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WEBERIAN MILITARIES:
PROMOTION AND APPOINTMENT SYSTEMS AS A DETERMINATE OF MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS IN POPULATION CENTRIC COUNTERINSURGENCY

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The views expressed in this dissertation are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the United States Army, the Department of Defense, or the United States Government.

For Missy and Max

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explains military effectiveness in executing population centric counterinsurgency (PCC) strategies. Why do some states conduct PCC effectively, while others attempt it, but fail to do so? Why are some states able to increase their effectiveness over the course of a campaign. In short, what are the determinates of PCC effectiveness?

The dominant literature focuses on the effects of past formative wars on a military organization's culture, the role of senior commanders, or the size of the military force and its ratio to the insurgent or civilian population. However, formative war based theories cannot explain within case variation, while commander and size based explanations are underspecified and underperform in empirical tests.

Instead, this dissertation argues that PCC strategies create a principal-agent problem within the military organization. PCC requires subordinate units and soldiers to undertake dangerous activity, endure significant hardship, and forgo opportunities for personal gain, all in an environment of limited oversight. To prevent shirking and subverting of the strategy, militaries undertaking PCC require a command structure mirroring a Weberain bureaucracy, to include high levels of expertise, clear and well respected lines of hierarchical authority, and impersonal organizational and institutional loyalty. Expertise and hierarchy are necessary for monitoring, while impersonal loyalty is necessary to create a values and standards infused organizational culture that fosters agents self-motivated to achieve organizational ends.

Merit based promotion and appointment systems are necessary to achieve this Weberian command structure. By contrast, promotion and appointment systems based on nepotism, cronyism, or patronage undermine these Weberian characteristics by ignoring expertise in leader selection, subverting formal chains of command, preventing monitoring and evaluation, and

creating an organizational culture that privileges personal gain and loyalty to patrons over loyalty to the organizational mission.

This dissertation probes the plausibility of the theory through two detailed case studies: the Huk Rebellion (1946-1956) and the Salvadoran Civil War (1979-1992). In the Philippines case, it uses longitudinal variation in the independent variable of promotion and appointment systems over the course of the war to demonstrate that changes in these systems cause a change in PCC effectiveness. In the Salvadoran case, it uses variation in the variables proposed in the dominant competing theories to show that by not accounting for promotion and appointment systems, those theories fall short in explaining PCC effectiveness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On my third day in Chicago in 2010, less than a week after returning to the United States from my third deployment to Iraq, and having no idea what to expect from graduate school, I met with John Mearsheimer. He told me that my University of Chicago experience would fundamentally change the way that I thought about the world. He said that I would understand parts of the change almost immediately, but that I would not fully appreciate it for years. His predictions, as I increasingly realize almost a decade later, were absolutely correct.

I could not have asked for a better committee – either in terms of supporting me through this project, or as mentors and teachers who affected the changes he predicted. They provided an ideal balance – from forcing me to ask big questions and relate my arguments to important macro level issues down to evaluating the empirical soundness of my claims at the micro level. As my chair, and before that, as a teacher and mentor, Robert Pape has been selfless with his time and his guidance. The informal workshops that he ran and the one-on-one hours in his office did more to teach me to think through political problems, develop theories and hypotheses, and analyze them than any formal course. Beyond this dissertation, he has given me much by way of personal example that I will take with me as I move on to my own teaching career.

I know of no one who models clear, sharp writing (or thinking) better than John Mearsheimer, and he was invaluable in clarifying the logic of my arguments and in presenting them. If he was correct in his prediction that my Chicago experience would change the way I looked at much of the world, no one individual at Chicago was more responsible for those changes than he was. Paul Staniland provided insightful critiques of my ideas, of how to better formulate them, and their place in the broader literature. Both also provided invaluable advice in navigating the dissertation writing process.

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The process of producing this dissertation has been a long one. I attended the University of Chicago as a graduate student for eighteen months in 2010 and 2011, returned to the Army for seven years, then came back to Chicago for a year in 2018 and 2019 to complete this work. During the first period at Chicago, a group of my peers including David Benson, Shawn Cochran, Will Nomikos, John Stevenson, and Josh Sutton were helpful in forming my thinking and developing the right questions. A grant from the Center for the Study of Civil-Military Operations at West Point also funded archival research for an earlier, much different version of this project. While this dissertation looks quite unlike what they viewed, their questions and insights played a significant role in helping me think through problems of military performance and counterinsurgency.

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Finally, the most important set of thanks. No one has sacrificed as much – including me – to see this dissertation through to completion as my family. As part of a dual military family, my decision to pursue this dissertation has meant that my wife, Missy, and my son, Max, have been separated from me during both periods in Chicago. Janet Rosol, my mother, dropped everything and made a temporary move across the country to assist my wife and son while I lived away for

the last year. She has also read draft after draft of chapters. Whether it was braving an especially frigid New York winter alone with a newborn baby while starting a new, trying Army job in 2010 or living 1,500 miles away in 2018 and 2019, Missy has been unwaveringly supportive of me throughout this process and is as much responsible for its completion as I am.

In an often quoted 1780 letter to his wife, Abigail, John Adams wrote, "The science of government is my duty to study more than all the other sciences…I must study politics and war, that my sons may have the liberty to study mathematics and philosophy."[1] Despite my great admiration for Adams, I am under no delusion that the study of war will ever lose its salience. I do hope that by making some small contribution to our understanding of the use of force, and of the limitations on the political ends that military force can achieve, I can help create for Max an environment in which we are a bit wiser in our decisions about politics and war.

[1] John Adams, *The Letters of John and Abigail Adams*, ed. Frank Shuffelton (New York: Penguin, 2004), 378.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
AIFLD	American Institute of Free Labor Development
AMT	League of Poor Laborers / General Workers Union (*Aguman ding Malding Talapagobra)*
ANDSF	Afghan National Defense and Security Forces
ANSESAL	National Special Security Service
ARENA	National Republican Alliance (*Alianza Republicana Nacionalista*)
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam
BCT	Battalion Combat Team
BIRI	Immediate Reaction Battalions (*Los Batallones (de Infantería) de Reacción Inmediata*)
BUDC	Barrio United Defense Corps
CCA	Combined Civic Action
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COIN	Counterinsurgency
CONARA	National Committee for the Restoration of Areas (*Comité Nacional de Restauración de Áreas*)
CORDS	Civilian Operations and Revolutionary Development Support
DA	Democratic Alliance
EDCOR	Economic Development Corps
ERP	People's Revolutionary Army (*Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo*)
ESA	Salvadoran Anti-communist Army (*Ejército Salvadoreño Anticomunista*)
FAES	Armed Forces of El Salvador (*Fuerzas Armadas de El Salvador*), sometimes abbreviated EFAS

FARN / RN	Armed Forces of National Resistance (*Fuerzas Armadas de Resistencia Nacional*)
FAS	Salvadoran Air Force (*Fuerza Aérea Salvadoreña*)
FDR	Democratic Revolutionary Front (*Frente Democrático Revolucionario*)
FMLN	Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (*Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional*)
FPL	Popular Liberation Forces (*Fuerzas Populares de Liberación*)
HAM	Hearts and Minds
HMB	People's Liberation Movement (*Hukbong Magapalaya ng Bayan)*
Huk	People's Anti-Japanese Army (*Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon),* Huk also used for the HMB
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JUSMAG	Joint United States Military Advisory Group
KPMP	National Society of Peasants in the Philippines (*Kalipunang Pambansa ng mga Magsasaka sa Pilipinas*)
LADESCO	Land Settlement and Development Corporation
MEA	Municipalities in Action
MJM	Military Youth Movement (*Movimiento de la Juventud Militar*)
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MNR	National Revolutionary Movement (*Movimiento Nacional Revolucionaria*)
MPC	Military Police Command
NAMFREL	National Movement for Free Elections
NCO	Non-commissioned Officer
ORDEN	National Democratic Organization (*Organizacion Democratica Nationalista*)

PAF	Philippines Armed Forces
PC	Philippines Constabulary [Philippines case]
PC	National Conciliation Party (*Partido de Conciliación*) [El Salvador case]
PCC	Population Centric Counterinsurgency
PCS	Communist Party of El Salvador (*Partido Comunista Salvadoreño*)
PDC	Christian Democrat Party (*Partido Demócrata Cristiano*)
PKP	Philippines Communist Party (*Partido Komunista ng Philipinas*)
PNS	Philippine News Service
PRTC	Central American Revolutionary Workers' Party (*Partido Revolucionario de Trabajadores Centro*)
PRAL	Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols (*Los Patrullas de Reconocimiento de Alcance Largo*)
ROTC	Reserve Officer Training Corps
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SFAB	Security Force Assistance Brigade
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction
STOL	Short Takeoff and Landing
UDCP	Uppsala Data Conflict Program
UNO	National Opposition Union (*Unión Nacional Opositora*)
UPR	United to Reconstruct (*Unido Para Reconstruir*)
USAFFE	United States Armed Forces in the Far East
USSOUTHCOM	United States Southern Command

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Military Effectiveness and the Principal-Agent Problem in Population Centric Counterinsurgency

This dissertation seeks to understand why some military organizations can effectively execute a particular counterinsurgency strategy – population centric counterinsurgency (PCC) – while other militaries fail in their attempts to implement the strategy. Further, it questions how some militaries that initially struggle with the strategy eventually find ways to execute it effectively. In short, it begins with the basic question, "What are the determinants of military effectiveness in population centric counterinsurgency?"

I find that PCC creates a fundamental principal-agent problem. PCC requires military organizations and individuals to undertake high risk, dangerous activities and to forgo plentiful opportunities for personal profit and gain while in an environment of limited supervision and oversight. It creates ideal incentives and conditions for subordinate units and service members to shirk and subvert the strategy.

Solving this principal-agent problem requires a particular type of military organization – what I call a Weberian command structure. It is Weberian because it includes the basic features of a Weberian bureaucracy, including expertise, well observed hierarchy, and impersonal loyalty to the organization, its offices, and the organizational mission.[1] Expertise and hierarchy are necessary for monitoring to identify shirking and subversion. Impersonal loyalty is necessary to

[1] Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, 2 vols., vol. 1, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 2013), 220-24.

create a value and standards infused organizational culture in which agents are self-motivated to secure the state and achieve the military's organizational ends even when unmonitored.

A Weberian command structure can only develop in a military organization with a merit based promotion and appointment system. Effective PCC militaries promote personnel and select them for leadership and key staff positions based on evaluation of past performance. Militaries that promote and appointment through nepotism, cronyism, patronage, or bribery cannot effectively perform PCC. This is not simply because PCC requires highly competent personnel, though competence is important. It is because patronage appointments undermine hierarchy, prevent monitoring and evaluation, and create organizational cultures that prioritize personal and patron gain over organizational ends.

As a note on definitions, by "population centric counterinsurgency," I refer to counterinsurgency strategies in which the counterinsurgent state seeks to re-establish governance and compliance from the portion or portions of the population in which the insurgents operate. I include in this both strategies that attempt to persuade the population, often referred to as "winning hearts and minds," and those that coerce compliance. Despite debates over these two supposedly different approaches, both agree on key requirements for the state's military: selective use of force, the need for intelligence to target insurgents (required to apply force selectively), control and protection of the population (required to obtain intelligence), and some level of service provision, which serves to either persuade loyalty or coerce compliance. In examining effectiveness, I am interested in how well the military implements the PCC strategy, not the outcome of the war itself.

