



**Crippling Insurgencies with National
Reconciliation Programs:
A Primer for Military Practitioners**

Raymond A. Millen, Ph.D.



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**US Army Peacekeeping and Stability
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About the Author

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in December 2008 (2d edition). In February 2019, PKSOF published *“Bury the Dead, Feed the Living:” The History of Civil Affairs/Military Government in the Mediterranean and European Theaters of Operation during World War II*. In May 2020, PKSOF published *Death by a Thousand Cuts: Weakening an Insurgency through a National Reconciliation Program*. Dr. Millen is a graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College and the US Army War College. He holds an M.A. degree in National Security Studies from Georgetown University, as well as an M.A. degree in World Politics and a Ph.D. in Political Science from The Catholic University of America.

Forward

This primer on reconciliation programs serves to complement counterinsurgency strategies. While such programs require a fair amount of organization, resources, funding and manpower, the key distinction is they are predominately managed by host nation governments. This requirement means that US military and government officials must focus on advising and the provision of resources to support a reconciliation program. The purpose of this primer is to inform US advisors on the salient features of a reconciliation program. This task is by no means simple because host nation governments are unlikely to pursue a reconciliation program without US persistence and guidance.

This primer provides a methodical approach to inducing surrender among common insurgents and providing ways for them to become productive citizens. Effective reconciliation programs have the potential to shorten the length and costs of an insurgency. Such programs serve to accelerate the healing process in the midst of an insurgency. In the aftermath of an insurgency, reconciliation programs provide the requisite infrastructure for the implementation of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs. As such, reconciliation programs lay the groundwork for enduring stability in an affected country.

Scot N. Storey
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Introduction

National reconciliation programs are a practical approach to fatally weakening insurgencies. Despite their potential, very rarely are national reconciliation programs adopted as part of a counterinsurgency strategy. The reasons are not hard to fathom. Reconciliation programs are not politically popular. Both the government and populace regard insurgents as traitors and criminals. Hatred and fear are heightened once insurgents perpetrate atrocities, acts of terrorism, intimidation, and destruction, and criminal activities. Nearly all insurgency movements commit such acts in order to survive and expand.

Insurgent propaganda seeks to create the impression that the revolution is wide-spread with all insurgents completely committed to the cause. Both the government and populace naturally conclude that the insurgency movement is completely cohesive, and hence they seek to give no quarter. This assumption belies the historical experience of insurgencies though. This primer is not an historical study of reconciliation programs. For readers wishing to gain greater historical insights of reconciliation programs, the following PKSOI study is recommended: *Death by a Thousand Cuts: Weakening an Insurgency through a Reconciliation Program* (PKSOI, April 2020), <http://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/index.cfm/front-items/death-by-a-thousand-cuts/>.

Despite popular presumptions, insurgency movements are not unbreakable. While people join an insurgency for a variety of reasons, as the conflict becomes protracted, their morale erodes. Wavering insurgents are often caught in a dilemma between death and survival. Reconciliation officials must understand

this dilemma and the motivations for defection when designing the program.

Counterinsurgencies are normally protracted, expensive, and destructive. In terms of casualties and expenses, a reconciliation program is far more cost effective than defeating an insurgency solely through military operations. Counterinsurgency operations and reconciliation programs are a dual-pronged approach to defeating an insurgency. As counterinsurgency operations gain control of more territory, insurgents have greater opportunities to defect and enter the reconciliation program. Both are mutually supportive, with the initial trickle of defectors increasing to mass proportions as counterinsurgency operations and the reconciliation program gain momentum. This interplay ultimately cripples the insurgency.

This primer describes the salient features of a reconciliation program for military practitioners: 1) insurgent motivations for reconciliation; 2) host nation government's commitment to the reconciliation program; 3) preparation for the program; 4) information operations; 5) reconciliation centers; 6) government service opportunities; 7) resettlement of reconcilers; and 8) detention operations. Whether the United States intervenes militarily or provides assistance with advisors, funding, and resources, the inclusion of a reconciliation program in counterinsurgency efforts raises the prospect of establishing enduring stability far beyond the insurgency.

Insurgent Motivations for Reconciliation

People join insurgencies for a variety of reasons: grievances stemming from government corruption and disenfranchisement, social and economic advancement, ideology, and financial opportunities. Some people are drawn to the insurgency out of a sense of adventure, inspired by insurgent propaganda and a chance to leave behind the ennui of village life. Many however, including children and young women, are impressed into service, serving as fighters, laborers, or slaves. Irrespective of the circumstances behind their involvement, guerrillas experience adversities which impact on their morale and discipline.

