of infantry. See Dewar, 1984, pp. 75–76.

[24]Quoted in Darby, 1973, p. 96.

[25]A scenario repeated nearly 30 years later during the 1982 invasion of the Falkland Islands.

[26]Darby, 1973, pp. 97–98.

[27]This program was estimated to save two to three months of training for reinforcements after they had reached their destination. Bartlett, 1972, p. 120.

invasion of Sicily from North Africa in the Second World War."[28] By the time operations were set to begin at the end of October, British forces totalled only 45,000 men, 300 aircraft, and approximately 100 warships.[29]

The Suez invasion was an unqualified failure for the British. It took over two months for them to coordinate their plans with the French and the Israelis. Israel was to attack Egyptian positions in the Sinai desert and appear to threaten the Canal. Britain and France would then announce their intention to protect the Canal by intervening militarily and would request Egypt to accept temporary occupation of the Canal Zone by British and French troops. Egypt's rejection would be the pretext needed for Britain and France to bomb Egyptian airfields and deploy their ground forces to seize the Canal. Then the two powers would remove Nasser from power and install a pro-Western regime in his place.

Instead, when the United States learned of the invasion, it blocked aid from the International Monetary Fund to arrest the declining value of the pound sterling on international markets, effectively pressuring Britain to agree to a U.N.-sanctioned cease-fire. This move severely exacerbated the financial difficulties already straining the faltering British economy. According to one estimate, by its conclusion, the Suez operation had cost Britain as much as £300 million. The country's gold and dollar reserves declined during November 1956 by £100 million, while the military costs revealed by the government were in the region of £35 million.[30] Adding insult to injury, during the operation Egypt not only managed to sink 47 ships in the Canal, defeating Anglo-French attempts to ensure unimpeded navigation through it, but nationalized all British and French property in the country.

REASSESSMENT AND CALL FOR MOBILE FORCES

The defeat at Suez was in large part due to the fact that the United States and the Soviet Union were powerful enough to pressure a cease-fire, indicating the end of Britain's position as a Great Power.[31] More significant in terms of Britain's LIC capabilities, however, was

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[28]Bartlett, 1972, p. 120; Darby, 1973, p. 96; and Bartlett, "The Military Instrument in British Foreign Policy," in Baylis, 1977, p. 38.

[29]Bartlett, 1972, p. 123.

[30]Ibid., p. 125.

[31]As one source observed: "The outcome of the Suez War is generally taken as evidence that direct imperial military intervention overseas, of the 19th-century gunboat diplomacy type, is no longer feasible. In particular, Britain and France could no longer

that the Suez debacle finally resulted in the reassessment of British strategic doctrine that had been needed for more than a decade.

First, the loss of the the Canal Zone as a base of British operations in the Mediterranean and as the key link to the British bases further afield decisively discredited the strategic chain of bases concept that had dominated postwar defense policy. With British access to the Suez Canal denied by the Egyptian government, the two primary areas of British overseas operations, the Far East and East Africa, were no longer as readily accessible to British surface transport as had formerly been the case. The Suez operations thus demonstrated and further exacerbated the deficiencies of the military's long-range logistical capabilities over both air and sea.[32]

The British now recognized the need for improvements in strategic mobility, improvements that would enhance Britain's counterinsurgency capabilities. Indeed, although as early as 1953, aircraft and naval helicopters had been used in both Malaya and Kenya, where they served with distinction deep in the jungle, providing reconnaissance and evacuating casualties, it was the Suez crisis that catalyzed their further development and use for LIC.[33] The failed Suez operation made it especially clear that the Royal Air Force's Transport Command needed to be enhanced. In the hostile atmosphere generated among the Arab states toward Britain as a result of the Suez incident, over-flight rights across the region seemed threatened. Together with the loss of the Canal Zone as a base of operations, the Air Force's ability to transport men and materiel over long distances had to be improved. In terms of tactical deployment, transport aircraft capable of landing on short, often primitive, airfields while carrying larger more efficient payloads were needed.[34]

The strength of the RAF's Transport Command before 1956 was confined to about 15 U.S.-manufactured C-123 planes. In that year, before the Suez crisis, the government continued giving priority to nuclear weapons and delivery systems, increasing the competition for money between the Bomber Command and the other arms of the air force; hence, expansion of Transport Command's airlift capability remained slow and makeshift. The Bristol Britannias and Comet IIs allocated to the Transport Command for the mobile reserve were merely modified versions of civilian aircraft and therefore were greatly

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apply force without U.S. support. The episode thus marked the end of Britain's position as a Great Power." Lorch and Shimoni, "Suez War," in Levine and Shimoni, 1972, p. 371.

[32]Martin, 1969, p. 2.

[33]Carver, 1980, p. 23; Bartlett, 1972, pp. 73 and 87.

[34]Bartlett, 1972, p. 126.

limited as far as the types of military equipment they could carry. Moreover, neither aircraft had the capacity to land or take off from primitive or improvised airstrips or to parachute men and supplies.[35] By 1960, although the situation had improved somewhat as a result of a three-fold increase in Transport Command's lift capacity and widespread use of the helicopter,[36] the airlifted strategic reserve nevertheless was not fully implemented.[37] The crisis that erupted in Jordan in 1958, for example, and necessitated the deployment of a parachute brigade to that country, made it clear that the strategic reserve remained problematic, as did the provision of adequate air transport.[38]

Fortunately, the creation of a highly mobile Marine Commando amphibious force and attendant development of a limited war role for the navy was more easily achieved.[39] One of the few bright spots in the Suez debacle had been the successful use of an improvised helicopter force, which had deployed 400 Marine Commandos at Port Said in 90 minutes.[40] It was recognized that there was a need not only for more amphibious assault vehicles but also for more modern ones, capable of transporting Marine Commandos from helicopter landing pads.[41] Faced with less competition for resources among its subdivisions than the air force and well-organized to neatly incorporate Commando ships, the navy was able to respond with alacrity to the need for amphibious assault vehicles.[42] Less than a year after the Suez crisis, the navy converted one of its smaller aircraft carriers, the *H.M.S. Bulwark*, for this purpose. Thereafter a seaborne Commando force, capable of deployment from ship to shore, became an "operational reality" as additional vessels were earmarked for this role, despite the reductions in naval expenditure mandated by the 1957 Defence White Paper. By 1961, the new Commando force was an established component of the operational fleet.

Because of the small number of men that could be effectively transported and deployed in such operations, neither airlifted strategic forces nor Commando ships were envisioned as a replacement for the larger (e.g. land) forces required in overseas engagements. For that matter, neither airlifted ground troops nor Marine Commandos are

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[35]Snyder, 1964, p. 12; Darby, 1973, pp. 79–80.

[36]Snyder, 1964, p. 12; Carver, 1980, p. 23.