In the remainder of this chapter, I explain the importance of the topic, provide a brief review of the existing literature on counterinsurgency effectiveness, a summary of my argument, and a roadmap for the remainder of this dissertation.

1.2 Why PCC Effectiveness Matters

Insurgency and counterinsurgency remains a vexing problem in security studies and in practical policy.[2] By focusing on military effectiveness, as opposed to outcomes, the dissertation fills a lacuna in the current literature. There are numerous factors that determine whether counterinsurgents succeed or fail, to include strategy, force size, organizational history and organizational culture, a military's cultural and language familiarity with the population, and military leadership. Military effectiveness in implementing a strategy is only one of many determinates and is not sufficient in itself for success. However, effective implementation of strategy is a necessary condition for success. In a literature that largely focuses on outcomes, effectiveness has also been an understudied variable. This lack of focus in part explains why previous work has missed the existence of the principal-agent problem and the importance of command structures and promotion and appointment systems.

Critics might argue that because weak states are at highest risk for insurgencies, such wars are of limited interest to major powers. This would be wrong. The three largest wars the United States has engaged in over the last six decades have been insurgencies – Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. None of these conflicts went particularly well for the United States.[3] In

[2] Lyall and Wilson document over 300 insurgencies from 1800 until 2010. These insurgencies are distributed before, between, and after the world wars, in periods of multipolarity, bi-polarity, and unipolarity, and before, during, and after waves of decolonization. There is little reason to think that insurgency will ever recede as an important phenomena. Jason Lyall and Isaiah Wilson, "Rage Against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars," *International Organizations* 63, no. 1 (January 2009), 67.

[3] Likewise, the Soviet Union, then Russia, found itself engaged in insurgencies in Afghanistan and Chechnya. In short, superpowers and great powers find themselves involved in insurgencies.

each case, the United States attempted to support or build a home state military that proved ineffective at PCC.

Neither the potential rise of a new bipolar era nor war weariness from Afghanistan and Iraq will necessarily preclude future involvement in such wars. It was superpower competition that drove the United States to incremental involvement in Vietnam.[4] Whatever the effects of a "Vietnam Syndrome," it did not prevent the Carter and Regan administrations from involvement in Latin American insurgencies, though it likely did preclude the commitment of large scale ground troops.[5] It certainly did not last long enough to prevent the George W. Bush administration from committing to major counterinsurgency efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. If history is a guide, there is good reason to believe that the ability of indigenous forces to effectively implement PCC will continue to be a relevant security issue for the United States and other major powers.

Some critics have instead argued that while counterinsurgency remains important, Iraq, Afghanistan and other historical cases have largely discredited the PCC version of counterinsurgency strategy.[6] These critics raise significant critiques of PCC, and the debate about its ability or limitations to achieve strategic ends even when effectively executed is important. However, the critics offer few alternatives short of mass killing or civilian victimization. Even after Iraq, Afghanistan, and multiple sets of doctrine revisions, PCC remains part of the official

[4] On Vietnam as part of a larger containment strategy, see John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), chap. 8.

[5] William M. LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard: The United States in Central America, 1977-1992* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 5-8.

[6] Gian P. Gentile, *Wrong Turn: America's Deadly Embrace of Counterinsurgency* (New York: The New Press, 2013); Jacqueline L. Hazelton, "The 'Hearts and Minds' Fallacy: Violence, Coercion, and Success in Counterinsurgency Warfare," *International Security* 42, no. 1 (2017); Jacqueline L. Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation in Counterinsurgency Warfare" (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 2011); Douglas Porch, *Counterinsurgency: Exposing the Myths of the New Way of War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

doctrine of the United States and the United Kingdom, among others.[7] Not only is it the doctrine of these major powers, but it is the doctrine that they attempt to impart on their client states. Nor, whatever the actual wartime behavior of the major powers or their clients, are liberal powers likely to embrace alternative formal doctrines based on mass killing and civilian brutalization.[8]

Understanding the characteristics of a military organization that make PCC more effective is an important contribution to the security studies literature, and, if my particular argument is correct, to the civil-military literature. As long as PCC remains an accepted option for states fighting counterinsurgency, understanding what types of forces can execute it also has great policy significance. Some military command structures may be inappropriate for PCC. For those forces, reform or the selection of a different strategy may be the only alternatives, and as demonstrated in chapter 5, such reforms are tremendously difficult. For outside states considering intervention, understanding the requirements for PCC can provide important information to filter client states and avoid commitment to those that lack the requirements for military effectiveness.

1.3 Existing Theories and Their Shortcomings

Current theories do not clearly disentangle effectiveness and outcomes. The most compelling theory of counterinsurgency effectiveness as developed by political science holds that a military's organizational culture determines the types of wars it fights most effectively,

[7] The US has revised doctrine since the well-publicized 2006 Counterinsurgency Field Manual, but the basic principles remain the same. See, for instance, Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-24: Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 25 April, 2018). On Britain, see British Army, *British Army Field Manual Volume 1 Part 10: Countering Insurgency* (October, 2009).

[8] I am not claiming that liberal states will not practice civilian brutalization, but simply that they are less likely to make brutalization and mass killing part of their formal doctrine. Downes compellingly demonstrates that when facing existential threats, democracies are quite willing to practice mass killing against civilians. Alexander B. Downes, *Targeting Civilians in War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

and that its culture is developed in early formative wars. Some – though certainly not all – historians, by contrast, have placed emphasis on the role of individual commanders. Finally, practitioners and some scholars have engaged in a debate about the necessary force size to conduct an effective counterinsurgency campaign.

1.3.1 Formative Wars and Military Archetypes

Formative war cultural theorists offer a corrective to an earlier literature on military adaptation and innovation. In the earlier literature, scholars such as Posen and Snyder argued that militaries, as bureaucratic organizations, preferred the autonomy and funding benefits that came with offensive conventional war. Thus, in peacetime, when left to their own devices, militaries pursue such doctrine, but in wartime, political leaders force reform and innovation.[9] While Posen and Snyder offered compelling explanations for military rigidity, they developed their theories to explain doctrine in conventional wars and did not apply them to insurgencies. The theories were not equipped to explain why civilian intervention is insufficient to make some militaries perform well in counterinsurgency, nor could they explain variation in different militaries' counterinsurgency performance.

Later theorists explain the variation in counterinsurgency performance based on military culture. Long provides the most compelling and theoretically sophisticated explication of this theory, focusing on how early formative wars near the period of a military's professionalization develop longstanding archetypes or cultures that determine future effectiveness. For instance, the United States Army's formative war was the American Civil War. Army professionalization began shortly after the Civil War, inculcating the lessons of total war into the service's

[9] Barry Posen, *The Sources of Miltiary Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984). Also see Jack Snyder, *The Ideology of the Offensive: Military Decision Making and the Disaster of 1914* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984).

organizational culture. By contrast, the US Marines and the British Army developed very different organizational cultures based on their early experiences in expeditionary wars and occupations, as did the US Special Forces community, created to conduct irregular warfare. These cultures have significant effects on the way each military fought later wars, both conventional and counterinsurgent.[10]

Similarly, Krepinevich argues that the US Army adopted a firepower and maneuver focused "Army Concept" of war based on its conventional history that made it resistant to full adoption and effective implementation of population centric measures.[11] Nagl integrates these arguments with organizational learning theory in his comparative case study of US performance in Vietnam and British performance in Malaya. He argues that the British Army, due to its colonial small war experience, was better at "learning" within the context of those wars (though he suggests that the US Army, with its conventional history and culture, more effectively learned on the western front in World War II).[12]

These explanations have three shortcomings. First, they rely on an increasingly questioned historiography of the few cases upon which the theories are built. A wave of recent revisionist historians have questioned both how hidebound the US Army was in Vietnam, the key case for Krepinevich, one of two for Nagl, and also a key case for Long. They have also questioned the accuracy of the history of the Malayan Emergency offered by Nagl and Thompson.[13] Second, even if accurate, it is not clear that an explanation built from two great

[10] Austin Long, *The Soul of Armies: Counterinsurgency Doctrine and Military Culture in the US and UK* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016); Austin Long, "First War Syndrome: Military Culture, Professionalization, and Counterinsurgency Doctrine" (PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2009).

[11] Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), see especially "The Army Concept," 4-7.

[12] John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 217-18.

[13] These works are largely dependent on US performance in Vietnam and British performance in Malaya. To Long's credit, he considers the British in Kenya and the British and Americans in Iraq and Afghanistan. On

powers, one acting in a colonial capacity and the second as a foreign intervener, is generalizable. They are limited in what they tell us, for example, about why the Army of the Republic of South Vietnam itself was so bad at PCC. This dissertation, by contrast, focuses on the home states attempting to conduct PCC. Finally, and most important, theories based on formative wars do a poor job of explaining within case variation. They predict a high degree of path-dependence and offer no explanation for a military that becomes more effective.[14]

1.3.2 Great Commander Theories

A second explanation for effectiveness, common in both popular culture and among some military historians, attributes effectiveness to individual commanders.[15] Often, the "great commander" argument is made in the context of a particular historical case, as opposed to an explicit presentation of a larger theory. A common version of this narrative begins with a blundering commander, followed by a military genius who changes the trajectory of the military and the war – Templer, Abrams, or Petraeus replace the supposedly incompetent, bungling, and convention bound Briggs, Westmoreland, or Casey and turns the tide of the war.[16]

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challenges to the historiography of Vietnam, see John M. Carland, "Winning the Vietnam War: Westmoreland's Approach in Two Documents," *The Journal of Military History* 68, no. 2 (Apr. 2004); Dale Andrade, "Westmoreland Was Right: Learning the Wrong Lessons from the Vietnam War," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 19, no. 2 (June 2008); Gregory A. Daddis, *Westmoreland's War: Reassessing American Strategy in Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Gregory A. Daddis, *Withdrawl: Reassessing American's Final Years In Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017). Nagl's historiography is largely the conventional one offered in Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1966). On new histories of Malaya, see Karl Hack, "'Iron Claws on Malaya': The Historiography of the Malayan Emergency," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 30, no. 1 (March 1999); Karl Hack, "The Malayan Emergency as Counter-Insurgency Paradigm," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 3 (2009); Karl Hack, "Everyone Lived in Fear: Malaya and the British Way of Counter-Insurgency," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 23, no. 4-5 (Oct. - Dec. 2012); Scott Paul Handler, "Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: Understanding Modern State-Building (and Counterinsurgency)" (PhD diss., Stanford, 2010); Hazelton, "The 'Hearts and Minds' Fallacy."

[14] The partial exception to this is Nagl's argument that militaries "learn" well within their own type of war. Thus, the British improved markedly over the course of the war in Malaya and the US improved significantly over the course of the Second World War.

[15] For a somewhat systematic attempt to support this claim historically, see Mark Moyer, *A Question of Command: Counterinsurgency from the Civil War to Iraq* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009).