The life of the common insurgent is grueling. Constantly exposed to the weather and geographic environment, they experience health issues since they lack access to basic services. The ever-present exposure to danger, either hunted by government security forces or engaged in combat operations, leads to a nomadic existence. Exhaustion, illness, disease, hunger, and thirst mean an existence of constant deprivation.

Fighter morale is dependent on the vagaries and actions of insurgent leaders. Dull and repetitious ideological instruction, limited promotions, countermeasures to prevent defections, and harsh treatment by the leadership create a life of tedium, depression, and paranoia. Insurgent treatment of the populace further disillusiones the common fighter. Acts of terrorism, intimidation, cruelty, and murder are common fare to maintain control of the population. After all, the insurgency needs the people for manpower, funding, supplies, and protection. Even initial sympathizers of the insurgency grow weary of prolonged privation and financial hardship. Instead of

hailing guerrillas as liberators or heroes, the populace soon regards them with hatred, fear, and repugnance.

The common insurgent is stuck in a dilemma. On one side, the government and the citizenry regard insurgents as traitors, criminals, and enemies. The threat of punishment and death from the government makes the prospect of surrender hazardous. On the other, to keep fighters in the ranks, insurgent leaders invariably use harsh control measures, including the threat of punishment and execution of defectors. Retribution extends to family members of defectors as well. Hence, a sense of fatalism settles on the common guerrilla, with death as the only escape.

While a base of committed insurgents (i.e., the irreconcilables) always exists, the host nation government must recognize that a segment of the insurgent ranks wishes to surrender. The number of potential reconcilers is unknown and will remain unknown if the government makes no effort to establish an outlet for them.

A national reconciliation program provides a way for uncommitted insurgents to escape their predicament. Adoption of such a program is a difficult decision for the national government. Regardless of the circumstances of individual guerrillas, the revolutionary cause seeks to overthrow the government, perpetrates atrocities on the populace, destroys infrastructure, and ruins the economy. Convincing the host nation government, which in turn must convince the populace, to adopt a reconciliation program requires persistence. Ultimately, US advisors must persuade the government that the benefits outweigh the costs.

Host Nation Government's Commitment to the Program

When in US national interests and supportive of strategic objectives, the United States may render assistance to a country suffering from an insurgency. Senior US policy makers and advisors must gain the national government's commitment to reconciliation as the initial step in assistance. They must make a national reconciliation program integral to the counterinsurgency strategy. They must convince the government that the program is in its best interests. While the US government can provide assistance and advice, only the host nation government can manage the program. First, US advisors must explain that no insurgency is invulnerable and that reconciliation aims to offer a way for disaffected guerrillas to surrender. Second, US advisors must outline the necessary organization and resources to make the program effective. Third, a reconciliation program is a part of the counterinsurgency strategy. The program is no substitute for such a strategy and will likely fail if attempted alone.

US officials must highlight that the benefits of a reconciliation program are generally applicable to all insurgencies. Historical experience suggests that processing a defector through the program is far cheaper than killing an insurgent with military operations. Fewer insurgents in the field result in fewer friendly casualties from military operations. This factor is not apparent with a few hundred defections, but when the defections run into the tens of thousands, then the difference becomes pronounced. Reconciliation is a zero-sum gain because the loss of a guerrilla to the insurgency is a gain for the host nation government, in terms of the economy, human capital, and revenue. Since insurgencies represent a minority

of the population, the loss of fighters is a constant concern. Moreover, reconciled insurgents can provide invaluable service to the government.

US assistance should be contingent on the government's commitment to a reconciliation program. Counterinsurgencies are expensive to fund and resource, so the United States must weigh the impact of engagement on enduring stability. Without a reconciliation program, even a successful counterinsurgency is no guarantee for such stability. By design, a formal reconciliation program addresses basic grievances and drivers of conflict. Most insurgencies are protracted, so time exists for the development of a reconciliation program. A well-managed and resourced reconciliation program shortens the length of an insurgency and establishes a pathway for demobilization, disarmament, and reconciliation (DDR) programs in the aftermath of the conflict. Thereafter, security sector reform (SSR) has the required stability for development.

The host nation government's commitment to the reconciliation program is foremost an issue of legitimacy. The United States must avoid accusations that the national government is a puppet of American imperialism, so a government-lead is imperative to legitimacy. While US departments and agencies can provide advisors, resources and funding for the program, the leadership, manpower, and management must come from host nation authorities. Only host nation personnel possess the linguistic, cultural, and societal skills to make the reconciliation program resonate with insurgents and the populace alike.

Again, an important distinction for the program is that it focuses on inducing the surrender of common

fighters, not the hardcore ideologues. The vast majority of an insurgency comprises the lower ranks, and the insurgency cannot endure without them. By publicly holding the irreconcilables responsible for perpetrated atrocities, the national government can gain the necessary support of the populace for the reconciliation program.