[37]Darby, 1973, p. 81.

[38]Wallace, 1970, p. 216.

[39]Darby, 1973, p. 56.

[40]Darby, 1973, p. 98; Snyder, 1964, p. 16.

[41]Bartlett, 1972, p. 126.

[42]Snyder, 1964, pp. 15–16.

capable of sustained operations without additional logistical support. But used in tandem, these two forces for the first time provided Britain with the ability to quickly deploy small intervention forces in a geographical region embracing Aden on the tip of the Arabian Peninsula to Hong Kong and the Malayan Peninsula. Moreover, a dividend of this new policy was that the development of these strategic forces increased the likelihood that all three services would be involved simultaneously in overseas military operations. This, in turn, clearly necessitated the development of unified overseas commands to provide centralized control and planning. Indeed, in 1958 the first such unified command was established in Aden, with a similar organizational structure later provided for the Mediterranean.[43]

The Suez affair also clearly demonstrated the inadequacy or inapplicability of Britain's strategic doctrine to the demands of the changed world system in the 1950s. The British fear of a European war and the country's emphasis on developing a nuclear deterrent effectively impeded British strategists and planners from recognizing the nature of the threats in the overseas territories and the need to develop forces appropriate for combating them. That each service had its own strategy exacerbated the confusion: The emphasis in the air force was on nuclear retaliation; the navy was so depleted that it focused on surviving; and the army, though fighting in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus, theoretically emphasized the development of major war-fighting capabilities in Europe. It was not until the late 1950s that a reassessment took place in which "the east of the Suez area regained a measure of conceptual unity; . . . the limited-war role was accepted as more pressing than the global role; and . . . the development of strategically mobile forces became a central concern of the defence establishment as a whole."[44]

A NEW STRATEGIC DOCTRINE: 1957

On April 5, 1957, the newly appointed Minister of Defence, Duncan Sandys, presented his *Outline of Future Policy* contained in that year's Defence White Paper. Although Sandys described it as the "biggest change in military thinking ever made in normal times,"[45] the White

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[43]Snyder, 1964, pp. 16–17. Ironically, the value of a unified command structure had been demonstrated in the conduct of counterinsurgencies (in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus, for example) but had not been translated into general strategic doctrine.

[44]Darby, 1973, pp. 93, 98–99; Snyder, 1964, p. 11.

[45]Jones 1975, p. 321.

Paper merely enunciated as a postwar doctrine the strategic ideas the country had already been pursuing for the last three years.[46] The new doctrine stated clearly that nuclear deterrence precluded major conventional war-fighting and would remain the country's number one priority. As a corollary, long-range air transport and mobile seaborne forces would be built up to contain any short-term local conflicts that might erupt. The dual rationales behind the policy were also derivative rather than prescriptive: the continued desire to reduce defense expenditure in view of Britain's economic difficulties, and the post-Suez depression and frustration from which the politicians, strategists, and military planners alike suffered.[47]

Although none of this was new, its clear articulation, especially regarding the need for mobility and versatility as a substitute for bases and numbers, was a necessary step in improving British capabilities short of strategic nuclear war or conventional conflict in Europe. The development of small, highly equipped forces to contain local short-term conflicts and to police Britain's remaining colonial territories was the logical solution to resource and manpower shortages.[48]

The White Paper, in fact, justified dispensing with the National Service in favor of "better-equipped all-regular forces."[49] Rather than tying up large numbers of men in training and personnel movements, particularly at the cost of losing disgruntled regulars, under the terms of the White Paper the three services would gradually reduce the number of men conscripted until 1960 and thereafter no further conscripts would be inducted. By January 1, 1963, the British military would consist entirely of volunteers.[50] This program envisioned a decline in total service manpower from the 690,000 personnel serving in 1957 to 375,000 by the end of 1962.[51] Insofar as the army was concerned, the minimum practicable strength of 220,000 men originally estimated in 1956 was scaled down to 165,000 by the White Paper, although the actual number did not decline below 180,000. Even so, this figure was considerably lower than the 373,000 soldiers in the army at the start of 1957.[52]

The economic benefits of the new policy were immediately apparent: The defense budget for 1957, for example, was approximately £1,420

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[46]Darby, 1973, p. 95.

[47]Wallace, 1970, p. 192.

[48]Ibid., p. 193.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Blaxland, 1971, p. 330.

[51]Darby, 1973, p. 107.

[52]Blaxland, 1971, p. 330.

million, a savings of £180 million over the previous year's figure.[53] However, although during the five year period covered by the White Paper defense spending was kept down to around 7 percent of the gross national product, Britain's defense expenditure nevertheless remained the highest of all the European NATO member countries. Hence, historian William Wallace notes, "besides these real achievements there remained considerable and continuing difficulties."[54]

This was particularly true of the army, whose overseas commitments still had not been scaled back despite both the promise of the White Paper's nuclear deterrent priority and the enforced reduction of its strength. Moreover, efforts to reduce the size of the British forces in West Germany foundered less than three years later as a result of the crisis in Berlin.[55] Thus, although Britain finally renounced its chain of bases policy in favor of strategic mobility, taking at least a small step into the present from a burdensome and expensive imperial past, the strategic doctrine of nuclear retaliation and reliance on small regular forces did little toward solving the manpower problems associated with the deployment of troops to Germany and overseas.

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[53]Darby, 1973, p. 107.

[54]Wallace, 1970, pp. 215–216.

[55]Greenwood, in Baylis, 1977, p. 197.

III. THE BRITISH EXPERIENCE IN MALAYA, KENYA, AND CYPRUS

Despite the fiscal difficulties and the confusing and contradictory defense strategies the British were trying to pursue after World War II, Britain's counterinsurgency campaigns in Malaya, Kenya, and, to a lesser degree, Cyprus are generally considered successful. Indeed, Britain's victory in Malaya has long been regarded as the epitome of a successful counterinsurgency campaign and, combined with techniques and tactics improved upon later in Kenya and then Cyprus, has served as a model for other countries fighting counterinsurgencies.

OVERVIEW OF THE THREE INSURGENCIES

Malaya

When, in the course of World War II, the Soviet Union allied itself with Great Britain, instructions were given to the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) to aid the British in the fight against the Japanese. The British agreed to arm and train the Malayan communists, who were then to set up camps in the jungle to wage guerrilla warfare in the rear of the Japanese armies. By 1945, this force, known as the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA), was 7,000 strong. On December 1, 1945, after the Japanese surrender, the MPAJA was officially disbanded, with orders that all personal weapons were to be turned in to the authorities. Instead, many MPAJA members cached their weapons.[1]

Following World War II, Malaya's 2,040,000 Chinese citizens[2] showed signs of resentment about both the reimposition of British rule and the continued domination by the majority Malays.[3] The Malayan Communist Party recognized an opportunity to swell its ranks and began to foment labor unrest among the Chinese. When these efforts failed to have an effect on the government, the MCP was galvanized to greater extremes. The caches of wartime British and Japanese arms

[1]Dewar, 1984, pp. 27 and 29.