[16] For a general critique of this great leader or "savior general" approach, see Joshua Rovner, "The Heroes of COIN," *Orbis* (Spring 2012). For an example of the approach, see Lewis Sorley, *A Better War: The Unexamined*

There are good reasons to consider first image explanations for the wartime performance of military organizations. War creates conditions amenable to maximizing the influence of individual leaders. Military organizations concentrate significant power in the hands of commanders, while combat presents them with a fluid and ambiguous environment in which institutional constraints may loosen.[17] Focus on the role of the commander is also part of a venerable tradition that includes Clausewitz's discussion of the "appropriate gifts and temperament" that make a commander a "military genius."[18]

However, the great commander theory has numerous shortcomings. Again, the individual narratives that support it often rely on disputed historiographies.[19] More important, it lacks clearly defined causal mechanisms or measurement criteria for its independent variable. This lack of specified mechanism makes great commander theories difficult to evaluate in practice beyond covariation between commander and performance. Yet the change in command and change in performance could well be spurious, both based on some other hidden variable. These explanations are also often circular, lacking clear criteria for defining the great commander, the independent variable, and instead relying on a post hoc evaluation of wartime performance.[20]

Finally, great commander theories likely overemphasize the role of a single individual. They do not consider the structural conditions and organizational mechanisms through which the

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Victories and Final Tragedy of America's Last Years in Vietnam (New York: Harcourt, 1999); Lewis Sorley, *Westmoreland: The General Who Lost Vietnam* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011).

[17] On concentration of power, ambiguity, and fluid circumstances as permissive conditions for individual leaders to exert greater influence, see Daniel L. Byman and Kenneth M. Pollack, "Now Let Us Praise Great Men: Bringing the Statesmen Back In," *International Security* 25, no. 4 (Spring 2001), 140-143.

[18] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 100 and Book I, chap. 3.

[19] See footnote 13.

[20] Moyer offers characteristics of effective counterinsurgency command: initiative, flexibility, creativity, judgment, empathy, charisma, sociability, dedication, integrity, and organization. However, he offers no way to operationalize and measure these characteristics, nor even to subjectively judge them before observing wartime performance. Moyer, *A Question of Command*, 3-12.

leader acts. Nor do they explain why some great leaders rise, while others do not, beyond a fortunate stroke of serendipity or the wisdom of the equally great political leaders who select the great commander. Yet this begs the question. This dissertation shares with the great commander theories the insight that military leaders have causal effects on military performance, but unlike the great commander approach, it considers the leadership throughout (not just at the top) of military organizations, the mechanisms through which leaders are selected, and the mechanisms through which they influence effectiveness.[21]

1.3.3 Force Size

Another set of arguments closely ties counterinsurgency effectiveness to force ratios. However, force ratio claims have yet to be rigorously theoretically developed in the way that force ratio "rules of thumb" for conventional operations were in the 1980s.[22] Proposed rules vary in quantities and even composition of the ratios. Thompson and Joes argue for a ten soldier to insurgent and twenty soldier to insurgent ratio, respectively, while others argue for a counterinsurgent to terrain ratio.[23] Nor is there even agreement that "more is better." While one school of thought treats proposed ratios as minimal necessary thresholds for success, another suggests a point of diminishing returns, while a third suggests that too many troops can undermine PCC by creating an over-reliance on military force and stunting the development of non-military good governance.[24]

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[21] For an argument that shares significant characteristics with mine in that it focuses on promotion pathways, not individual commanders, see Stephen Peter Rosen, "New Ways of War: Understanding Military Innovation," *International Security* 13, no. 1 (Summer 1988); Stephen Peter Rosen, *Winning the Next War: Innovation and the Modern Military* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991). Rosen's focus, however, is military innovation as opposed to military effectiveness.

[22] See, for example, John J. Mearsheimer, "Assessing the Conventional Balance: The 3:1 Rule and Its Critics," *International Security* 13, no. 4 (1989), https://doi.org/10.2307/2538780.

[23] Thompson and Joes discussed in Jeffrey A. Friedman, "Manpower and Counterinsurgency: Empirical Foundations for Theory and Doctrine," *Security Studies* 20 (2011): 565.

[24] Friedman, "Manpower and Counterinsurgency," 563. One argument in favor of a larger force, tied to the "great commander" approach, is that a larger military simply gives political leaders more personnel to choose from

The most common rules of thumb are based on counterinsurgent to population ratios. This approach builds on the dual insights that PCC is a struggle to control the population, and that the intelligence necessary to target insurgents must come from the population, requiring security and significant military to civilian interaction. In order to perform these tasks effectively, the PCC force must maintain a constant and significant presence within the population, a requirement that is human-resource intensive. The ratio most often offered, as repeated in the US Army and US Marine Corps' 2006 *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, is one counterinsurgent for every fifty civilians in the population, or 20 counterinsurgents to 1,000 civilians:

> During previous conflicts, planners assumed that combatants required a 10 or 15 to 1 advantage over insurgents to win…A better force requirement gauge is troop density, the ratio of security forces (including the host nation's military and police forces as well as foreign counterinsurgents) to inhabitants. Most density recommendations fall within a range of 20 to 25 counterinsurgents for every 1000 residents in an A.O. [Area of Operations] Twenty counterinsurgents per 1000 residents is often considered the minimum troop density for effective COIN [counterinsurgency] operations.[25]

Yet even this lacks universal acceptance, with competing suggested ratios ranging from 2.8 per 1,000 to 13 per 1,000 and up.[26] The recommendations the Field Manual refers to seem to trace back to a few works by James Quinlivan focused on only the British in Malaya and in Northern

in selecting a commander. Thus, Abraham Lincoln could rotate through commanders until he found Grant, whereas Jefferson Davis was stuck with a much smaller stable from which to choose. I thank Paul Poast for suggesting this line of thought.

[25] United States Army, *U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24 / U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5: Counterinsurgency*, The University of Chicago ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 23.

[26] For a review of several studies arriving at different conclusions, see Riley M. Moore, "Counterinsurgency Force Ratio: Strategic Utility or Nominal Necessity," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 24, no. 5 (2013): 860-62. See also Steven M. Goode, "A Historical Basis for Force Requirements in Counterinsurgency," *Parameters* 39, no. 4 (Winter 2009/10): 53-54.

Ireland.[27] Besides relying on only two conflicts, it is not even clear that Quinlivan's ratios in Malaya are empirically correct, with McGrath suggesting the ratio was actually 6.17 to 1,000.[28]

Many of the studies on force ratios rely on only a handful of conflicts. Further, they do not differentiate between a broad range of activities to include "peace keeping" operations, post-war reconstruction, and civil wars.[29] Nor do they clearly define what qualifies as "the population." Does the entire state provide the relevant population, or just the areas in which the insurgency is most active? In one of the few comprehensive studies on force ratios, drawing on Lyall and Wilson's dataset of post-World War I insurgencies, Friedman finds little support for a twenty to one ratio. In fact, it produces only a 40 percent success rate. He also finds that additional troops, even increased by an order of magnitude, produce only marginal differences in results.[30]

Force ratios simply do not account for numerous relevant considerations, to include strength of the enemy, terrain, quality of the troops, ideological appeal of the insurgency, or external resources available to both combatants, among many other factors. In fairness, nearly every work on ratios adds caveats such as, "as with any fixed ratios, such calculations remain very dependent on the situation," but these situational factors are so numerous and can be so significant as to call the usefulness of the rule of thumb into question.[31] Most important, they neither account for the strategy that a military adopts nor how well it executes that strategy. The

[27] James T. Quinlivan, "Force Requirements in Stability Operations," *Parameters* 25, no. 4 (Winter 1995); James T. Quinlivan, "Burden of Victory: The Painful Arithmetic of Stability Operations," *Rand Review* 27, no. 2 (Summer 2003).

[28] John J. McGrath, *Boots on the Ground: Troop Density in Contingency Operations*, Army Combined Arms Center (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 2006), 43.

[29] McGrath, for instance, considers five examples: the Philippines (1899-1901), post-war Germany, post-war Japan, the Malayan emergency, and Bosnia / Kosovo. Cleary, these are not all of like type. McGrath, *Boots on the Ground*.

[30] Friedman, "Manpower and Counterinsurgency," 573-75.

[31] United States Army, *Field Manual 3-24: Counterinsurgency*, 23.

important insight behind the force ratio debates is that PCC is personnel intensive – without enough people, a military force will not be able to secure and hold terrain, control the population, and attack insurgents. No one doubts the relevance of having sufficient troops for any military strategy. But force ratios alone can tell little about whether the force, however large, will effectively execute a PCC strategy.

1.4 Towards a Weberian Military: A Promotions and Appointments Based Theory

This dissertation argues that the system through which a military promotes and appoints its leaders determines whether it can effectively execute a PCC strategy. It explains how corruption in appointments and promotions processes preclude a rational-legal command structure. In doing so, such corruption undermines a mission based organizational culture and the ability of the command structure to conduct institutional monitoring, evaluation, and accountability. Without a mission based culture and monitoring, members and units within the military will shirk and subvert the requirements of effective PCC. In short, it claims that how militaries promote and select their leadership is a key determinant of PCC effectiveness.

Military organizations develop systems through which they appoint officers to key leadership positions. Like any other hierarchical organization, they face an adverse selection problem in picking personnel with the highest levels of competence and commitment to the organization. Effective militaries solve this problem through a merit-based promotion system. The result is a command structure that resembles a Weberian bureaucracy with expertise, clear hierarchy, and impersonal norms of commitment to the organizational mission.

Military organizations also face a classic principal-agent problem. They require subordinate units and personnel to undertake difficult and dangerous tasks without direct

supervision. They also require their personnel to forgo alluring and lucrative opportunities for predation and graft. Weberian command structures are optimal for developing monitoring mechanisms and organizational culture to mitigate these problems.

By contrast, nepotism, cronyism, and patronage rely on personal loyalty to individuals, not on the ability or desire to meet the requirements of the organization's mission. They are based on transactional benefits provided between the appointee and the appointing individual or group. They undermine a rational-legal command structure by blurring formal hierarchical lines and subordinating them to patronage lines. They deny the organization expertise at senior levels. More important, they undermine internal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, which would threaten incumbent leadership, and foster an organizational culture centered personal and factional gain, as opposed to achievement of the organizational mission. This creates permissive conditions for shirking and subverting within the organization. These problems are especially damaging to effective execution of PCC, with its already numerous opportunities and incentives to shirk and subvert.

Figure 1.1: The Argument in Summary

Variable / Mechanism	**Independent Variable**	**Intervening Variable**	**Mechanism**	**Dependent Variable**
	Appointment System	Command Structure	Principal-Agent	PCC Effectiveness
Value / Action	Merit Based	• High competence • Impersonal loyalty to institutional ends	• Monitoring • Duty based organizational culture • Avoid shirking • Avoid subverting	High
	Non-Merit Based	• Inconsistent Competence • Personalistic loyalty to patron	• Low monitoring • Personal / patron interest based organizational culture • Shirk • Subvert	Low

Of note, my focus on appointment processes and command structure does not diminish the tremendous importance of selecting sound strategy. Instead, it refocuses on the equally

important issue of how to effectively implement strategy. Nor is my claim that a merit based, rational-legal, Weberian command structure is a guarantee of effectiveness. Numerous other factors may influence effectiveness, to include not just friction and chance, but material capabilities, miscalculation based on imperfect information, past national and organizational history, or subject population demographics. Merit based promotion and appointments are, however, both a necessary condition and a major determinant.