Preparations for the Program

A national reconciliation program requires extensive organization to manage the manpower, resources, and funding. The program requires close coordination with the counterinsurgency strategy to assure its effectiveness. Because the reconciliation program is integral to counterinsurgency operations, it depends on the government's ability to control insurgent-contested territory. The reconciliation program enhances government territorial gains. Logically, as the government gains more control of insurgent areas, common fighters have greater opportunities to defect safely.

A government ministry of reconciliation provides the necessary organization for the program. It serves as the coordinating center for information operations, construction and management of reconciliation centers, the rehabilitation training programs, the enlistment of volunteer reconcilers in the government services, the resettlement of reconcilers, and detention operations. The ministry ensures the military forces, police services, and general population understand and support the program as envisioned. Delegation of authority to provincial and district government officials to manage reconciliation centers is essential to efficiency and effectiveness. A ministry oversight

office is needed to detect and curb corruption and incompetence in the management of the reconciliation program at all levels of government. Ultimately, a ministry of reconciliation is a tangible demonstration of the government's commitment to the program and its abiding legitimacy.

US advisors and other officials should provide assistance to the ministry of reconciliation and provincial reconciliation centers. Their advice and involvement in information operations, intelligence exploitation, and management of reconciliation programs promote oversight and the timely allocation of resources to critical areas. To emphasize, US involvement is to assist and not take charge of any activities. The employment of US survey teams is useful in recording and studying best practices for reconciliation programs, which adds to the body of knowledge and possible application to other insurgencies.

Information Operations

Information operations address two audiences—the insurgents and the public. Information operations must craft a synchronized and purposeful plan, as well as employing astute, dedicated personnel. Messaging requires widespread dissemination to inform the insurgents and public of the amnesty policy, the reconciliation program, the details of the program, and instructions on surrendering safely. An alluring, culturally appropriate name for the reconciliation program requires considerable thought, so as to persuade insurgents to surrender with honor. For example, during the Vietnam War, the Republic of Vietnam named its program *Chieu Hoi*, which translated to “Open Arms” or “Welcome

Back.” As such, information operations must avoid terms which convey surrender and defection, which insurgent leaders can exploit to label them as traitors, deserters, and apostates. For most societies, honor, family, tradition, and loyalty are deep-felt beliefs. Thus, culturally appropriate names and terms are important so they can maintain their appeal.

The information service comprises two primary offices: the executive agency and the psychological warfare section. The executive agency concentrates on formulating policy and the prompt production of messages. Its initial task is the formulation of the amnesty policy, which must be just and reasonable. Amnesty is the government promise of fair treatment and should include enough details for quick consumption. The agency coordinates with government ministries, including the military and police, for the timely well-crafted dissemination of policies and activities. As such, the executive agency needs professional managers and editors for the effective articulation and orchestration of reconciliation efforts. If practicable, a cyberwarfare cell may provide additional capabilities to counter insurgent propaganda and disrupt insurgent command and control.

The psychological warfare section focuses on crafting sophisticated messages which resonate with insurgents. The section studies information gleaned from defector interviews and captured documents. As the reconciliation program evolves, it should employ former insurgents (reconcilers) to gain insights into insurgent psychology and assist in the crafting of persuasive messages to encourage defections. In coordination with the government, the section can arrange for reconcilers to participate in taped

interviews for media distribution, as well as appearing on leaflets and social media with personal messages to insurgents. Personal messages from former insurgents, featuring their picture, are proof of the government's sincerity with amnesty. US military information support operations (MISO) soldiers and personnel from other US agencies should advise and assist the psychological warfare section.

The dissemination of messages should use diverse and widespread means: television, radio, leaflets, movies, newspapers, journals, loudspeakers mounted on aircraft and trucks, internet social media, cell phone messages, and armed reconciliation team visits to local communities. Because dissemination is a prodigious effort, US military logistical assets can provide substantial assistance. All messages must inform insurgents on the proper ways to surrender. Senior government officials must publicly declare the terms of the amnesty policy, the enactment of a reconciliation program, and incentives for reconciling (e.g., rewards for weapons brought in, information on weapons caches, and tips on the locations of insurgent leaders). The ministry of reconciliation should ensure amnesty policy proclamations are prominently posted everywhere and included as leaflets.

