“What’s in a name?...That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.”

Or, why half of winning an Irregular War is agreeing what it is...

Simon Purton
Future Capabilities, Research and Technology
Allied Command Transformation
Caveat

- Personal observations
  - Not view of NATO nor SACT
- Adapted from presentation given at SAS 071 Analysis of Irregular Warfare Conference
Getting NATO to fight...

- Afghanistan
  - Article 5
- Expeditionary Operations Concept
  - No traction / Too subtle
- Asymmetric Warfare Concept
  - No basis (arguably illogical)
- Irregular War Concept
- Countering Hybrid Threats Concept
Hybrid Wars (Hoffman)

- Conflicts in 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars
  - Dec 2007
  
  “…[Hybrid] adversaries integrate Conventional, Irregular, Terrorist and Criminal assets Operationally and Tactically at the lowest possible level.”

- Operational or Tactical problem

- Historical indicators:
  - Somalia; Chechnya; 2nd Lebanon War; Georgia
Hybrid War (Killcullen)

- “The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One”
  - Mar 2009
- Combines elements of:
  - Insurgency, Nation-building, Sectarian strife, and Domestic terrorism
- “Accidental guerilla syndrome”
  - They fight not because they hate the West, but because their space has been invaded
- Hybrid War poses a strategic dilemma
Special Executive for Counter-intelligence, Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion – SPECTRE
It’s not a Hybrid
It’s a Hydra!
The NATO Construct: Countering Hybrid Threats

Interconnected, unpredictable, combined with traditional, mixed with irregular, applied simultaneously and adaptively, in time and space

- Conventional
- Irregular
- Terrorism
- Criminality

Hybrid Threats
NATO’s Problem with Irregular War

- Some views on Irregular War(fare):
  - War is a “legal condition between states”
  - “Against the rules”, “potentially illegal” methods
  - “Philosophy of our opponents”
  - “It is a capability gap…”:
    - superior in Conventional and Nuclear, not superior in Irregular

- NATO is a:
  - Defensive alliance against peer (state) competitor…
  - …but first use of Article 5…
“Irregular warfare denotes a form of conflict where one or more protagonists adopt irregular methods...**Irregular troops are any combatants not formally enlisted in the armed forces of a nation-state or other legally-constituted entity**”

AJP-3.2, Allied Land Operations, 2d Study Draft, February 2006
“A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. Irregular Warfare favors **indirect** and **asymmetric** approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will.”

*USA Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept*
“Irregular Activity is defined as: Behaviour that attempts to effect or prevent change through the illegal use, or threat, of violence, conducted by ideologically or criminally motivated non-regular forces, groups or individuals, as a challenge to authority.”

“Countering Irregular Activity within a Comprehensive Approach” Joint Doctrine Note 2/07
CAUTION INTELLECTUAL HAZARD AHEAD
“Various forms of intra- and trans-state warfare coexist with the relatively rare occurrence of armed conflicts between states.”*

“…an error to reify irregular war as a distinct phenomenon…”

“…a serious mistake to divide the realm of warfare neatly into the regular and irregular”

“…irregular, indirect and asymmetrical are inherently empty concepts, definable only with reference to their opposites.”

Irregular warfare: one nature, many characters

*Modern Strategy
On Hybrid Warfare…
“…not a big fan of **new terminology for old** forms of war.”
“If it’s a term that stimulates thought without muddying the waters then great.”
“…if you read your history you’d see there is nothing new there.”

Interview on his USA paper “Lessons from the 2006 Lebanon War”
“Regular Warfare is a situation where Regular Opponents are present and are undertaking Regular Activities”

“Irregular Warfare is a situation where Irregular Opponents may be present and someone may be undertaking Irregular Activities”

- Uncertainty
  - in definition of Irregular Activities
  - AND / OR
Decomposition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regular Activities</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Irregular Activities</td>
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The Irregular Warfare domain

- Regular Warfare
- a. Irregular opponents
- b. Irregular activities
- c. Presence of ‘irregularness’
- d. Intersection of irregular opponents and activities
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regular Activities</th>
<th>Irregular Activities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Vietnamese Army</td>
<td>Ballkans paramilitaries</td>
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<td>Iraqi Army (’91,’03)</td>
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<td>Viet Cong (1970s)</td>
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<td>Mujahedeen (1980s)</td>
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<td>Iraq Insurgency (2003)</td>
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<td>Hamas (2008)</td>
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<td>Operation Greif (1944)</td>
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<td>Spetsnaz (Cold War)</td>
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</table>
“2006 Lebanon campaign and the future of warfare: implications for army and defence policy.”

Considers how similar to “regular” or “guerrilla” forces an opponent is

Conclusion: Hezbollah 2006 conducted the conflict using “regular” approach

Acknowledge situation not clear-cut
  - Envisage a spectrum of warfare
  - Illustrate using the extremes
At the Strategic level, four characteristics between the extremes of opponents:

- Balance of the employment of brute force and coercion;
- Relative concentration of combat power;
- Organization of the theatre of war; and
- Sensitivity of dispositions to the political orientation of the population.

Suggest one more:

- Adherence to conventions and treaties pertaining to Armed Conflict, Human Rights, and International Law.
Irregular Strategic Activities

- Balance of the employment of brute force and coercion; **Coercive**
- Relative concentration of combat power; **Low, homogeneous**
- Organization of the theatre of war; **Territorial defence, fight where they live**
- Sensitivity of dispositions to the political orientation of the population; **Local support and safe havens**
- Adherence to conventions and treaties pertaining to Armed Conflict, Human Rights, and International Law; **Limited**
Operational & Tactical level

- Two principles at Operational level:
  - degree to which opponent contests ground and accepts decisive engagement; and
  - manner in which concealment is sought.

- Six specific characteristics were derived:
  - duration of firefights;
  - proximity of attackers to defenders;
  - incidence of counterattack;
  - incidence of harassing fires and unattended minefields;
  - proximity of combatants to civilians; and
  - use of uniforms to distinguish combatants from civilians.
- does not contest ground and rejects decisive engagement
- duration of firefights; short
- proximity of attackers to defenders; far
- incidence of counterattack; limited
- incidence of harassing fires and unattended minefields; high
- proximity of combatants to civilians; close
- use of uniforms to distinguish combatants from civilians; limited, indistinguishable
Findings

- Hybrid latest initiative to mobilise nations
  - Contrasting views on what Hybrid is!
- “Irregular” remains key element (at the moment)
  - But no national agreement
- Existing definitions deficient
  - For requirement or capability analysis
- Resolve Irregular Warfare into two elements relevant to NATO
  - i.e. Irregular Opponents and Irregular Activities.
Findings cont.

- **Irregular Opponents**: combatants not formally enlisted in the armed forces of a nation-state or other legally-constituted entity

- The Biddle / Friedman characteristics useful in identifying **Irregular Activities**
  - Supplement the four strategic characteristics with a fifth
Irregular Warfare features opponents who will not be formally enlisted in the armed forces of a nation-state or other legally-constituted entity. These opponents will employ regular and irregular means against us. They may be limited to coercing us, eroding our will and determination; they are unlikely to contest ground and will reject decisive engagements if possible. When they engage our forces, it will be on their terms, employing capabilities to limit their exposure; their attacks will be swift and made from the safety of distance.

It is likely that they will fight where they live and rely on local support and safe havens for resupply. They will seek concealment amongst civilians and may be indistinguishable from them. They are unlikely to adhere to recognised conventions and treaties.
Questions?