1.5 Plan for the Dissertation

The remainder of the dissertation proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 develops the promotion and appointment "Weberian military" theory of PCC effectiveness. Chapter 3 briefly outlines my methodology and research design, to include identifying my universe of cases and my selection criteria for my two detailed case studies.

Chapters 4 and 5 present detailed case studies of two counterinsurgencies. Chapter 4 examines the Philippine counterinsurgency campaign against the Huk, in which the Philippine Armed Forces made major reforms in their promotions and appointments systems and in the process affected a significant increase in counterinsurgency effectiveness. Chapter 5 examines the Salvadoran Civil War. El Salvador made major changes to both state and military leadership, more than tripled their force's size, and improved training with the help of the United States, but was unable to reform a promotion system entirely detached from merit. While it made marginal improvements, it failed to develop into an effective PCC force. The Salvadoran case also offers analytical leverage on formative war theories, as insurgent strategy and tactics varied between Vietnamese style "people's wars" and more conventional operations.

Finally, chapter 6 concludes the study with a summary of findings, topics for future research, and policy implications.

CHAPTER 2

AN APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTION BASED THEORY OF PCC EFFECTIVENESS

This chapter presents my theory in detail. I work from "back to front," beginning with the dependent variable of PCC effectiveness, working back through the causal logic to the intervening variable of command structure, and finally to the independent variable of promotion systems. Part one defines the dependent variable, effective population centric counterinsurgency. It details three essential components of a PCC strategy: population control, selective violence, and service provision. Part two explains why PCC is so difficult, and why it creates a principal-agent problem in which individual military members and subordinate units have high incentives and opportunities to shirk and subvert the requirements of sound strategy. Part three defines the ideal military command structure to address these difficulties, while part four explains why corrupt promotions and appointments subvert this command structure. Finally, part five derives hypotheses from the theory

2.1 The Dependent Variable: Effective PCC and its Elements

Military effectiveness is traditionally defined as "the process by which armed forces convert resources into fighting power," with "a fully effective military force" defined as "one that derives maximum combat power from the resources physically and politically available."[1] In conventional war, where combat power alone is a strong determinant of success, this definition is sufficient. However, insurgencies, which tend towards dramatic asymmetry in combat power,

[1] Allan R. Millett, Williamson Murray, and Kenneth H. Watman, "The Effectiveness of Military Organizations, Volume 1: The First World War," in *Military Effectiveness*, ed. Allan R. Millet and Williamson Murray (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 2.

require revised characteristics of effectiveness. This section identifies three key components of PCC strategy: control, selective violence, and service provision. First, however, it briefly distinguishes between effectiveness and outcomes and defines the operational level of war as its focus.

2.1.1 Effectiveness vs. Outcomes

Effectiveness is distinct from victory or defeat. As defined here, effectiveness measures how well militaries perform the tasks required by an operation or a strategy, not the outcome of that operation or strategy. Victory or defeat (or resolution in-between) is a result of conflict, but does not necessarily indicate how a military performed within the conflict. Van Creveld explains,

> …victory is by no means the sole criterion of military excellence. A small army may be overwhelmed by a larger one. Confronted with impossible political and economic odds, a qualitative superior force may go down to defeat through no fault of its own. Not only the outcome alone, but intrinsic qualities as well must figure into an attempt to measure military (or any other) excellence; omit this, and the very notion of quality becomes impossible to sustain.[2]

Similarly, in their classic work on military effectiveness, Millet et el. explain, "Victory is an outcome of battle. It is not what an organization does in battle. Victory is not a characteristic of an organization but rather a result of organizational activity. Judgments on effectiveness should retain some sense of proportional cost and organizational process."[3] There are good reasons to disaggregate effectiveness, as a characteristic of a military organization, from outcomes. Most fundamentally, they are simply distinct phenomena. For example, the Soviet Union was victorious over the Finns from 1939 to 1940 and over the Germans from 1941 to 1945. However,

[2] Martin van Creveld, *Fighting Power: German and U.S. Army Performance, 1939-1945* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1982), 3. See also Caitlin Talmadge, *The Dictator's Army: Battlefield Effectiveness in Authoritarian Regimes* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

[3] Millett, Murray, and Watman, "The Effectiveness of Military Organizations, Volume 1: The First World War," 3.

the Finns and the Germans made better use of their significantly more limited resources. In short, the more operationally effective side lost in both cases.[4]

Conflating the two masks the other important variables and causal processes that determine outcomes. State and insurgent material capability, the nature of political objectives, population demographics, external actors, and even chance, among other factors, may play decisive roles in war outcomes.[5] To understand the causes of military performance and of war outcomes requires treating the two as separate dependent variables and disaggregating the causes of both. Finally, sound policy requires careful thought about both how to organize, structure, and train military organizations to maximize effectiveness.

2.1.2 Levels of War

Military activity in war is traditionally divided between the tactical, operational, and strategic levels. Tactics deal with the conduct of individual battles. Strategy deals with how military force, along with other elements of national power, achieve major national or theater level military objectives and, in the case of grand strategy, what the state's political-military objectives ought to be.[6] In the words of contemporary military doctrine, the operational level of war is,

> The level of war at which campaigns and major operations are planned, conducted, and sustained to accomplish strategic objectives within theaters or operational areas. Activities at this level link tactics and strategy by establishing operational objectives needed to accomplish the strategic objectives, sequencing events to achieve the operational objectives, initiating actions, and applying resources to bring about and sustain these events. These activities imply a broader dimension of time or space than do

[4] Millett, Murray, and Watman, "The Effectiveness of Military Organizations, Volume 1: The First World War," 3.

[5] For the classic statement of chance in war, see Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 85.

[6] The line between "tactics," "grand tactics," "operational art," and "strategy" has varied historically and by author. Clausewitz, who had no concept of a distinct operational level of war, defined strategy more modestly as "The use of the engagement for the purpose of war." von Clausewitz, *On War*, 177. The important point here is clarity and consistency of the definition of levels within this project. For purposes of clarity, I have aligned my terms and definitions with western military doctrine.

> tactics; they ensure the logistic and administrative support of tactical forces, and provide the means by which tactical successes are exploited to achieve strategic objectives.[7]

In short, the operational level unites tactical actions, supported logistically, and sequenced over time and space, to meet strategic ends. If tactics generally apply to battles and strategy applies to theaters of war and above, operations focus on campaigns, or unified series of battles and tactical actions that achieve strategic ends.[8] This dissertation focuses primarily on effectiveness at the operational or campaign level, though it also considers the tactical PCC activities necessary for operational effectiveness.[9]

2.1.3 Characteristics of Counterinsurgency Effectiveness

I define "population centric counterinsurgency" as any form of counterinsurgency in which the incumbent state pursues compliance from the population as the primary means through which to defeat an insurgent threat. For at least sixty years, practitioners and scholars of PCC fixated on a debate between strategies based on "winning hearts and minds" (HAM) and strategies based on "coercion."[10] While both agreed on the central role of the population in insurgency, they disagreed about how best to separate insurgents from the population. The former argued that the counterinsurgent state must persuade popular support.[11] The later argued

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[7] Department of the Army, *U.S. Army Field Manual 1-02 / U.S. Marine Corps Reference Publication (MCRP) 5-12A: Operational Terms and Graphics*, (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2004).

[8] For a succinct overview of the levels of war, see Stephen Biddle, "Strategy in War," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 40, no. 3 (Jul 2007).

[9] In focusing on the operational level, I do not dismiss the importance of the other levels. Operational success is clearly influenced by the tactics a military employs, while successful campaigns can contribute to strategic ends. Conversely, success at a lower level of war is no guarantee of success at a higher level. For a discussion of the dangers of focusing on one level (tactical) to the exclusion of others in counterinsurgency, see Gian P. Gentile, "A Strategy of Tactics: Population-centric COIN and the Army," *Parameters* 39 (Autumn 2009). Of note, Gentile treats all population centric counterinsurgency under the "hearts and minds" framework, whereas I use a broader definition for PCC.

[10] For a concise summary of the two schools, see Austin Long, *On 'Other War': Lessons from Five Decades of Rand Counterinsurgency Research* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006).

[11] Richard Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds in Guerilla Warfare: The Malayan Emergency 1948-1960* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, CN: Prager Security International, 2006); Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*; Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1966); John A. Nagl, *Learning to*

that civilian behavior, not sentiment, was most important, making coercion a more effective counterinsurgent tool than persuasion.[12]

While this debate was productive in developing basic concepts, it has likely reached its practical and analytical usefulness. Practically, few counterinsurgents, short of those who resort to mass killing solutions, engage exclusively in persuasion or coercion. Instead, they apply varying combinations of both.[13] Analytically, the two options are not mutually exclusive, and the tactics that even the most stalwart advocates of either strategy propose overlap considerably.[14]

Counterinsurgency continues to lack a single, definitive method comparable to Biddle's "modern system" of conventional war. [15] However, the counterinsurgency literature broadly identifies three key components of any population centric strategy: population control, selective application of violence, and some level of service provision. Here, I elaborate on these components, explain why they are necessary to population centric strategies, and develop a series of indicators by which to measure effectiveness of each component. First, however, I explain how counterinsurgency differs from conventional war.

Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

[12] Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency* (Westport, CN: Prager Security International, 2006); Nathan Leites and Charles Wolf, Jr., *Rebellion and Authority: An Analytical Essay on Insurgent Conflict* (Chicago: Markham, 1970); Jacqueline L. Hazelton, "The 'Hearts and Minds' Fallacy: Violence, Coercion, and Success in Counterinsurgency Warfare," *International Security* 42, no. 1 (2017). For recent, if somewhat polemic, works on the coercive nature of PCC and how it can transition into civilian brutalization by historians, see Gian P. Gentile, *Wrong Turn: America's Deadly Embrace of Counterinsurgency* (New York: New Press, 2013); Douglas Porch, *Counterinsurgency: Exposing the Myths of the New Way of War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[13] Stephen Pampinella, "The Effectiveness of Coercive and Persuasive Counterinsurgency Practices since 1945," *Civil Wars* 17, no. 4 (2015).

[14] Kelly M. Greenhill and Paul Staniland, "Ten Ways to Lose at Counterinsurgency," *Civil Wars* 9, no. 4 (Dec. 2007): 404-06. As examples of overlap, so called hearts and minds theorists such as Stubbs and Thompson have advocated measures such as forced population relocation. Coercion theorists such as Trinquier have identified the need to eventually establish a governing regime accepted as legitimate by the population. Both schools agree on the importance of civilian provided intelligence in separating the insurgency from the population and targeting it.