Social media attachments, cell phone messages, and paper leaflets can serve as safe conduct passes, with a picture and signature of the government president or prime minister for authenticity. Safe conduct passes should be multilingual and provide instructions on the safe way to surrender. Simple signs of surrender, such as removing headgear, slinging the weapon behind the back, and arms raised holding the safe conduct pass may suffice to show intent. All military units and police

services must be aware of the safe conduct pass and the procedures for processing surrendering insurgents to reconciliation centers. Since surrendering to military units is hazardous for insurgents, police stations should expect to receive the majority of defectors.

The most important civilian audiences for information operations are relatives and friends of insurgents. Historical experience suggests that insurgents remain in contact with loved ones, so they should be a part of the dissemination chain. As trusted sources, they serve as a means of persuasion and information on the amnesty and the reconciliation program. Public media announcements are passive consumption by nature and no guarantee of assured awareness. Police and military visits to local communities may not be that effective since people tend to shy away from authority figures. Reconcilers formed into armed reconciliation teams may prove more effective in outreach visits. Reconcilers from the local areas are generally more familiar with the villagers and able to make connections. Visits by national entertainers and senior government officials are also worth the investment in spreading the word.

Involving reconcilers in newspaper stories (with pictures), media interviews, and lectures serves two purposes. First, they counter insurgent propaganda of government mistreatment of defectors. Media pictures of well-fed reconcilers with family and friends intimately connect with former comrades. Personal messages denouncing specific insurgent leaders and their propaganda serve to exacerbate dissension and mistrust within guerrilla ranks. Second, once reconcilers have gone public, they cannot defect back to the insurgency since the insurgent leadership

regards them as traitors to the cause. Even insurgent infiltrators would be reluctant to rejoin the insurgency once they have appeared in the media as reconcilers.

Reconciliation Centers

The ministry of reconciliation should construct reconciliation centers in each province, which should be within the parameters of government capacity. If government capacity permits district reconciliation centers, so much the better. Otherwise, district reception centers can be constructed near police stations to transport surrendering insurgents to provincial reconciliation centers. For efficiency, police stations can collect biometrics data and issue pictured identification cards to reconcilers. Biometrics data may be uploaded to a central network databank (if available) or given to the reconciler for in-processing at the provincial reconciliation center.

A national reconciliation center in the capital city may serve for senior insurgent leaders who surrender. While few senior insurgent leaders defect, except in the closing period of the insurgency, prudence suggests the erection of a center to interview them for intelligence and for information operations. Indeed, senior level reconcilers are a key measure of effectiveness for the reconciliation program.

Because insurgents are well-informed on conditions at provincial reconciliation centers, any instances of mismanagement and corruption tend to dissuade insurgents from defecting. Hence, well-managed and maintained reconciliation centers are tangible proof of the government's sincerity towards reconciliation. Provincial reconciliation centers should be spacious

and built for expansion. As counterinsurgency efforts gain momentum, the number of reconcilers can grow from hundreds to thousands per month. Each center should be configured for the following facilities: reception/in-processing; weapons turn-in; medical/dental; clothing issue; segregated living quarters (i.e., males, females, children, and families); dining; life skills; education; vocational; informal justice proceedings; worship; meetings; and athletics. While a US agency may provide modular shelters initially, the ministry of reconciliation should construct permanent facilities since reconciliation centers may become a permanent feature, even in the post-conflict period.

Reception/in-processing.

After verifying reconciler biometrics and identification cards, reconciliation center officials escort them to interview rooms. Trained interviewers question reconcilers to determine their status, to collect intelligence, and to detect infiltrators. The initial task of the interview is to verify the role of the insurgent. Some people (e.g., displaced persons) may pretend to be insurgents so they can reap the benefits of the program. Some will be insurgent infiltrators to undermine the program or to give intelligence to insurgent leaders. The interviewer also determines the aptitude, motivation, and aspirations of reconcilers. The majority of reconcilers may have limited knowledge of the insurgency and simple aspirations, so they can proceed through the program quickly. Since many farmers and herders may have been impressed into the insurgency, they would not be interested in education and vocational training; thus, they would be happy to return to their former way of life.

Those reconcilers with greater knowledge of insurgent locations, leadership, tactics, and procedures have value for the intelligence services and tactical units. Their information is promptly forwarded to national and military intelligence services for action. Reconcilers which are motivated and have high aspirations are earmarked for higher education and vocational training. They have the most to contribute to the economy and perhaps government service if qualified.

Because of their familiarity with the insurgent apparatus, reconcilers in government service should participate as interviewers to verify the status of defectors and to detect potential infiltrators. Defectors are more likely to provide candid answers when they realize a former insurgent is involved in the interview. Thus, these interviewers can glean greater intelligence once they demonstrate intimate knowledge of insurgent leaders, tactics, and methods.