[2]The Chinese constituted approximately 38.5 percent of Malaya's population. Ethnic Malays accounted for approximately 49 percent, Indians for 11 percent, and Europeans and Aborigines for the remaining 1.5 percent. Clutterbuck, 1985, p. 33.

[3]Carver, 1980, pp. 12–15.

were unearthed and distributed to units of the MCP that had remained hidden since the war. The MPAJA reactivated its former supply and support contacts and by the summer of 1948 had unleashed a full-scale rebellion in Malaya.[4] Although the British security forces outnumbered the insurgents by about five to one, they were no hindrance to the jungle-based guerrillas, who were able to successfully carry out hit-and-run operations against European economic interests and citizens. Moreover, long before the British realized the power of the movement, the insurgency had spread throughout the country.

Kenya

As in Malaya and other British colonies, nationalist aspirations grew and became more militant in Kenya during the postwar period. Two related groups spearheaded the movement for independence: the Kenya African Union (KAU), a legal political party, and the KAU's strong arm, "secret" society known as the Mau Mau. The KAU and the Mau Mau drew their support almost exclusively from the country's largest, best educated, and most Westernized tribe, the Kikuyu. The roots of the Kikuyu's resentment against the Europeans had been laid in confusion about the original British purchase of Kikuyu lands in the early 1900s. Whereas the British believed that they had purchased the land outright, the Kikuyu assumed the Europeans were only renting the land for a limited period. As the Kikuyu became more politically astute, the land issue became a serious grievance. The Europeans refused to relinquish land that they had labored to develop, while the Kikuyu recognized the land as their own.

Before World War II, the Kikuyu split into two factions: the moderates, who were interested in negotiating land settlements and political rights with the British, and the radicals who believed they could achieve their goals only through revolution. After World War II, the Kikuyu began to press their claims more seriously, with little result. Although the British recognized a potential threat in the Mau Mau and banned the organization, they failed to recognize the depth of the radical Kikuyus' influence and their continued ties to the still-legal KAU. Under Jomo Kenyatta, the future president of Kenya, the Mau Mau began a recruitment campaign, using intimidation, murder, and tribal rituals to exact oaths of loyalty from more moderate Kikuyu. The Mau Mau were reorganized into active guerrillas and passive supporters. By 1952, the guerrillas were ready to launch their offensive. In October, a Kikuyu chief who had expressed open opposition to the

[4]Cloake, 1985, pp. 192–193.

Mau Mau policy of revolution and noncooperation was brutally murdered. This opening salvo was followed by a maelstrom of violence and bloodshed, most of it directed against moderate Kikuyu tribe members rather than against the imperial government. The Mau Mau based themselves in the jungle and could rely on a steady supply of recruits as Europeans, afraid of the insurgents' ties to the Kikuyu tribe, fired their Kikuyu employees. Moreover, the land settlement issue remained unresolved, and the Mau Mau continued to recruit through intimidation.

As in Malaya, the British and colonial governments were unprepared for the insurgency. Numbers of police and army were woefully inadequate, intelligence was not coordinated, and the civil administration was late in recognizing the scope of the problem. By this time, four months into the insurgency, the Mau Mau not only had subverted most of the Kikuyu (and they were actively tormenting those who remained supporters of the government), but they had begun to indoctrinate members from other tribes into the organization. The British realized that it was time to take harsher measures than the ineffective State of Emergency they had imposed and began to establish civil, military, police and intelligence responses to the crisis.

Cyprus

In 1955, Britain was confronted with yet another colonial conflict. In Cyprus, however, the insurgency was of a different nature than in either Malaya or Kenya. The Greek nationalists in EOKA[5] focused their guerrilla campaign on the island's cities and towns, unlike the MCP and Mau Mau who operated out of jungles. As in the other insurgencies, the Greek nationalists' goal was independence; but *enosis*, or union with Greece, was another issue.

Cyprus had once formed part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire, and its population was composed of both indigenous Greeks and Turkish immigrants. Rule of the Mediterranean island had been ceded to the British toward the end of the nineteenth century; however, freed from Turkish domination, the majority population of Greek Cypriots nursed a longstanding desire for reunification with their brethren on the mainland.[6] As in Malaya and Kenya, the nationalist awakening prevalent among colonized peoples throughout the world after World War II gave fresh impetus to Greek Cypriot aspirations.

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[5]A Greek acronym for the National Organization of Cypriot Fighters.

[6]The island was populated by 419,000 Greeks and 105,000 Turks.

At least six years before the eruption of violence, Archbishop Makarios III, the titular leader of the Greek Cypriot community, and George Grivas, a former colonel in the Greek Army, had met to lay the foundations of the revolt. Grivas had previously achieved notoriety as the commander of an extreme right-wing private army formed to fight communists on the Greek mainland after World War II; it had gained a reputation for committing atrocities.[7] Excluded from the postwar regular Greek Army, Grivas's desires for power and glory were complemented by Makarios's nationalist goals for Cyprus.

The two leaders agreed to use terrorism as a means of directing international attention to the nationalist movement and the situation on Cyprus, as well as to embarrass and humiliate the British through hit-and-run attacks. Under this plan, urban terrorist cells were organized throughout the island's cities and towns, with the aim of forcing the British to commit the majority of their forces in these places while permitting the guerrillas to operate more freely in the countryside.[8] This strategy was almost directly opposite to that used by the insurgents in Malaya and Kenya and required a very different response on the parts of the police, army, and intelligence organizations. Moreover, the campaign was waged in tandem with Makarios's diplomatic and political activity. The Greek Cypriot population was mobilized to support the campaign through a combination of political appeals and intimidation.

Terrorist attacks commenced on April 1, 1955, with a series of bombings of government offices, military facilities, and police stations. The attacks escalated to include assassination attempts on senior British officials and more dramatic attacks against targets symbolizing British rule. As in Malaya and Kenya, the British were completely unprepared for the insurgency. The police were unable to control the violence, the army was too small to be of much help, and the civil administration reacted slowly. Although the British had by this time accumulated a wealth of practical experience and knowledge on how to deal with insurgencies from their involvement in the Malayan and Kenyan emergencies, they could apply only the most general lessons to the very different insurgency in Cyprus.

Thus, within ten years, Britain had become embroiled in three insurgencies in colonial holdings. Of interest is how the British, constrained by their own domestic economic crisis and a plethora of competing defense interests and responsibilities, planned and carried out the counterinsurgency efforts in these three instances. Also interesting is the

[7]Carver, 1980, pp. 44–46.