[15] Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

How Counterinsurgency Differs from Conventional War

Countering insurgent networks employing guerrilla tactics presents a different problem set from conventional war. In the later, militaries maximize operational effectiveness through synchronization of "cover, concealment, dispersion, suppression, combined arms, and independent small unit maneuver."[16] This synchronization maximizes the potential for defeat of a conventional enemy force. Instead of the physical cover or concealment of conventional war, insurgent networks conceal themselves and their identities within the civilian population.[17] Instead of attacks in large military formations, they frequently make use of guerilla tactics, utilizing small formations and individuals to attack suddenly, and then slip back into anonymity. Mao's comparison of the insurgent to a fish in the water of the population may be cited so often as to seem cliché, but it captures a fundamental problem – how does the counterinsurgent identify and dis-embed the insurgent network from the population within which it hides?

Despite disputes about the relative merits of "winning hearts and minds" or coercing civilians, population centric counterinsurgent thinkers have developed remarkably similar arguments to answer the question of how to destroy a well-embedded insurgency. Kalyvas and Kocher suggests that a "locality is 'conquered'…selective violence is used against 'defectors'…this violence leads to the consolidation of control, as the population aligns with the new rulers."[18] Using different language but suggesting a similar sequence, HAM theorists often refer to it as a "clear, hold, build" strategy.[19] Clearing is akin to Kalyvas' "conquering." It entails

[16] Biddle, *Military Power*, 59.

[17] Staniland identifies that some insurgent organizations do not develop deep vertical ties into the population, even if they develop strong horizontal ties within the leadership of the organization. Such insurgent structures are most appropriately combatted through leadership decapitation, not PCC. Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 46-48.

[18] Stathis N. Kalyvas and Matthew Adam Kocher, "The Dynamics of Violence in Vietnam: An Analysis of the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES)," *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 3 (2009): 339.

[19] For similar sequences, see Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 44-46; Sarah Sewall, "Introduction to the University of Chicago Press Edition: A Radical Field Manual," in *U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24 / U.S. Marine*

breaking the insurgent organization's control of a population and establishing the counterinsurgent state in the insurgency's place. Holding implies maintaining permanent security through military presence. Building refers to the establishment of the full spectrum of government functions over the secured population and terrain.

Both explanations must address a fundamental question: How does the counterinsurgent identify members of the insurgency hidden in the population against whom to apply selective violence? Much of the necessary intelligence will come from local populations who know who the insurgents are. However, civilians will not inform unless the state protects them from reprisal from the insurgency, thus the requirement for continued control and security. In short, counterinsurgency requires information, which requires civilian informants, which requires civilian control, security, and, in some versions, material incentives. This understanding provides the basis for deriving the indicators of effectiveness for a counterinsurgent force.

Population Control: Presence and Small Unit, Decentralized Operations

For the counterinsurgent, establishing and maintaining control of the population is both an end in itself and a necessary condition for future counterinsurgency activities. Control facilitates civilian provided intelligence on insurgent identities and activities. This "human intelligence" is essential to target violence selectively against insurgents and dis-embed them from the population. [20] Control is also necessary to establish basic services and functioning governance.

Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5, Counterinsurgency (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), xxx; Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 88-89, 93-101.

[20] Mir suggests the possibility of developing the necessary intelligence to target insurgents through technological means, without reliance on civilian tips. However, his proposed system requires significant technology resources that may not be available to many counterinsurgent states. Further, it is not clear that his system leads to successful assertion of state control as much as managing an insurgent problem to a low level of violence. In any case, it lies outside of the universe of "population centric" strategies. Asfandyar Mir, "What Explains Counterterrorism Effectiveness? Evidence from the U.S. Drone War in Pakistan," *International Security* 43, no. 2 (Fall): 45-83.

Population and spatial control facilitates civilian provision of information through several mechanisms. Most important, once the counterinsurgent force establishes control, it can provide informants with protection from retaliation. While protection alone may not serve as a sufficient condition for civilians to inform on insurgent identity and activity, it is a necessary condition. Civilians will not risk providing information without adequate protection from retribution. [21] Control, once demonstrated to be enduring, also enables what Kalyvas terms "mechanical aspirations," a process of socialization in which joining or supporting an armed force with long established control (and supporting family members in that force) seems natural – much like the citizen of a stable state might support or join their home military force without serious consideration of joining another. The controlling party can monitor the population and sanction non-compliance. Establishment and maintenance of control also signals that the controlling party is a likely winner. For the self-interested civilian, supporting a winner diminishes long-term risk and maximizes the benefits of collaboration. Finally, control is also a necessary pre-condition to the sort of service provision hearts and minds theorists recommend.[22]

Population control is not in itself an activity, but an intermediate objective for the counterinsurgent. It is an outcome of counterinsurgent tactics and operations. The activities required to establish and maintain control deviate from standard conventional military focus on integrating and massing multiple forms of firepower through maneuver. Specifically,

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[21] Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006). Shapiro and Weidmann argue that cell phone technology may reduce reliance on population security as a requirement for intelligence because cell phones provide civilians a method of anonymous tip reporting. This would lower insurgent ability to selectively retaliate, either forcing them to refrain from retribution or to conduct indiscriminate group punishment that could push the population to the state. Their case study in Iraq supports their assertion, but is not wide scale enough to suggest abandoning the generalization that security will usually be a necessary condition for tips. Nils B. Weidmann and Jacob N. Shapiro, "Is the Phone Mighter Than the Sword? Cellphones and Insurgent Violence in Iraq," *International Organizations* 69, no. 2 (Spring 2015).

[22] On the multiple mechanisms through which control facilitates collaboration, see Kalyvas, *Logic of Violence*, 124-32. On the importance of convincing civilians that the counterinsurgent force will win, in addition to Kalyvas, see Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 55-65.

maintaining control in counterinsurgency requires greater reliance on extended duration, independent small unit operations.

One option for the counterinsurgent is massive population relocation and consolidation. The British relocations of the Boer, Chinese Malayans, and Kenyans are classic examples of this approach.[23] However, mass relocation has serious limitations. In practice, its execution has historically entailed significant brutalization.[24] Beyond moral-normative concerns, it can also create significant resentment in the relocated population, and its feasibility is severely limited when the subject population is large and dispersed over expansive terrain.[25]

Barring massive relocation, after initially "clearing" or "conquering" an area, the counterinsurgent must establish a permanent presence within the population to maintain control and security and to dis-embed the remaining insurgent network. Presence "within" the population implies active engagement with civilians beyond secure, fixed military sites. In the form of "on the ground" dismounted operations, it also provides personal level civilian-to-military contact. This contact increases opportunities for intelligence collection, and if absent victimization, for civilian provision of tips and information.[26]

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[23] For the classic positive evaluation of resettlement in Malaya, see Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds in Guerilla Warfare*, 100-07.

[24] On the brutal nature of British execution, see Alexander B. Downes, "Draining the Sea by Filling the Graves: Investigating the Effectiveness of Indiscriminate Violence as a Counterinsurgency Strategy," *Civil Wars* 9, no. 4 (Dec. 2007): 428-31, 35-37; David French, *The British Way in Counter-Insurgency, 1945-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Karl Hack, "'Iron Claws on Malaya': The Historiography of the Malayan Emergency," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 30, no. 1 (March 1999); Karl Hack, "The Malayan Emergency as Counter-Insurgency Paradigm," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 3 (2009); Hazelton, "The 'Hearts and Minds' Fallacy." On the potential counterproductive nature of this method of control, Percox suggests that the harsh relocation in Kenya drove some young men to join the Mau Mau out of desperation. David A. Percox, "British Counterinsurgency in Kenya, 1952-56: Extension of Internal Security Policy or Prelude to Decolonisation," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 9, no. 3 (1998): 68-70.

[25] Downes notes that these population relocation practices tend to turn into indiscriminate violence in practice, and that indiscriminate violence has the highest probability of success against small populations, in small geographic areas, when insurgents have no external source of supply, and when the population is deeply committed to the insurgent cause. The three British cases cited met at least the first three conditions. Downes, "Draining the Sea by Filling the Graves," 422, 38-40.

[26] On civilian to military contact and intelligence, see Jason Lyall and Isaiah Wilson, "Rage Against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars," *International Organizations* 63, no. 1 (January 2009).

However, maintaining such a permanent presence presents significant challenges. Once a military force establishes control, it must maintain a presence in the area while at the same time moving forces to other areas to expand control. It must also maintain forces capable of actively seeking out and killing or capturing insurgents based on the intelligence it gains. These are human resource intensive activities. In short, PCC requires a deceptively large quantity of troops, dispersed over significant areas, but still mutually supporting and capable of offensive operations.[27] As military forces rarely have unlimited personnel to be everywhere at all times in mass, to achieve this widespread presence, PCC requires dispersed, long-duration, independent small unit operations.

In sum, effective PCC requires constant presence within the population through continual small unit, independent, decentralized operations. It requires non-abusive civilian to military contact to gain intelligence regarding insurgent networks. Such operations are necessary to maintain control and to provide population security from insurgent retribution. They are also necessary to simultaneously offensively target insurgents.

Selective Violence: Non-Combatant Discrimination, Civilian Protection, and Refraining from Predation and Abuse

A second widely accepted component of effective PCC is the requirement for selective application of violence, and with it, protection of non-combatants from military induced harm. Selective application of violence implies military actions that target insurgents, and only insurgents. Non-selective or indiscriminate violence against civilians may take multiple forms. So-called "collateral damage" occurs when civilians' harm is an unintended (but potentially

[27] On force ratios, see the discussion in chapter 1. On force size, also see Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro, who find that the American "surge" in troops in Iraq in 2007 was a necessary though not sufficient condition for violence reduction. Stephen Biddle, Jeffrey A. Friedman, and Jacob N. Shapiro, "Testing the Surge: Why Did Violence Decline in Iraq in 2007," *International Security* 37, no. 1 (Summer 2012).

foreseen) byproduct of violence targeting combatants. Explaining the need to use violence discriminately and avoid collateral damage, John Paul Vann may have exaggerated, but only slightly, when he claimed that in population-centric counterinsurgency, "The best weapon for killing is a knife, but I'm afraid we can't do it that way. The next best is a rifle. The worst is an airplane, and after that the worst is artillery. You have to know who you are killing."[28] Collateral damage is an element of any armed conflict, but effective population centric forces take active steps to limit it and to mitigate it when it does occur.[29] Counterinsurgents may also intend violence against a civilian population as a form of collective punishment for non-compliance. Finally, counterinsurgent forces may abuse and practice predation on civilians for strategic reasons, for personal gain, or out of lack of discipline and control within the military force.

Civil war scholars and counterinsurgency theorists suggest that indiscriminate violence shifts popular support from the counterinsurgent state to the insurgency and reduces civilian provision of information through several mechanisms.[30] It evokes a fundamental emotional response of unfairness. Worse, it creates an ambiguous incentive structure. When the counterinsurgent force applies violence selectively, the civilian knows that he or she can avoid

[28] William Prochnau, *Once Upon a Distant War: David Halberstam, Neil Sheehan, Peter Arnett — Young War Correspondents and Their Early Vietnam Battles* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 162.