Biometrics collection and identification cards help the government keep track of resettled reconcilers and forestall attempts by former reconcilers to extract additional benefits from other reconciliation centers. In-processing includes the issuance of ration cards for dining and establishment of accounts for stipends during their stay. These administrative practices also prevent potential corruption by officials.

Weapons turn-in.

Reconcilers may bring in multiple weapons especially if the government has a cash-for-weapons offer. These weapons are recorded and stored in a locked container and then

transported promptly to a central collection point for repair or destruction. Close supervision of weapons collection is needed to prevent illegal arms trafficking.

Medical/Dental.

Since reconcilers experience health problems due to living in the field, a medical examination fulfills the government promise of healthcare and forestalls an outbreak of disease in the center. Food and medical care are powerful incentives to encourage defections, so information services should record and disseminate “before and after” pictures of reconcilers. Psychological or trauma counselling may be needed for some reconcilers, especially child soldiers and sex slaves. Since child soldiers have an undeveloped moral compass and may have committed atrocities, they likely need extensive counselling.

Clothing Issue.

Because insurgents wear out clothing and shoes rather quickly while in the field, the majority will need fresh clothes and shoes. The host nation government and provinces should initiate charity drives for such commodities. Select NGOs and international charities may also be a source for clothing and shoes. Fresh clothes and shoes fulfill the government promise and should be included in information operations.

Segregated Living Quarters.

While the majority of reconcilers are male, living arrangements for female and child soldiers are necessary.

Segregation breaks any coercive bonds that may exist between adult males and females/children. The availability of family quarters may prove an inducement for the defection of married insurgents. Assuring them a safe place for their family may persuade wavering insurgents to defect, particularly those families in insurgent-controlled areas. Since the reconciliation program operates on a cycle of four to six weeks, grouping newcomers in living quarters to correspond with their training cycle improves efficiency.

Dining.

Culturally appropriate and nutritious food is always a powerful inducement for defection, so ensuring stocks are plentiful is a key concern for reconciliation centers. Reconcilers, who have gone through the program and are interested in a food service career, can volunteer to work in the dining facility. Their service not only supports the reconciliation center, but it also allows food service workers to establish relationships with local restaurant owners when they eventually resettle.

Life-skills Training.

Basically, life-skills training teaches the rudiments of maintaining a household, shopping, and budgeting. Years as an insurgent may deprive many of the ability to perform simple tasks, such as shopping and paying for commodities. Learning how to follow recipes and to cook is universally appreciated. Managing a personal budget and maintaining a savings account are also fundamental skills. While this training is not time-consuming, these simple skills

help reconcilers reintegrate into society without personal embarrassment.

Education.

Most insurgents have little education, particularly those impressed at a young age. Realistically, basic education is limited to the time spent in the center (i.e., four to six weeks). Reconciliation centers should reach out to local teachers to the fullest extent and rely on external teachers on a supplemental basis. Local teachers may know many reconcilers as former students. Reconnecting with former teachers permits reconcilers to continue their education once they resettle. A small number of reconcilers may be former teachers, so tapping into their expertise helps bring fulfillment to them as well as a benefit to the students.

Vocational.

Vocational training must reflect the economic needs of the local communities. While the ministry of reconciliation may provide some vocational trainers, reconciliation centers should seek the assistance from local businessmen, farmers, textile manufacturers, and repairmen, among others. The purpose is to provide rudimentary skills for reconcilers to find employment and improve their skills once they start working fulltime. Vocational training can serve as an informal jobs fair since trainers can offer positions to exceptional students once they resettle.

Reconcilers with higher aspirations will want advanced education and/or specialized vocational skills, especially if they joined the insurgency for the

purpose of upward social mobility. These reconcilers are not interested in menial skills and would leave the reconciliation center in frustration if nothing better is offered. Accordingly, the ministry of reconciliation should establish advanced vocational training centers and specialty programs (e.g., medical, agriculture, and engineering) for motivated and capable reconcilers. The national government should view vocational training as an investment, since graduates contribute to the economy as productive citizens.

Informal Judicial Proceedings.

Thousands of atrocities occur during the course of an insurgency. Often, common insurgents are forced to commit them at the behest of the leadership. Such coercion is a technique to maintain control of insurgents, since perpetrators fear punishment from the government once they surrender. Government amnesty is the gateway for forgiveness, but informal judicial proceedings (e.g., truth and reconciliation trials) provide an opportunity for reconcilers to face former victims and/or their families, explain the circumstances, and ask forgiveness. The ministry of reconciliation should provide judges for the proceedings and funds for financial compensation to the victims as part of the judgement. Such proceedings are necessary for reconciler resettlement into former communities. If the afflicted communities do not want the reconcilers back, then the ministry of reconciliation must resettle the reconcilers elsewhere.