[8]Ibid.

extent to which lessons learned in one insurgency could be applied to the next. It is important to compare not only the natures of the insurgencies and the resultant tactical and strategic requirements for countering them, but the nature of the British interests in each case. For Britain strengthened its counterinsurgency efforts immeasurably in Malaya and Kenya by promising each country independence from British rule; but in the case of Cyprus, which the British still considered necessary for their international defense strategy, they showed themselves to be much less flexible politically.

Of particular interest to the United States in planning for future contingencies is the comparative utility of given strategies in the face of a variety of insurgencies. Some strategies and tactics developed by the British proved useful in all three insurgencies, while others were appropriate only in specific circumstances. This suggests that the United States can profit from an understanding of the generally applicable strategies, as well as from continued flexibility in its approach to LIC.

BRITISH TACTICAL FLEXIBILITY

The difficult circumstances in which Britain found itself after World War II formed the basis for the success of its LIC policies. For example, key to the tactics and strategies developed by the British in each of the counterinsurgencies was the need for economy and efficiency. Also, lacking any formal structure or strategy for dealing with insurgencies, Britain had to delegate authority and responsibility for the counterinsurgency efforts in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus to local British military representatives who relied upon their personal experiences in fighting prewar imperial revolts and wartime guerrilla campaigns. These representatives, with no doctrine to guide them and restricted by a serious manpower shortage, had to develop tactics that capitalized on whatever advantages the British could accrue from the specific political and military situations in each country.[9]

Although in studying the British approach to LICs scholars have traditionally emphasized the success or failure of given tactics, many of the strategies the British used, placed in the contexts of post-World War II Britain's fiscal and manpower constraints and the specific natures of the insurgencies facing the British, proved to be appropriate responses rather than general strategic planning. Thus the pattern of British responses in Malaya and Kenya was suitable to both the

[9]See App. A for the numbers of British troops annually deployed in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus and App. B for a comparison of British and insurgent strength.

circumstances in which Britain found itself after World War II and to the insurgencies taking place in those countries. In each country, the insurgents:

1. Were part of a clearly defined minority group in an ethnically stratified environment.
2. Used violence as one means of controlling the population.
3. Attacked primarily in rural or jungle areas.
4. Based the majority of their operations within the country rather than in neighboring countries.[10]
5. Received little or no support from outside powers.

The circumstances in Cyprus were somewhat different: Fighting occurred not only in remote areas but in the middle of congested urban centers, the insurgents received aid and support from outside the country, and the insurgents represented the majority of the island's population. Thus, tactics used successfully in Malaya and Kenya were less appropriate and less effective in Cyprus, where a different kind of response had to be developed.

Two types of tactics, general and situation-specific, came out of this process of response and development. The more broadly applicable tactics are often alluded to as the lessons learned from British LICs and include:

1. The timely declaration of a State of Emergency for maximum advantage in terms of maintaining civil power.[11]
2. The coordination and cooperation of the military, police, and civil administration.
3. The development of an integrated intelligence network.
4. The use of small, specially trained forces for precision strikes in lieu of operations requiring large numbers of troops.

Strategy responses specifically tailored to the type of insurgency and the circumstances include, but are not limited to:

1. The creation of Home Guards.
2. Resettlement programs.
3. Hearts and minds operations.

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[10]The Malayan insurgents apparently had access to Thailand and some support in that country, and the Kikuyu did base some of their operations in Nairobi and receive some support from within that major Kenyan urban center.

[11]With an emphasis on the maintenance of civil power, because the State of Emergency was not intended in these instances as an instrument of repression.

4. Counter-gangs/pseudo-operations.
5. Special incentives programs.

Both kinds of tactics were developed out of the need for maximum efficiency and cost-effectiveness and were thus well-suited to the postwar British economic situation.

Early Mistakes

That the tactics were developed as responses, rather than as theoretical ideals, can be demonstrated in part by the initial British failures. For example, despite warnings from intelligence experts in each country about the incipient insurgencies, the local governments remained complacent and States of Emergency were not declared until the insurgents had thoroughly entrenched themselves. Britain's repeated inability to gauge the seriousness of the threats as they arose in each country was to prove costly, as it prolonged the period during which the insurgents could act before being faced with any kind of organized British resistance. Nor could the British have reacted quickly and effectively even had they recognized the threat facing them in each country. British forces were woefully unprepared in each case. The forces in Malaya suffered from a lack of organization and training, being composed largely of national servicemen (who were constantly changing over) and Gurkha battalions with a high percentage of new recruits;[12] the forces in Kenya were nearly nonexistent and comprised only African combat troops with a part-time volunteer infantry battalion of Europeans; and the forces in Cyprus were both understaffed and disorganized.

Once the British colonial administration in each country realized that they were going to have to act, they each made the same mistake: To maintain a policy of minimum force, they deployed the army only in support of the police. This not only put too large a burden on the police forces, but it meant that (1) regular day-to-day police work fell by the wayside, despite its critical importance in providing the police with regular intelligence through contacts with the civilian population, and (2) the army's morale plummeted while relations between the army and police commands rapidly deteriorated. Nor did the British administrations or security forces quickly recognize the need in each country for good relations with the population. The immediate effects of the imposition of States of Emergency were to alienate the population and validate the causes of the insurgents to some extent. And

[12]Carver, 1980, p. 16.

when the insurgents proved to be a threat to the civilian population as well as to the security forces, especially in Malaya and Kenya, the British in each country failed to offer adequate protection early enough. Also, despite the acknowledged importance of intelligence, the British in each country only very slowly developed adequate means of processing and applying intelligence to their tactical operations. Finally, they lost a lot of men and materiel pursuing large-scale operations when they could well have turned to smaller, special forces operations earlier in each conflict.[13]

A Single Leader

The British administrations soon determined that the delegation of authority to a single leader was critical in avoiding the kinds of errors made early on in each conflict. General Sir Gerald Templer took over the roles of High Commissioner and Director of Operations in Malaya; Sir George Erskine (later General Sir Gerald Lathbury) served as Commander-in-Chief and Director of Operations in Kenya; and in Cyprus, Field Marshal Lord Harding acquired the posts of Governor and Commander-in-Chief. Each of these men was able to consolidate the armed forces command structure, combining the police, military, and civil administration in such a way as to alleviate much of the stress caused by the early emphasis on police. Such coordination of forces not only improved command and control over the armed forces for increased success militarily, it also allowed organized, thoughtful reaction to the demands and actions of the local population without threatening the success of military operations. Coordination under a single authority had the added advantage of limiting internecine competition among the security forces and made it possible for unusual and sometimes radical tactics to be adopted quickly without proprietary bureaucratic haggling among the security force arms.[14]

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[13]General Harding, the British Far East Commander-in-Chief, described the waste of military effort in the Malayan jungles as "will-o-the-wisp patrolling and jungle-bashing." Such large-scale operations and sweeps gave the insurgents sufficient warning for escape; and when the operations were over, the insurgents would resume their activities and reestablish their connections. Carver, 1980, p. 19.