[29] Counterinsurgents, for example, may offer cash payments to compensate for property damage or death of family members. On the problem of collateral damage, see Luke N. Condra and Jacob N. Shapiro, "Who Takes the Blame? The Strategic Effects of Collateral Damage," *American Journal of Political Science* 56, no. 1 (Jan. 2011). However, contra these findings, Lyall finds that indiscriminate Russian violence against Chechen civilians actually reduced insurgent violence, while Lyall, Blair, and Imai find that responses to civilian victimization in Afghanistan were asymmetric depending on whether the insurgent or counterinsurgent inflicted the victimization. Civilians were significantly more forgiving of the Taliban than of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Jason Lyall, "Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks? Evidence from Chechnya," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 3 (2009); Jason Lyall, Graeme Blair, and Kosuke Imai, "Explaining Support for Combatants during Wartime: A Survey Experiment in Afghanistan," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 4 (Nov. 2013).

[30] For arguments and evidence, see Kalyvas, *Logic of Violence*; Stathis N. Kalyvas and Matthew Adam Kocher, "How 'Free' Is Free Riding in Civil Wars? Violence, Insurgency, and the Collective Action Problem," *World Politics* 59, no. 2 (January 2007); Matthew Adam Kocher, Thomas B. Pepinsky, and Stathis N. Kalyvas, "Aerial Bombing and Counterinsurgency in the Vietnam War," *American Journal of Political Science* 55, no. 2 (Apr. 2011); Elisabeth Jean Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

harm through compliance. When violence is indiscriminate, compliance is nearly as dangerous as non-compliance. Related, indiscriminate violence serves as a form of reverse discrimination that may encourage civilian-insurgent collaboration. Those who are least associated with the armed opposition are likely the most vulnerable to indiscriminate state violence because they lack protection. Those with close ties to the insurgency can seek its protection from state indiscriminate violence. Supporting the insurgency thus becomes the safer option for the unaligned civilian. This presents the insurgency with the opportunity to offer protection as a select incentive for civilian-insurgent cooperation. In addition, indiscriminate violence serves as a signaling mechanism to civilians that the perpetrating force places low value on civilian security and safety, engenders desire for revenge, and undermines legitimacy of the perpetrating state. Finally, when indiscriminate violence is applied as a means of compulsion, it is often based on a faulty assumption that overestimates civilian political influence over the insurgency.[31]

Critics have suggested that indiscriminate violence may be successful under a limited set of conditions. For instance, Downs find that indiscriminate violence may be effective when the population is small, occupies a small geographic area, and when the state has little interest in actually governing the civilian population. In these cases, mass killing can eliminate the population, denying the insurgency sanctuary. Mass killing "drains the sea" in which the insurgent fish swim. However, such cases, where the state does not actually seek to govern major subsets of the population, fall outside the scope of this study.[32]

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[31] Condra and Shapiro, "Who Takes the Blame?" 182-83; Kalyvas, *Logic of Violence*, 149-60; Kalyvas and Kocher, "How 'Free' is Free Riding in Civil Wars?"; Christopher D. Kolenda et al., *The Strategic Cost of Civilian Harm: Applying Lessons from Afghanistan to Current and Future Conflicts* (Open Society Foundation, 2016).

[32] Downes, "Draining the Sea by Filling the Graves." Lyall also found less insurgent violence in Chechen villages indiscriminately shelled, though his findings here are challenged by his findings in other studies (see footnote 33). Lyall, "Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks?"

There is significant empirical evidence supporting the theory that indiscriminate violence undermines the state's ability to establish control over and govern the civilian population in civil war, even when that violence is an unintended consequence of violence against insurgents. Lyall et el. find that International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) killing of non-combatants led to a reduction in state/ISAF support in Afghanistan, while Kolenda found it increased Taliban support.[33] Kocher et el. identify US indiscriminate aerial bombing in Vietnam as the cause of a shift in territorial control from counterinsurgent to insurgent.[34] Condra and Shapiro found that non-selective violence increased insurgent attacks in Iraq. They hypothesized that this was due to a decrease in civilian-to-counterinsurgent information provision.[35] Other studies find support for the link between counterinsurgent indiscriminate violence and civilian provision of information in both Iraq and Afghanistan.[36]

In short, effective PCC requires the insurgent force refrain from indiscriminate violence, whether motivated by desire to collectively punish the civilian population, benefit from predation, or a lack of military discipline. It also requires active measures to minimize collateral damage, such as reliance on precision weapons over area weapons, even if these measures are inconvenient or entail increased risk to the counterinsurgent force.

Service Provision

Provision of basic services is a more controversial and less understood component of PCC. Of the three components, it is also the one for which empirical support is most ambiguous.

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[33] Lyall, Blair, and Imai, "Explaining Support for Combatants During Wartime." Kolenda et el. also suggests that civilian casualties that ISAF caused on night raids, air attacks, and faulty intelligence led to a reduction in support for ISAF and the Afghan regime and bolstered Taliban recruiting. Kolenda et al., *The Strategic Cost of Civilian Harm*.

[34] Kocher, Pepinsky, and Kalyvas, "Aerial Bombing and Counterinsurgency in the Vietnam War."

[35] Condra and Shapiro, "Who Takes the Blame?"

[36] Andrew Shaver and Jacob N. Shapiro, The Effects of Casualties on Wartime Informing: Evidence from the Iraq War, 3 Jan. 2016, Working Paper; Sebastian Schutte, "Violence and Civilian Loyalties: Evidence from Afghanistan," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 8 (2017).

HAM focused theorists give it a central role in successful counterinsurgency. Coercion focused theorists see it as secondary in importance, but useful as a positive incentive to coerce compliance. In either case, it has classically been included in population-centric strategies, and ineffective attempts at service provision can harm overall effectiveness.

Counterinsurgents can address service provision through multiple methods. They can develop or improve existing government institutions and functions, provide social services, improve infrastructure, and provide direct aid. They can also undertake major structural economic reforms such as wealth or land redistribution to meet population needs or grievances. These various forms of service provision also require significant military coordination with civil authority and possibly non-governmental organizations.

Service provision theoretically works through multiple mechanisms. HAM advocates argue that it can shift popular sentiment and that long-term perceptions of governments legitimacy depend on the government's ability to provide basic services beyond security.[37] From the perspective of coercion, services provide the "carrot" in the "carrot and stick" formula of incentives for compliance. Thus, while HAM theorists may advocate universal service provision as an aspect of "good governance," coercion theorists view it as an incentive to be provided as a reward for compliance, suggesting that the counterinsurgent must take great care that it is not converted to material support for insurgents.

Bridging these two approaches, Felter, Berman, Shapiro and Matanock identify provision of service as a key component of gaining intelligence from civilians. They model a three-sided

[37] For survey evidence that aid can increase perceptions of government legitimacy, see Jan Rasmus Böhnke and Christoph Zürcher, "Aid, Minds, and Hearts: The Impact of Aid in Conflict Zones," *Conflict Management and Peace Studies* 30, no. 5 (2013); Andrew Beath, Fontini Christia, and Ruben Enikolopov, Can Development Programs Counter Insurgencies? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Afghainstan, 29 Dec. 2017, 2011-14, Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA.

game: (1) the government seeks tips from the population to suppress the insurgency; (2) the insurgency seeks political change and relies on the population for sanctuary; (3) the population seeks security and services and cooperates with either side (or remains neutral) to maximize both. To be clear, the argument is not simply that the counterinsurgent must shift popular sentiment. Instead, the counterinsurgent appeals to self-interested members of the population through material incentives. Improving government service provision and civilian material conditions increases the opportunity cost to the population of insurgent success. This in-turn reduces the threshold of insurgent violence that civilians will accept before providing the government tips.[38]

Provision of services can be relevant for both "greed" and "grievance" motivated insurgencies. If low income and slow growth ease insurgent recruiting by making guerilla membership a relatively lucrative option, increased services may raise the opportunity costs and lower the relative benefits of participation.[39] Targeted services can also reduce grievances against the state or demonstrate inclusion of previously excluded populations.[40]

The relationship between aid and violence is a developing research area. The empirical data on service provision and aid is mixed. In a review of existing literature on development aid published between 2001 and 2016, aid only reduced violence in seven of twenty-four cases, while it had mixed effects in three, no effects in six, and negative effects in nine. (Of note, the

[38] Eli Berman, Jacob N. Shapiro, and Joseph H. Felter, "Can Hearts and Minds be Bought? The Economcis of Counterinsurgency in Iraq," *Journal of Political Economy* 119, no. 4 (2011): 768; Eli Berman and Aila M. Matanock, "The Empiricists' Insurgency," *Annual Review of Political Science* 18 (2015): 445-48; Eli Berman, Joseph H. Felter, and Jacob N. Shapiro, *Small Wars, Big Data: The Information Revolution in Modern Conflict* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 55-81.

[39] On "greed" as a cause of insurgency, see Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 2004 (2004).

[40] For a review of mechanisms and a general overview of the state of the field on aid and insurgent violence, see Christoph Zürcher, "What Do We (Not) Know About Development Aid and Violence? A Systematic Review," *World Development* 98 (2017): 515-17.

counterinsurgent force did not directly administer much of this aid.) Critics note that aid can fuel violence through sabotage, in which insurgents step-up attacks to undermine any positive effects of aid, and through predation, in which the additional resources provided are siphoned off to support conflict.[41] Aid and service advocates acknowledge these risks, but point to the significant variation in outcomes to suggest that the types of service or aid and the methods through which they are administered and secured must be disaggregated to understand when service provision is likely to be successful.

A full theory of the role of services and aid in civil conflict is beyond the scope of this project. Three points are essential. First, provision of basic services and aid has long been a component of PCC and is likely to continue to play a role in the future. Second, whether or not well-administered services and aid contribute to counterinsurgents' strategic objectives in particular cases, poorly administered programs can clearly harm effectiveness. Graft and waste in service and aid provision squander limited counterinsurgent resources. Visible incompetence and perceived corruption in aid administration can undermine state legitimacy, and insurgent predation can convert aid into resources for the insurgency. Third, studies of variation in past programs suggest a series of characteristics that increase the probability of aid and service provision effectively serving counterinsurgent ends.

Requirements for successful services and aid projects include security from insurgency sabotage or from insurgent or counterinsurgent predation, tying projects to specific local needs, conditionality, and expertise in administration. Projects were most successful when administered in already secured areas with significant counterinsurgent troop presence. Securing projects

[41] Zürcher, "What Do We (Not) Know About Development Aid and Violence?," 511, 16. On insurgent sabotage, also see Renard Sexton, "Aid as a Tool Against Insurgency: Evidence from Contested and Controlled Territory in Afghanistan," *American Political Science Review* 110, no. 4 (Nov. 2016). As early as 1970, Leites and Wolf warned of the dangers of aid capture by insurgents. Leites and Wolf, *Rebellion and Authority*.

deters sabotage. It also limits insurgent access to the provided material resources. Small projects generally decreased violence, while large ones had no effect or increased violence, likely because smaller projects facilitated careful tailoring to local needs and because large projects provided more opportunity for corruption and predation. Projects were most successful when conditioned on continued civilian cooperation. In these cases, the state provided services to a population when that population complied with state rule, but revoked services when the population reduced compliance. Again, this explains the advantages observed in small projects, which counterinsurgents could easily start and halt. Finally, greater professional expertise in the specific service type provided correlated with drops in violence.[42]

These conditions reinforce the requirements of an effective counterinsurgent force developed above. The requirements for control, for persistent troop presence, and to tailor projects to local requirements buttress the case for decentralized, independent operations by small units capable of interacting with the civilian population. The risk of graft, predation, bribery, and fraud inherent in service provision and aid suggests the need for a cohesive command structure with internal monitoring mechanisms and professional norms.