Worship and Meeting Facilities.

Having a place to worship is self-evident, and most insurgents may not have had the opportunity to worship properly while in the field. These facilities may also serve as meeting halls for the reconciliation center administrators to provide information on the program, review training schedules, and answer questions. Perhaps as important, administrators need to address rumors which are likely to spread among reconcilers. Rumor control may be one of the more important functions of town hall meetings.

Athletics.

Downtime is inevitable during the stay at the reconciliation center. Soccer, volleyball, and similar sports are a source of entertainment and physical activity, thereby ameliorating boredom and frustration. At a minimum, exercise burns off excess energy, particularly with children, encouraging sleep rather than mischief at the end of the day. Athletic fields may serve as parade grounds for morning formations and graduation.

Graduation.

As a way to bolster the reconciliation and amnesty policies, a formal graduation is needed for each cycle of reconcilers. Graduation is an opportunity to provide reconcilers with official documents for their records: a signed grant of amnesty with government seal is tangible proof of official forgiveness; vocational training certificates are useful for

reconciler job portfolios; and academic certificates assist in subsequent school placement or employment qualifications. The formal graduation is an opportunity for participants to take an oath of allegiance to the government and receive their take-home packages. Transportation of graduates to their local communities prevents potential robbery or attacks.

Miscellaneous Issues.

Insurgents are likely to target reconciliation centers for attack, so their security is a concern. Reconcilers, who opt for government service, can provide security of reconciliation centers since they have a stake in protecting colleagues and newcomers. As such, their service as local security allows military and police services to focus on counterinsurgency operations. If reconcilers are not available, local militias may serve to provide security of reconciliation centers.

Biometric and identification collection allows the ministry of reconciliation to track progress on the reconciliation program per province. Accordingly, this information helps the ministry shift resources to provinces experiencing high volumes of reconcilers. Oversight offices in the ministry use the data to curb corruption by local officials attempting to inflate numbers for financial gain.

Interviews of defectors helps information operations personnel identify motivations for defection, which may change over time. In this manner, information services can tailor timely and effective messages to specific areas. Feedback from reconcilers on the vocational programs or management of reconciliation centers helps the ministry take corrective measures for mismanagement, as well as improving the programs.

Many of the reconciliation center activities are conducted as part of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs in the aftermath of a conflict. For more information on DDR and the reintegration programs, refer to PKSOI publication, *Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration: A Primer for Military Practitioners*, http://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/default/assets/File/Homepage/DDR%20paper_web.pdf.

Government Service Opportunities

Reconciliation center authorities should solicit volunteers for government service. As such, the candidates must demonstrate physical fitness, motivation, and aptitude for such service. Once volunteers graduate from basic training, they serve on a probation basis (perhaps six weeks) before serving full time. Thereafter, they receive the full benefits as service personnel. A distinctive designation for these soldiers promotes their self-worth and pride. For example, during the Vietnam War, ralliers who served with US military units were known as Kit Carson scouts. Some cultural appropriate appellation for these select soldiers would heighten their effectiveness in tactical operations.

Because of their intimate knowledge of insurgent tactics, techniques, and procedures, select soldiers may serve as trainers for tactical units. Training on insurgent techniques, such as ambushes, the planting of mines and improvised explosive devices, and location for caches improve unit effectiveness. Reconcilers suffering from disabilities may be suitable as trainers.

Some reconcilers may serve as scouts for tactical units to locate and attack insurgent units. Since insurgent groups form habits in regards to selection of

bases, caches, and movement routes, scouts can guide units into likely insurgent areas for tactical operations undetected. Similarly, select counter-guerrilla units may operate deep in insurgent territory to disrupt and sabotage insurgent activities, as well as target insurgent leaders. The adage, "It takes a guerrilla to catch a guerrilla," is demonstrated with the employment of reconcilers as scouts and counter-guerrillas.

A number of soldiers can serve on armed reconciliation teams as part of information operations. Operating in small groups (around four personnel), they enter insurgent controlled and contested areas, visiting villages, sharing their personal experiences, and promoting the reconciliation program. As such, the ministry of reconciliation should plan on deploying dozens of teams to ensure sufficient coverage of provinces. Their main audiences are relatives and friends of insurgents. Along with government messages, they distribute safe conduct leaflets, under the assumption that family members and friends will pass them on to insurgents. These soldiers may also serve as security for reconciliation centers and police stations. For command and control, provincial governors would assume responsibility of these teams.

The most intelligent, knowledgeable, and motivated reconcilers should serve in the intelligence and information operations services. Their involvement in defector interviews, their study of captured documents, their interpretation of radio intercepts, and their intimate knowledge of insurgent methods and leaders substantially help in creating an accurate intelligence picture of insurgent activities.