[14]By the time the conflict began in Cyprus, the British were more prepared to apply some of the general tactics they had developed in Malaya and Kenya. An effective, integrated administration (civil, military, and police) had been created before the revolt gathered momentum, instead of being improvised later as had been done in Malaya and Kenya. So well did this triumvirate function that it lasted with virtually no change to the end of the conflict. Paget, 1967, p. 123.

Nature of the Local Population

In Malaya and Kenya, the general population was intimidated by the insurgents, who in any case represented only a minority in each country. The British security forces were therefore able to divide administrative responsibilities of the armed forces so as to free the military and police to fight the insurgents directly while the administration protected the civilian population, running incentive programs, relocating civilians into protected villages, and otherwise establishing the government's good intentions and strengthening government-civilian relations. This not only stemmed the flow of aid from the civilian population to the insurgents, but opened up channels of intelligence to the security forces.

The ethnic breakdown of the conflicts and the violence used by the insurgents against the civilian populations also made it possible for the British to employ native forces in the fight against the rebels. In Malaya, where the insurgents represented the ethnic Chinese minority of the population (though claiming to represent Malaya in general against the imperial British), the armed forces comprised mostly ethnic Malays. In Kenya, "Home Guards" were established of native forces set up by the government to protect villages that had already been purged of insurgents by the government's forces. The Kenyan Home Guards were initially armed only with pangas, or machetes, for fear that more modern weapons would end up in the hands of the insurgents. But the Guards fought enthusiastically against the guerrillas, perhaps because the insurgents specifically targeted tribespeople for violence rather than the imperial government or the local colonial administration. Once fully armed by the government, the Home Guards contributed a great deal to the counterinsurgency and, in Kenya, along with the Tribal Police were responsible for the greatest damage caused to the insurgents.

The military involvement of the local population against the insurgents in Malaya and Kenya was to the general advantage of the British. By employing native rather than British troops against the insurgents, the post-World War II strain on British manpower could be somewhat reduced. More critically, the very willingness of the local population to fight the insurgents indicated that the insurgents would not be able to depend on civilian aid for supplies and cover. In Malaya, the insurgents were forced further into the jungles, where for a time they demanded aid from Chinese squatters. In Kenya, too, the insurgents were gradually deprived of resources as the local population received sufficient governmental protection against insurgent reprisals.

Such tactics were not possible in Cyprus, however, where over 80 percent of the population (the Greek majority), as well as neighboring Greece, supported the insurgents' cause. Here it proved impossible to woo the Greek constituency with limited political incentives; they numbered too many to be relocated; and although they suffered violence at the hands of the insurgents, they did not trust the government to protect them against reprisals. Moreover, faced first with incentives and then punishment from the government, the community remained uncooperative with various government efforts to gather intelligence and stem aid to the insurgents. The British also had to rely on infusions of British troops for manpower, because the combination of national loyalties, the political situation, and powerful insurgent reprisals militated against creation of local forces. These circumstances severely constrained the security forces' power in Cyprus, increased British expense, and demonstrated the critical role of the local population in an insurgency.

Intelligence

Despite its importance in counterinsurgency operations, intelligence was neither heeded nor effectively collated and coordinated at the outset of the insurgencies in the three conflicts. As late as December 1951, five years into the Malayan conflict, intelligence remained uncoordinated and inadequate; and not until January 1955, five years into the Kenyan counterinsurgency, was intelligence organized among the various arms of the security forces.[15] This was an expensive oversight, given that the forms of intelligence used in counterinsurgencies guarantee greater efficiency of action and resources, and better and earlier use of intelligence could have saved the British both manpower and time. For example, intelligence in the context of counterinsurgencies is most effective when it emphasizes the use of the police, usually Special Branch, in the day-to-day collection of intelligence from the local population. By forcing the police to adopt a paramilitary role at the beginning of each of the insurgencies, the British administrations deemphasized routine police work, thus decreasing the control and contact the police had with the civilian population.

Nor, except in Cyprus, was intelligence coordinated so that the data that were brought in were processed usefully and distributed to the services that would need it. Little cooperation existed between police intelligence and the military in Malaya and Kenya. In fact, the Special Branch in Malaya was not overhauled until 1950, when it was

[15]Carver, 1980, pp. 24 and 40.

reorganized to coordinate and process intelligence for all the security forces. And it was not until 1955 that the entire intelligence structure in Kenya was reorganized, with army intelligence being integrated into the police Special Branch both at the central headquarters and in the districts and provinces.[16]

In Cyprus, however, Field Marshal Harding gave intelligence high priority from the outset of the conflict and coordinated it early on with the creation of the Joint Intelligence Organization. There was nevertheless a paucity of intelligence available to the British because of the insurgents' own effective intelligence network, which allowed them to successfully infiltrate virtually every level of the government. So pervasive was the guerrilla intelligence network that clandestine insurgent sympathizers were employed by the police force, the civil service, and at various British military facilities on the island. Insurgents often gleaned additional information through the church and various nationalist organizations, particularly those involving Greek-Cypriot youths.

Despite the experience gained in Malaya and Kenya, therefore, the differing circumstances in Cyprus made the development of new tactics and responses necessary. Harding therefore appointed a Chief of Intelligence to further coordinate the security forces' intelligence apparatus and established a Joint-Army Police Staff School, which two years later was replaced by the Internal Security Training Centre. The schools allowed the security forces to develop a joint approach to the counterinsurgency campaign, providing training in the techniques of LIC warfare and acting as a pool for new ideas and approaches to the counterinsurgency.[17]

Special Forces

Large operations were given precedence over the use of special forces tactics until far too late into each conflict. The security forces in Malaya only began to realize the need for special operations in 1952, when they needed to develop specialized jungle tracking and patrolling units to locate the shrinking bands of insurgents spread throughout the jungle. In Kenya, too, special forces tactics were deemphasized until 1955, when the security forces increased their use of special forces, psychological operations, and concentrated strikes.

Although it was perceived late, the need for improved intelligence and concentrated strike capability catalyzed the development of one of

[16]Carver, 1980, p. 40; Townshend, 1986, p. 162.