2.2 Difficulties of PCC Execution and the Principle-Agent Problem

The requirements to achieve and maintain control, apply violence selectively, and provide basic services entail significant risk and hardship for military units and individual soldiers. They also require military leaders at all levels and their soldiers to forgo opportunities

[42] These traits were common across multiple studies. Greg Adams, "Honing the Proper Edge: CERP and the two-sided potential of miltiary-led development in Afghanistan," *The Economics of Peace and Security Journal* 10, no. 2 (2015); Berman, Shapiro, and Felter, "Can Hearts and Minds be Bought?"; Zürcher, "What Do We (Not) Know About Development Aid and Violence?"; Berman, Felter, and Shapiro, *Small Wars, Big Data*, 136-38; Eli Berman et al., "Modest, Secure, and Informed: Successful Development in Conflict Zones," Jan. 2013, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA; Sexton, "Aid as a Tool Against Insurgency."

for personal gain. The requirement for independent, small unit operations limits direct oversight of military formations. This combination of factors forms a classic principal-agent problem, in which both organizations and individuals have powerful incentives and many opportunities to shirk and subvert the requirements of a PCC strategy.

2.2.1 The Difficulty of Population Centric Counterinsurgency: Incentives and Opportunities to Shirk and Subvert

PCC provides plentiful opportunity for military units and leaders to shirk and subvert. Small-unit operations, limits on firepower, long-duration operations, and direct contact with the population are all high-risk activities. Small units forward deployed lack the direct support in logistics, protection, and supporting firepower they would have access to during large unit maneuvers, increasing the danger of such operations. At the same time, decentralization means that small units lack the direct oversight to ensure they conduct such operations. When a unit does identify a potential threat, mass firepower will seem a better bet for short-term survival than limited, precise, discriminatory firepower. Given an insurgency imbedded in a civilian population, direct, continual, non-violent contact with civilians puts soldiers and small units at continual risk of attack on insurgent terms. Similarly, continual oversight and management of service provision requires considerable time and effort often in a dangerous environment outside of secure bases.

Given these risks and hardships, military personnel and small units have powerful incentives to shirk. Remaining on large, well-secured military facilities, large unit sweep operations, armored vehicle-mounted operations, and maintenance of distance from civilians (who might be insurgents) all reduce short-term personal and organizational risk. If avoiding patrols is not a possibility, the next safest option may be to focus patrols in already secure areas, leaving contested areas untouched.

Because it places military organizations and personnel in direct contact with both civilians and the resources entailed in service provision, PCC also provides ample opportunity for subverting. Military personnel may victimize civilians as a form of predation for personal gain, as a means of punishment for non-compliance, or out of sheer lack of discipline. For a poorly resourced military organization, theft from civilians can serve as a source of food and necessities. Even for a well-resourced organization, theft and looting are alluring when opportunities are abundant and oversight is limited. Predation of this type is appealing to unmonitored soldiers and small units, but senior leaders may also seek personal gain through predation on a larger scale. Commanders of large military units responsible for expansive territories and sizable civilian populations have even more lucrative opportunities for graft, extortion, and predation.

Given the difficulty of separating insurgents from the population, collective punishment strategies are a tempting option that subverts PCC strategies. In a formal strategy of collective punishment, the counterinsurgent force inflicts indiscriminate punishment on the belief that the population will turn against the insurgency to gain relief from the pain. As discussed above, there are deep flaws in this logic, as indiscriminate violence may provide incentives for civilians to turn to the insurgency for protection.[43] However, collective punishment need not be officially sanctioned. One should not underestimate the emotional forces of frustration, anger, or revenge among an unmonitored military force faced with continual attacks from within a civilian population.

[43] Pape's study of airpower also suggests that "coercion by punishment" approaches are highly ineffective and are instead more likely increase population resistance towards the punishing state. Robert Anthony Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).

Finally, management of services and aid also provides plentiful opportunity for graft and bribery. Theft, graft, corruption in contracting, and bribery for basic service provisions are all readily available means for members of an unmonitored military to make personal profit, and are all the more tempting when lack of oversight is combined with low pay and poor resourcing. Again, these predatory activities are alluring at multiple levels, from the soldier who steals equipment from a local project, to the captain who sells project supplies on the side, to the colonel or general who takes bribes from the project's contractors.

All these forms of shirking and subverting may be counterproductive for both the state and the individual counterinsurgent in the long-term. They are likely to lead to defeat or lengthen the duration of conflict, placing the counterinsurgent in hard and dangerous conditions for longer. These long-term concerns do not override the short-term advantages to the self-interested actor. Immediate survival incentives shorten the shadow of the future in combat. Using excessive force now while in contact with an enemy may lead to collateral damage that lengthens the conflict or pushes unaligned civilians to the insurgency. If that is the price to pay for surviving another day, it will seem a worthwhile risk. Beyond survival concerns, preventing shirking and subverting for personal gains presents a collective action problem. Given that any one actor refraining from predatory activity is unlikely to turn the course of the war, the average self-interested soldier or officer may choose to "get their cut" while they can do so.

2.2.2 Population Centric Counterinsurgency's Principal-Agent Problem

The Principal-Agent Problem

The incentives and opportunities for subordinate units and soldiers to act in ways that undermine PCC strategies present a challenge for the state and its military. Borrowing from economics, the principal-agent problem provides a useful mechanism to depict the difficulty. In

the classic principal-agent model, a principal must rely on an agent to act on his or her behalf. However, the problem arises because the principal's interests do not fully align with those of the agent. The principal seeks to obtain maximum effort from the agent towards organizational ends. By contrast, the self-interested agent seeks maximum personal benefit at minimal personal cost and risk. The agent's incentives are to "shirk" and to "subvert." Shirking is avoidance of undesirable, difficult, or costly activity. Subverting is to act to directly contravene organizational ends. Because the principal cannot observe all agents at all times, the agent has an information advantage. When not under direct observation, the agent can shirk or subvert without detection.[44]

In executing a counterinsurgency strategy, the state or the component of the state seeking to defeat the insurgency and seeking to gain control of and govern the population is the principal. The specific composition of the state – the specific individuals or groups who constitute the principal – may vary by case. In a state with clear military subordination to civil authority, the chief executive may serve as the principal. In a military dictatorship, it may be the general or generals who head the state. Principals may vary within a single state if the state's structure changes over the course of the war. In short, the principal is the executive state actor seeking to gain control and govern.

Subordinate military commanders, units, and soldiers are the agents that the state charges with executing its strategy. The principal in this case relies on agents to implement a PCC

[44] For discussions of the principal-agent problem and moral hazard, see Terry M. Moe, "The New Economics of Organization," *American Journal of Political Science* 28, no. 4 (Nov. 1984): especially 754-58; James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), 154-75. While I apply the problem to counterinsurgent militaries, Weinstein offers a similar application to insurgent forces. Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 127-59.There is also an extensive literature applying the principal-agent problem to civil-military relations and the creation of strategy and doctrine. See Deborah D. Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change: Lessons from Peripheral Wars* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

strategy that entails significant hardship and great risk to both subordinate units and individuals. Subordinate units must assume risks by operating independently with limited support, in constant contact with civilians who could be insurgents. They must forgo opportunities for personal profit through civilian predation, restrain impulses for revenge through retaliatory civilian victimization, and at least for volunteer soldiers, perform tasks that are likely far outside those that motivated them to join the military. They have powerful incentives and plentiful opportunities to shirk. They can avoid risk by remaining on well secured fixed sites, limiting patrols to secure areas, maintaining large formation, and making use of heavy firepower. They can also subvert by seeking personal profits through predation and graft.

Principal-Agent Solutions

The principal has three options to mitigate the principal-agent problem. First, the principal can monitor agent activities or "outputs." In this form of monitoring, the agent closely supervises the activities of the agent. Second, the principal can monitor "outcomes," or whether the agent successfully achieves organizational tasks and objectives. Finally, the principal can attempt to influence organizational culture, which can in-turn influence agents to act in accordance with the interests of the principal and the organization even without monitoring.

Militaries apply all three options to varying degrees, but each has limitations. Wilson's distinction between "procedural" and "craft" organizations is useful in understanding how these options apply to militaries.[45] In procedural organizations, senior officials can observe what their subordinates are doing, but cannot easily observe organizational outcomes. In peacetime, military organizations are classic procedural organizations. A military's ultimate "outcome" is success or failure in war. In peacetime, there is no outcome to observe. However, seniors can

[45] For a full discussion of organization types based on monitoring mechanisms, see Wilson, *Bureaucracy*, 159-71.

observe subordinates' "outputs" in the form of compliance with doctrine, standard operating procedures, and programs.

In war, militaries become craft organizations. In craft organizations, seniors can more easily observe outcomes than activities. However, monitoring of wartime outcomes as a method to solve the principal-agent problem has its own set of deficiencies. The requirement for decentralized operations and "the haze, noise, and confusion of distant battlefields" make timely outcome monitoring in war difficult.[46] If this is true of conventional wars, where military organizations maneuver as large units such as battalions, brigades, and divisions, it is even truer of counterinsurgent operations, which rely on squads and platoons acting independently and out of direct contact with their parent organizations.

Returning to the effectiveness-outcome distinction, it is also not clear that the outcome of a battle, campaign or war is an accurate indicator of the capability or organizational commitment of its leaders. In the fog and friction of war, numerous factors outside the control of subordinate personnel or units contribute to success or failure. A particular individual's leadership and an organization's effectiveness are two important factors, but only two among many. A unit may lose a battle because of poor force ratio, equipment, weather, or pure chance. Moreover, outcomes are often evident too late to make effective change. By the time a senior commander observes that a subordinate unit is failing, the battle, campaign, or war may be irretrievably lost.

In the particular case of insurgency, the very task of determining and measuring relevant outcomes is a tremendous challenge. In conventional war, tangible military success may include seizure of terrain or the destruction or surrender of an enemy force (on the offense) or repulsion of an enemy attack and retention of terrain (on the defense). Short of total destruction of an

[46] Wilson, *Bureaucracy*, 159-71.

insurgent organization, indicators of operational and strategic progress in insurgency are more ambiguous. Are reductions in insurgent attacks indicators of counterinsurgent control and insurgent weakness, or of insurgent success and transition to political consolidation? How does one objectively measure variations in public support or perceptions of state legitimacy? Defining and measuring success has historically vexed counterinsurgency practitioners.[47]

The best option for principals in craft organizations is to create an organizational culture that inculcates a sense of duty to the organization's mission on the part of individual agents. Wilson explains, "The most successful agencies of this type [craft] are those that develop among their workers a sense of mission, a commitment to craftsmanship, or a belief in professional norms that will keep unobserved workers from abusing their discretion."[48] Organizational leaders can foster environments that privilege achievement of organizational ends over personal material gains. Training, indoctrination, and personal example can engender intrinsic personal motivation and a sense of duty. They create an environment in which an individual's observable devotion to the organization's missions produces peer esteem, while lack of devotion produces peer shunning and condemnation. Publication and enforcement of rules and norms further provide negative incentives against violating norms, while performance-based promotions create positive incentives for accomplishment and adherence to norms.