Their contributions to information operations are equally valuable. Understanding the insurgent psyche,

they can craft sophisticated messages, which appeal to the common fighters. Knowledgeable on insurgent hardships, frustrations, and hopes, their messages provide a personal touch. Some messages are reserved to certain geographic areas, mentioning specific leaders, units, and even insurgents by name. These communications seek to create dissension, mistrust, and even hatred between the common fighter and the leaders. This friction is heightened by offers of rewards for fighters to betray their leaders to the government (e.g., killing them or providing information on their whereabouts). In reaction, insurgent leaders may intensify plummeting morale by exerting more control over fighters, denying visits to families, and threatening fighters with punishment if caught listening to messages or having leaflets in their possession.

Resettlement of Reconcilers

Ideally, reconcilers should return to their communities of origin. This may not be possible if villagers refuse their resettlement. Even those who do return may experience lingering mistrust, fear, and hatred among the populace, so enlisting the support of local authorities to explain the reconciler's circumstances and goals of the reconciliation program is necessary. Personal visits by armed reconciliation teams may serve to check on a resettled reconciler's well-being and elicit any information on insurgents operating in the area for the intelligence services.

When resettlement to homes of origin is not possible, reconciliation center personnel can seek placement with distant relatives or another locale where the reconciler is not known. With former female

sex slaves, social taboos may make this decision best for the individual to start with a clean slate. Resettlement should be as low profile as possible.

The ministry of reconciliation may choose to provide stipends for food and rent to help settle reconcilers (perhaps for six months). The ministry must ensure that local communities do not perceive reconcilers as reaping benefits for joining the insurgency. Accordingly, job opportunities, benefit packages, and stipends must not be advertised for individual reconcilers. In essence, the government must downplay specific attention to reconcilers because the local populace, particularly resettled displaced persons, must not perceive any special treatment of people considered traitors.

Detention Operations

Detention operations are integral to the reconciliation program and impact on the counterinsurgency strategy. The insurgency leadership scrutinizes detention facility conditions and treatment of inmates for propaganda. Poor conditions and mistreatment serve the insurgent cause by painting the host nation government as illegitimate, corrupt, and inhumane. Insurgent propaganda highlighting heinous treatment of inmates acts as a powerful recruitment tool, not only domestically but globally as well.

The national government must attend to the influx of insurgents resulting from counterinsurgency operations. Normally, detained insurgents are held in a separate category from prisoners of war due to the character of the conflict. Detention facility capacity becomes problematic due to overcrowding, which in turn exacerbates living and nutritional requirements.

The insurgency leadership exploits the overcrowding and attendant problems for propaganda. Further, hardcore insurgents held in detention capitalize on the confusion due to overcrowding to further the insurgent cause inside of the detention facilities.

Historical experience suggests that insurgents use detention facilities to convert, recruit, and intimidate other inmates to support the insurgency upon release. A large segment of the inmate population may be fairly moderate. Military forces may have swept them up during operations, unsure of their status, and placed them into detention centers as a safeguard. Insurgents may have paid some people to provide intelligence, perform labor, and plant explosives. Insurgents may have impressed a great many who were later captured during military operations. Since hardcore insurgent inmates attempt to blend in with the general population, detention officials have a difficult time determining everyone's true status.

Segregation.

Detention officials need to segregate the inveterate insurgents from the moderates. While initial interviews of incoming inmates may help determine the real status of most, savvy hardcore inmates portray themselves as moderates to gain access into the general detention population. Hence, detention officials must closely monitor inmates for signs of intimidation, proselytization, and recruitment. Hardcore inmates attempt to deprive detention personnel access to their areas of domination, so active countermeasures are needed, which is a dangerous task for guards. Follow-on interviews of all inmates are necessary to further identify and separate

the hardcore from the moderate inmates. Detention officials may seek opportunities for moderates to divulge information safely, such as sick call, family visitations, and inspections of cells. Providing information is dangerous for inmates, so detention officials must establish safe conditions for the provision of anonymous tips.

Ideally, a separate detention facility for hardcore inmates provides requisite separation, but time and resources to build such a facility may not be available. In this case, seclusion within existing detention facilities is the only viable option. Consequently, iterative interviews of suspected inveterate inmates, vigilance, and tips serve to provide a safe environment for moderate inmates.

Education and Vocational Skills Training.

Detention officials must provide hope for moderate inmates. An area of the detention facility must be set aside for education and vocational training. Illiteracy is the most likely challenge for the education program. Detention officials can identify inmates with an academic background to teach basic education. The ministry of reconciliation may hire teachers to provide instruction as well. Detention officials should hire retired school administrators to provide structure to the education program, which reflects the standard practices of domestic education. Achievement awards for outstanding academic performance of inmates should also be part of the education program.