[17]Paget, 1967, pp. 124 and 151.

the more ingenious tactics in Malaya, which was further improved in Kenya: the "turning" of captured or injured insurgents. In Malaya, insurgents would be offered the opportunity to work for the government instead of standing trial for their crimes against the state. Turned insurgents were able to offer the most current information on insurgent activities, tactics, plans, and locations, thus saving the security forces time, manpower, and resources by allowing them to pinpoint insurgent locations and strike surgically. Moreover, turned insurgents themselves fought as government troops, in the Special Operational Volunteer Force. For their information, the turned insurgents were rewarded monetarily under an established rewards program. Many were subsequently able to start their own businesses and became solid supporters of the government. One author cites the rewards program as "one of the biggest war-winning weapons" used in the conflict.[18]

The concept of turning insurgents was expanded upon in Kenya with the development of "counter-gangs" or "pseudo-forces": teams of former insurgents who would act as double agents, returning to the jungle to gather intelligence from insurgent loyalists in their former areas of operation. Major Frank Kitson, who himself acted as a "pseudo-terrorist" in Kenya, hit upon the idea of using former Mau Mau insurgents themselves in combat against their erstwhile comrades. The problem, as Kitson saw it, was "that an intelligence organization such as Special Branch could never hope to provide enough bits of contact information." Although Special Branch could provide excellent background information, what was really needed was a unit capable of furnishing the information needed to provide immediate contact with the enemy.[19] As the pseudo-forces began operations, a steady flow of intelligence began to reach the security forces. Although information was rarely used for offensive purposes immediately after being obtained (for fear of exposing the whole operation), the units were enormously successful. By the end of the insurgency, some 300–400 surrendered insurgents were employed in the counter-gangs, and none ever defected back to the Mau Mau. As in Malaya, turning insurgents allowed the security forces to capitalize on fresh intelligence.[20]

The creation of counter-gangs is yet another tactic dependent for its success on the specific characteristics of an insurgency. Although turned insurgents made huge contributions in Malaya and Kenya, the tactic could not be effectively employed in Cyprus, partly because of

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[18]Barker, 1971, p. 70; Komer, 1972, p. 75; Dewar, 1984, p. 37.

[19]Kitson, 1977, p. 75; Magdalany, 1962, pp. 211–212.

[20]Dewar, 1984, pp. 57 and 59. Kitson subsequently implemented the "counter-gang" practice in Oman in 1958 with similar success. See Kitson, 1977, pp. 168 and 196–198.

the nature of the conflict. The insurgents in Kenya and Malaya could be wooed by the government because the reason for fighting had little connection to their own ethnic or national interests, but the insurgents in Cyprus were intensely loyal to their cause. In Malaya and Kenya, the government would promise to relocate and protect the families of turned insurgents, pay them generous salaries, etc.; but relocation was not an option in Cyprus. The insurgents' reprisals could not be adequately defended against, so no incentives were large enough to compensate for the danger of collaboration with the government.

Hearts and Minds

Among the most successful tactics developed in Malaya, and some of the most difficult to apply without the right social, political, and economic conditions, were the strategies developed in the battle for the civilian population's "hearts and minds." In Malaya, where the insurgents relied mostly on the minority Chinese population for support, the government had to win the support and trust of the Chinese population to wean it away from the insurgents. The need for a two-pronged strategy was recognized early on, whereby police and the army would seek out and destroy the insurgents while the government persisted with efforts to win the hearts and minds of the civilian population.[21] Under the first Director of Operations in Malaya, General Sir Harold Briggs, a plan was developed that emphasized proving to the general population that the government could provide security and defense against the insurgents' threats and actions. Unfortunately, with authority still dispersed among the various civil and military interests in the country, the Briggs Plan foundered. Intelligence was neglected, the army undertook operations without allowing for previous administrative measures, and bureaucratic difficulties stalled any attempted civil actions designed to woo the civilian population.

After Sir Gerald Templer arrived in 1952, however, substantial progress was made. With his reorganization of intelligence, administration, and the military, hearts and minds operations became more possible. Among other measures taken by the government, the police were instructed to provide kindness and service to the local population, with remarkable results;[22] Malayan citizenship was accorded to all immigrants, reducing the Chinese grievances regarding political enfranchisement; and Chinese squatters were given title to the land they occupied.

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[21]Carver, 1980, p. 19.

[22]Paget (1967, p. 67) notes that "up to 20,000 instances of a 'service' a month" were being reported and concludes that this policy was "a major contribution to the battle for the hearts of the people."

Perhaps the most ambitious and revolutionary hearts and minds tactic was the phased creation of "White Areas," cleared of insurgents, in which the population proved itself loyal to the government. In the first phase, the government would use in-depth intelligence-gathering and reconnaissance to familiarize troops stationed in the area with the local population's practices and routines. In this manner, they were often able to identify who the local insurgent contacts were and how they functioned. In the second phase, a strict food denial program was established, in which the food allocated to the local population was extremely limited and prepared so that it would be neither easily transported nor last long without rotting. This either forced the insurgents out of the jungles seeking supplies, or further in, where they tried to survive on the jungle's natural but meager resources. In the third and final phase, the army would move deeply into the jungle, trying to prevent the insurgents from developing it as a resource and sanctuary. In this phase, the troops sought to make direct contact with the insurgents, either to capture or to kill them.[23] Once an area had been cleared of insurgents, and if the population had proven itself helpful and patient under the burden of food sanctions and other civil restrictions, the government regulations would be lifted, and all rationing, curfews, police checks, and controls over the movement of food would be removed.[24] By 1958, the overwhelming majority of the country had been declared "White," leaving only two small areas in which insurgent operations continued, albeit on a limited scale, and in the face of concentrated government resources.[25]

In Kenya, such tactics were less necessary. Where the government was able to provide protection from insurgent reprisals, it received support and intelligence from the local population. Such help was forthcoming both as a reaction to the Mau Mau's violence against the local population and as a means of hastening the return to a normal daily life unencumbered by governmental emergency regulations and security measures.

In Cyprus, attempted hearts and minds tactics failed completely, for two reasons: (1) The nature of the conflict was not conducive to wooing the population, most of whom sympathized with the insurgents, and many of whom believed the insurgents represented their own political interests; and (2) the government was never able to defend the public effectively against reprisals and, "until they could, there was little incentive for anyone to risk their life in a cause which held no

[23]Carver, 1980, pp. 24–25.

[24]Barker, 1971, p. 197.

[25]Dewar, 1984, pp. 42–43.

promise of enosis."[26] Moreover, a leading figure in the fight for enosis, Archbishop Makarios, successfully rallied public opinion both within and outside Cyprus to his cause. Anything that the British offered as an alternative was considered insufficient as long as Greece and Makarios held out the possibility of enosis, and the belated attempts the British made at public relations foundered in the face of the sophisticated, well-organized Radio Athens campaign.

Resettlement and Villagization

Closely related to hearts and minds tactics were the resettlement and villagization programs established respectively in Malaya and Kenya.[27] These programs incorporated the intent of civil restrictions and the effect of hearts and minds tactics. In other words, such programs effectively blocked contact between insurgents and the general population while improving the standard of living of the resettled people. Under the Briggs Plan in Malaya, more than a half million Chinese "squatters" were moved into "New Villages" defended by police and Home Guards. The Chinese community recognized the advantages offered by the new settlements, which included not only defense against insurgent pressure and reprisals, but improved housing and infrastructure (plumbing, electricity, etc.). Although it took almost four years for the security measures and administrative framework for the villages to be honed to efficiency, the New Villages were by and large successful. They helped improve government-Chinese relations and had serendipitous tactical effects. Insurgent activities now tended to be focused in and around the villages, limiting the need for the security forces to undergo wasteful large-scale operations and allowing them instead to engage the insurgents in clearly defined areas.[28]

In Kenya, a vigorous policy of villagization was undertaken in the Kikuyu tribal reserve. As in Malaya, the project restricted insurgent contact with potential supporters, and it also improved government-civilian relations. Thus, as the villagization took place under the protection of both the military and the Home Guard, native agriculture and social services also improved; concurrently, the government campaigned rigorously and successfully to convince the Kikuyu that such measures were in their own interests.[29]

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[26]Paget, 1967, p. 146.

[27]As mentioned earlier, the situation in Cyprus, geographically and politically, was not conducive to relocation or resettlement programs.

[28]Townshend, 1986, pp. 162–163.

[29]Carver, 1980, p. 40; Townshend, 1986, pp. 205–206; Dewar, 1984, p. 56.

THE BRITISH APPROACH TO COUNTERINSURGENCY: A COMMON DENOMINATOR

Clearly, among the most successful tactics developed by the British were many that were situation-specific and could not be applied to insurgencies in general. Any country facing an insurgency should be aware of the circumstances from which advantage could be derived and should develop tactics and strategies responsive to these circumstances.

When situation-specific tactics are misapplied, the situational lessons can be ineffective and expensive. During the counterinsurgency effort in Rhodesia in 1965–1980, for example, the Rhodesian government tried to apply the concept of relocation. But instead of taking advantage of the hearts and minds potential such an action afforded, the Rhodesians merely moved people into unhealthy camps with inadequate protection. This did a great deal to further alienate the population against the government and was very costly in terms of time, money, and manpower.

It is useful to compare the Rhodesian counterinsurgency efforts with those of the British, because the Rhodesian police and army were so closely modeled on the British security forces. The situation in Rhodesia, though, was very different from the situations in Malaya and Kenya. Except for the fact that they used violence as a means of controlling the population, the insurgents in Rhodesia were different from those in Malaya and Kenya in that they were members of the majority population, attacked in urban areas as well as rural, were able to use neighboring countries as bases of operation, and received considerable support from outside powers. It was thus difficult for the Rhodesian government to effectively apply the tactics developed in Malaya and Kenya. The ratio of Rhodesians to insurgents made some tactics impossible, as did the Rhodesian government's refusal to politically enfranchise the black majority population. Rhodesia, in this sense, was more like Cyprus. The insurgents received outside support, they represented the majority of the population, they fought in urban as well as rural areas, and they were fighting against the government's immutable interests and policies.[30]

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[30]Rhodesia was able to successfully adopt another of the situational lessons developed in Malaya and Kenya: the "turning" of insurgents. In fact, counter-gangs were responsible for more than 60 percent of all insurgent kills and captures during the Rhodesian counterinsurgency. The successful adoption of this policy was possible in part because the Rhodesian government was willing to provide similar incentives to "turned" insurgents as had been provided in Malaya and Kenya—the "turned" insurgents received better medical care if they needed it, their families were guaranteed safety, and they received sufficient amounts of money to be able to set up their own businesses. Moreover, any charges against them were dropped by the state. For more discussion of the Rhodesian case-study, see Hoffman, Taw, and Arnold, forthcoming.

In circumstances more like those in Malaya and Kenya, resettlement, hearts and minds measures, and the creation of Home Guards should all be possible, and would all improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the government's campaign against the insurgents. If, as in Rhodesia, a country finds itself fighting an insurgency more like the one in Cyprus, where the insurgents' cause has wide appeal both nationally and internationally and where the insurgents promise more than the government is willing to give, then tactics need to be developed that depend less on support from the general population. In such circumstances, for example, increased propaganda and public relations measures should be generated early on. Also, if the insurgency is similar to the one in Cyprus, strong, competent antiterrorist measures must be taken as a means of defending the general population from insurgent attacks and reprisals. Such measures, though necessary in Rhodesia, were not necessary in Malaya and Kenya, where attacks were concentrated in rural areas and where government resettlement and Home Guard programs effectively defended the citizenry from the insurgents.

IV. CONCLUSION

The British experiences in Malaya, Kenya, and Cyprus are of particular interest in terms of the constraints the British were facing and the varied international interests they were pursuing. There are concrete lessons to be learned about the development of tactics and strategy and much to be gained from understanding Britain's successes and failures in terms of broader British international and defense interests in the context of postwar fiscal limitations.

As in post-World War II Great Britain, the post-Cold War United States is in the process of reassessing its strategic interests and regearing its defense establishment in the face of a changing threat environment, new fiscal constraints, and strongly partisan lobbies. Recent budget wars in Congress have revolved around the appropriate allocation of defense funds to each of the armed services, with the most bitter competition for LIC funds occurring between the Army and the Marines.[1] Other debates have focused on reduced oversight for special operations[2] and the need for LIC-appropriate weaponry. Pitted against U.S. Defense Secretary Cheney, for example, who is arguing strongly for cuts in other expenses in favor of modernizing America's nuclear arsenal, are members of Congress, some defense firms, and the Marine Corps, who are fighting to save the $26 billion V-22 Osprey, a revolutionary planned troop carrier that is part helicopter and part airplane and would be appropriate for low-intensity conflicts.[3] Also in favor of increased attention to the development of LIC-materiel, U.S. Army General James J. Lindsay, the former Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Special Operations Command, has emphasized that special operations forces can no longer be "content to live with hand-me-downs" from the conventional forces.[4] This point of view has just begun to garner broader support. As occurred in Britain, American attitudes toward LIC-preparedness have changed in response to specific incidents. Although the Suez debacle acted as a catalyst for change for Britain, the failed 1980 "Desert One" mission, followed by the events in Grenada in 1983 and the December 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama, clearly indicated the need to improve U.S. LIC-capabilities.

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[1]Ropelewski, 1990, p. 14; "Armies without Adversaries," 1990, p. 14; Gordon, 1990, p. 1.

[2]Wolffe, 1990, p. 12.

[3]"Osprey Aircraft Funding," 1990; Finnegan, 1990, p. 4.

[4]Starr, 1990, p. 932.