Vocational training is an effective way to prepare inmates for a meaningful livelihood upon release, so the ministry of reconciliation should hire instructors for vocations that support the economy. The provision

of stipends for inmates participating in vocational programs serves as a strong inducement. Inmates should be allowed to provide their stipends to their families during visitations. Inmates may be the breadwinners, so their families experience financial difficulties during their incarceration. Certificates of training and small achievement rewards heighten the popularity of these detention programs.

Review and Release Program.

Because effective counterinsurgency operations result in inordinate numbers of detained insurgents, detention facilities must establish a release program to keep the inmate population at manageable, humane levels. The inmate release program is imperfect because some released inmates return to the insurgency. However, the program is intended to provide a chance for the majority of inmates to become productive citizens. An accompanying goal of detention operations is for former inmates to relate their good treatment and training opportunities to friends and relatives, thereby undercutting insurgent propaganda. Hence, while a few malcontents may slip through the release program, the vast majority become productive members of society.

Tracking recidivism rates is difficult at best, so some ambiguity is inherent regarding the program's measure of effectiveness. While biometric data on former inmates undoubtedly verifies recidivists, a number of inmates returning to the insurgency may elude capture or be killed in combat. While detention officials should record recidivism rates, overreliance on them as categorical proof of success can be self-delusional. The true measure of long-term effectiveness

is intangible, which is the former inmate's decision to seek a peaceful life.

Small review and release boards are the mechanism for release and should occur about every six months for each inmate. Candidates for release meet with the board to explain the circumstances of their detainment. Whenever possible, reports pertaining to their capture and on their behavior during detention are reviewed by candidates and the board. Obtaining military reports for this purpose are normally difficult since they may be classified, particularly reports from special operating forces. Candidates may be illiterate, so someone must read the reports aloud. As part of the release process, village or tribal leaders may vouch and take responsibility for candidates in front of the board. These elders may also affirm continued good behavior of former inmates to local judges.

Local military commanders, police, and the populace are likely to complain about the release program because past encounters with associated inmates have bred suspicion, fear, and hatred. The board must make clear to candidates that the eyes of the community are upon them, so if they engage in criminal behavior again, their recidivism may result in an extended detention or imprisonment.

Conclusions

The host nation government must view a reconciliation program as an investment in the future of the country. The root causes of the insurgency and drivers of conflict are important to address, but reforms require time and resources. The national government must attend to the exigencies of

the crisis, which means the counterinsurgency effort holds priority. A reconciliation program permits the government to institute reforms while combatting the insurgency.

The objective of the reconciliation program is to siphon off disaffected insurgent fighters and laborers. Without a stable base of trained fighters and laborers, the insurgency becomes more vulnerable to counterinsurgency operations. As insurgents suffer battlefield defeats and observe the good treatment of reconcilers, increasing numbers are likely to defect. Hence, the insurgency slowly wastes away into nothing.

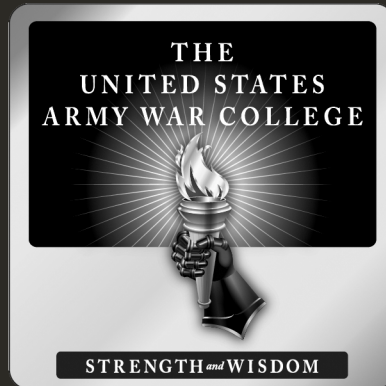
The added benefit of a reconciliation program is the regeneration of the national economy. Education and vocational training provide upward social and financial mobility for reconcilers. In the long term, provincial reconciliation centers may become permanent fixtures for adult education and vocational training for all interested citizens.

The early investment in a reconciliation program pays dividends for disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs in the aftermath of an insurgency. The immediate areas of reconciliation centers can serve to host disarmament and demobilization activities. The reconciliation centers can continue as reintegration cantonments for both former insurgents and government forces. Since government military forces and local militias expand during an insurgency, they too will need to demobilize. The reintegration cantonments would provide excellent opportunities for education and vocational training for such forces. This approach eases the strain on the national economy which normally suffers from mass demobilization.

Reconciliation during the emergency promotes enduring reconciliation in the aftermath. Whether the original rift was religious, ethnic, or ideological, the host nation must embrace reconciliation in order to heal the nation and promote economic recovery. The absence of earnest government and societal reconciliation sows the seeds of future conflict, condemning the country to perpetual instability. With stability, security sector reform and other programs have a better chance of assisting a country to become an active partner in the international community – and that is the bottom-line.



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