For more than 40 years, American defense planning has been oriented primarily toward fighting a conventional war along the Central Front in Europe against the Soviet Union; many have argued (and some would say history has demonstrated) that war is the least likely contingency for which the United States ought to prepare. Until recently, Army planners generally have paid scant attention to the essentially "low-tech" requirements of small-scale conflict, assuming as a matter of course that by preparing for the largest contingency, a range of responses could be sized downward to fit lesser contingencies. This general approach has excluded consideration of the political and economic dimensions of counterinsurgency planning. Although the U.S. invasion of Panama was an improvement over the 1983 U.S. invasion of Grenada, it nonetheless demonstrated to planners and politicians alike that more consideration and funding must be allocated to "contingency (conflicts not driven by Soviet and Warsaw Pact threats)" planning.[5]

These changes in priorities are occurring as the United States faces a large budget deficit and as it seeks to pare back expenses by making drastic cuts in weapons development and manpower.[6] In fact, just as Britain did after World War II, the United States is considering how best to maintain its power projection capabilities in the face of diminished resources and changing threats. Given the similarities between the situation in which the British found themselves after World War II and the U.S. situation today, American defense planners would do well to note some of the lessons gleaned from British LIC experiences.[7]

Well-oiled conflict administration and flexibility in the development of tactics and local resources remain top priorities in the successful functioning of a counterinsurgency. The need for a clear understanding of the type and nature of the insurgency is also critical, so that appropriate tactics can be chosen and developed well in time to prevent the insurgents from gaining a foothold. Finally, the lessons themselves, though often repeated, bear remembering:

1. Administration, police, and military should be coordinated under a single individual.
2. The value of intelligence should not be underestimated, and intelligence-gathering and collation should be coordinated under a single authority.

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[5]Ropelewski, 1990, p. 14.

[6]Schmitt, 1990, p. 20; Griffith, 1990, p. 1; Moore, 1990c, p. 8; Redburn, 1990, p. 4; Moore, 1990a, p. 12.

[7]The Americans are not the only ones facing changes in the post-Cold War era. The British, for example, are again reassessing their defense doctrine and posture. See "British Army Survey: Facing Up to Change," 1990, pp. 1081–1085; Frankel, 1990, p. 29.

3. Late recognition of an insurgency is costly, insofar as the insurgents have the opportunity to gain a foothold before facing any organized opposition.
4. Special forces operations should be emphasized in lieu of large-scale formal operations.
5. Routine police work should continue.
6. Without sufficient LIC-training for troops and/or appropriate materiel, the LIC will last longer and be more expensive.

Finally, a country's own interests will have a bearing on the outcome of the LIC, and the extent to which its interests will constrain the political, tactical, and strategic options available to the security forces must also be taken into account. Where Britain was willing to make political concessions in Malaya and Kenya, the incentives it was able to offer were that much greater. Where its interests were immutable, as in Cyprus, the political compromises it was willing to make were never sufficiently appealing to either the Cypriot population or the insurgents.[8] Thus, even if a country develops an effective form of conflict administration, has a clear understanding of the circumstances facing it, and is able to develop tactics appropriate to the situation, it may not be able to win the war if it is inflexible in its attitude toward the conflict. In Cyprus, the political issues were greater and more telling than either the insurgents' or Britain's military skills. Such situations limit the extent to which tactical superiority and advantageous manpower ratios can determine the outcome of the conflict. Military actions must be used in support of, rather than in lieu of, political and social measures. In these circumstances, the military can make the difference between credibility and noncredibility in a compromise or can buy time for an improved negotiating position, but it cannot be expected to end the conflict. The value of effective and inexpensive tactics is nevertheless clear, and the need to develop tactics appropriate both to a country's means and the circumstances facing it should not be underestimated.

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[8]In Rhodesia, the government arguably won the war tactically. Nevertheless, it would not have been able to keep fighting against the waves of new insurgent recruits, nor continue to govern in a country where it was no longer considered legitimate either domestically or internationally. It therefore was forced to accede power to the black majority. At no point in the conflict did the government show itself willing to make any real political concessions, despite the deleterious effects such a stand had on any possibility of coming to a political compromise.

Appendix A

ANNUAL BRITISH DEPLOYMENT IN MALAYA (M), KENYA (K), AND CYPRUS (C)

1948	1949	1951
(M)7 battalions (25,000 troops in 14 units)	(M)7 battalions	(M)7 battalions
1952	**1953**	**1954**
(M)7 battalions (K)1 battalion	(M)7 battalions (K)5 battalions (5,000 troops) (K)2 RAF squadrons	(M)7 battalions (K)5 battalions
1955	**1956**	**1957**
(M)8 battalions (K)6 battalions (C)5 battalions (C)1 engineer regiment (C)2 Royal Marine Commandos (C)2,000 RAF	(C)10 battalions (C)1 engineer regiment (C)1 artillery regiment (C)2 Royal Marine Commandos (C)2,000 RAF (C)armored cars (C)the "Blues" (totals 17,000 troops in 14–15 army units)	(C)20,000 troops (18 battalions)

SOURCES: Bartlett, 1972; Carver, 1980; Dewar, 1984; Paget, 1967; Townshend, 1986. Numbers are extrapolated from allusions in these texts. For the most part, the numbers were reinforced rather than contradicted by the various texts.

Troops remained in each country after the date shown but for convenience are only listed up to the point where they reached their highest numbers.

Appendix B

BRITISH DEPLOYMENT AND INSURGENT STRENGTH COMPARED

Country	No. British Troops	No. Total Troops	No. Insurgents	British Troops as % of Total	Ratio Total Troops to Insurgents	Ratio British Troops to Insurgents
Malaya	25,000	300,000	8,000	8	37.5:1	3:1
Kenya	5,000	56,000	12,000	9	4.6:1	.4:1
Cyprus	20,000	24,911	1,000	80	25:1	20:1

The British were much better able to exploit the circumstances in Malaya and Kenya than they were in Cyprus. Where Britain was able to employ native forces against the insurgents in Malaya and Kenya, it needed to use far fewer of its own troops. This was a critical savings at a time when Britain was experiencing severe manpower shortages. Of the three insurgencies, Cyprus was clearly the most costly in terms of British manpower employed per insurgent.

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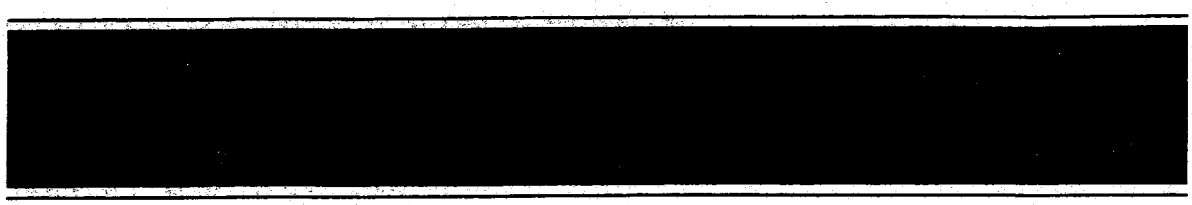
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