Because both monitoring and organization culture have limitations, military organizations ideally combined both. Wartime conditions limit the military's ability to monitor, while even an organization with deeply ingrained norms may not be able to control for all deviant members.

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[47] For an example of this challenge in Vietnam, see Gregory A. Daddis, "The Problem of Metrics: Assessing Progress and Effectiveness in the Vietnam War," *War in History* 19, no. 1 (2012); Gregory A. Daddis, *No Sure Victory: Measuring U.S. Army Effectiveness and Progress in the Vietnam War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[48] Wilson, *Bureaucracy*, 175.

Monitoring and enforcement can make rules and regulations habit, ingraining them into organizational culture, while a mission centric organizational culture fosters peer-policing and self-policing, making monitoring and culture mutually reinforcing.

2.3 The Intervening Variable: Weberian Command Structure

A military command structure must provide effective monitoring and a mission based, professional organizational culture to mitigate PCC's principal agent problem. The ideal command structure to do this is a rational-legal organization with merit-based advancement, clear lines of authority, professional expertise, and impersonal norms of dedication to the organization. [49] These characteristics establish an ideal type that few military institutions may fully meet, but they serve as a useful construct from which to compare sub-optimal command structures. In short, the ideal type for the maximally effective military command structure looks much like Weber's description of modern bureaucracy.

It is not shocking that military effectiveness is maximized when the military organization mirrors many of the traits of a rational-legal Weberian bureaucracy. Scholars of civil-military relations have long noted that professional military officer corps simultaneously constitutes a specialized profession and a bureaucracy.[50] These two aspects of the idealized officer corps may sometimes conflict, but they can also be mutually supportive, as, for example, in the case of their mutual emphasis on expertise as a requirement of effectiveness. Moreover, PCC is essentially armed state building. It requires the military to establish a monopoly of violence over a

[49] Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, 2 vols., vol. 1, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 2013), especially 217-26.

[50] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), 16-17; Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (New York: Free Press, 1971); Amos Perlmutter, *The Military and Politics in Modern Times: On Professionals, Praetorians, and Revolutionary Soldiers* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 1977), 5.

population, protect that population, and, potentially in coordination with other elements of the state, provide some level of service provision.

The relationship between military officers' expertise in "the management of violence" and effectiveness has been long established in the civil-military literature.[51] Because it requires the military leader to engage in the full range of state building, PCC arguably requires more diverse and higher levels of expertise, though it does not negate the baseline "management of violence" requirement. In fact, this particular strategy for counterinsurgency requires greater expertise in applying violence precisely and selectively.

Clear hierarchy, or in military nomenclature, "unity of command," allows militaries to rapidly execute orders. Organizational hierarchy is clear when each subordinate office recognizes a single superior office and follows the directives and orders of that superior office. Talmadge explains that ideal command arrangements, "…give significant decision making power to those in the field, enabling military units to engage in the improvisation and initiative required to perform complex operations," while at the same time, "…a commander's authority over his particular unit(s) is absolute. There are never two commanders giving orders to the same soldiers. The chain of command is clear and responsibility is unambiguous, meaning soldiers can execute decisions rapidly once they have been made."[52] Hierarchy does not necessarily negate the ability of subordinate units to take initiative or act independently. It can facilitate initiative by providing senior commands with trust that subordinates will act on orders and intent without detailed guidance and direct oversight.

Finally, in this ideal construct, loyalty norms lie, in order of priority, with the state as an entity, the military's organizational mission, and senior military offices (as opposed to the

[51] Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 11-14.
[52] Talmadge, *The Dictator's Army*, 14.

specific civilian or military officer holding that office). In militaries, as in any organization, "soldiers are also at the same time husbands, wives, parents, classmates, mentors, or patriots" with "multilayered identifications" and loyalties.[53] However, the most effective organizational norms for achieving state and military ends will be those that give priority to those ends over competing loyalty demands. It is the higher headquarters and the office of its command that pulls loyalty, not the specific commander sitting in the billet. In other words, loyalty is abstract, not personal. Of course, any organization falls short of this ideal type, but the ideal is a useful baseline from which to judge.

2.4 Adverse Selection: Undermining the Weberian Command Structure Through Corrupt Appointments

The methods through which personnel are appointed or promoted to leadership positions within a military organization are essential determinants of whether a command structure can approach the Weberian ideal. Through merit-based promotions and advancements, a military greatly increases the likelihood that it can provide sufficient monitoring and the necessary organizational culture to overcome the principal-agent problem inherent in execution of a PCC strategy. By contrast, corruption in the appointment system, defined here as an appointment process dominated by cronyism, nepotism, patronage, or bribery, both undercuts internal monitoring and subverts organizational culture, reducing effectiveness.

2.4.1 Defining Corruption in Appointments and Promotions

This dissertation examines the effects of a specific type of corruption on the state's ability to execute a specific counterinsurgency strategy: the effects of corruption in *selection (and*

[53] Eric Christopher Hundman, "Networks and Loyalties: The Social Roots of Military Disobedience in the Sino-French War" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2016), 8.

removal) of military leaders on the state's ability to *effectively execute population centric counterinsurgency*. It defines promotion and appointment systems based on whether they select on merit or on personal and factional loyalties. Organizations making merit-based appointments and promotions select personnel for offices based on expertise and capability as demonstrated through quality of past performance. In short,

> Promotion patterns in the most effective militaries follow a simple principle: merit. The ticket to being a senior officer in these militaries is *competence*, demonstrated by *wartime performance* or by *performance in training*…This sort of promotion system enables the military to develop a much higher base of human capital over time, which in turn makes the military better at just about everything it attempts to do…[54]

A system based on quality of performance prioritizes past military efficacy as the primary criterion in selecting personnel for advancement.[55]

Merit-based appointment also implies removal of underperformers from office. Removal includes both relief and transfer to lower offices at which the underperformer has demonstrated past effectiveness. Measuring and acting on this imperative for removal in wartime is not simple given the numerous factors that account for wartime outcomes. A commander who wins a battle against an inferior force at great cost may be a better candidate for removal than one who loses but fights competently against overwhelming odds. Still, a merit-based organization will penalize examples of gross incompetence and continual misjudgment with removal.[56]

The converse of a merit-based promotion and appointment system is one based on nepotism, cronyism, patronage, or bribery. Nepotism and cronyism are appointments based on familial relation or friendship, respectively. Patronage selects personnel based on loyalty to

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[54] Talmadge, *The Dictator's Army*, 13-14. Italics added.

[55] Some military positions, for instance, military engineers, may also require special technical expertise, but even here, such training serves only as a minimal baseline. Past demonstrated performance is still the primary discriminator for office among the technically qualified.

[56] For example, Reiter and Wagstaff find that the removal of poor performing military leaders produced higher performance in both American and German World War II divisions. Dan Reiter and William A. Wagstaff, "Leadership and Military Effectiveness," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 14, no. 4 (Oct. 2018).

political faction, as opposed to merit. All three imply that personal loyalty to individual patrons or political factions are the deciding factor in selection, not demonstrated performance. In systems dominated by cronyism, nepotism, and patronage, demonstrated incompetence is also less likely to result in punitive removal because network and personal/factional loyalty ties are valued more than wartime task performance. At best, the offending officer may maintain his or her position, or may be "laterally transferred" to a new position of equal rank and responsibility. At worst, he or she may even receive promotion.

Narrowing Corruption to Appointments

Corrupt appointments and promotion are a narrow subset of the larger phenomena of state corruption and of its effects. Nye provides a classic definition of the larger phenomena of corruption:

> Corruption is behavior which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private- regarding influence. This includes such behavior as bribery (use of a reward to pervert the judgment of a person in a position of trust); nepotism (bestowal of patronage by reason of ascriptive relationship rather than merit); and misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private-regarding uses). [57]

Of note, Nye's definition makes no moral judgment about corruption. It assumes neither that all corruption is immoral, nor that all immoral behavior is corrupt. This dissertation is likewise agnostic about the moral implications of corruption. The effects of the large set of corrupt activities that fall under Nye's broad definition are complex, varied, and disputed among scholars. Some argue that all forms of corruption are detrimental to effective governance, while

[57] Nye explains that this definition "also excludes any consideration of whether the behavior is in the public interest, since building the study of the effects of the behavior into the definition makes analysis of the relationship between corruption and development difficult." Joseph S. Nye, "Corruption and Political Development: A Cost-Benefit Analysis," *The American Political Science Review* 61, no. 2 (Jun. 1967): 419.

others argue that specific forms of corruption may be essential to state development.[58] Johnston, for example, suggests that some forms of corruption, such as black markets, can have a stabilizing and "integrative" effect on societies because they are open to all and offer access to goods the state cannot provide on its own, while others, such as cronyism, are "disintegrative" and undermine state cohesion because they are by definition exclusionary.[59]

Corruption in selection for military leadership offices clearly falls within Nye's larger definition, but is a narrow subset of the larger phenomena. Just as with other forms of corruption, it may provide some desirable outcomes for the state. For instance, it may provide the state a means of integrating competing internal factions by using military offices as rewards for loyalty or as a means to balance factions. As suggested in a substantial literature on coup proofing, regimes at high risk of coups may have powerful incentives to make corrupt appointments. When military overthrow poses a greater threat to the regime than either external state actors or insurgencies, building a military based on personal or factional loyalty is a rational option. Selecting poor performing officers to senior offices can even be a benefit, as they will be less capable and competent to challenge the regime.

However, research on coup proofing suggests that regimes that rely on corrupt appointment and promotion systems are poor performers in conventional war.[60] Similarly, I

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[58] Summarizing these positions, Dean explains that "The moralists argue that corruption is harmful to societies and governments eroding legitimacy, whereas revisionists consider the benefits of 'red tape cutting' and political access through bribery. The final position is most persuasive for examining the role of corruption for conflict groups in transition and considers that 'consequences of corruption depend in part upon the characteristics of political systems, the balance of economic and political opportunities, levels of national integration, economic opportunities, integration, government capacity (Nye 1967) or upon the relationships among key factions and elites (Scott 1972)' " Shelley Deane, "Crime Corrupting Credibility: The Problem of Shifting from Paramilitaries to Parliamentarians," *Civil Wars* 10, no. 4 (Dec 2008): 434.

[59] Michael Johnston, "The Political Consequences of Corruption: A Reassessment," *Comparative Politics* 18, no. 4 (Jul. 1986).

[60] On coup-proofing, among others, see Stephen Biddle and Robert Zirkle, "Technology, Civil-Military Relations, and Warfare in the Developing World," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 19, no. 2 (June 1996); James T. Quinlivan, "Coup-proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East," *International Security* 24, no. 2 (Fall 1999); Daniel L. Byman, "Friends Like These: Counterinsurency and the War on Terrorism," *International Security*

argue that such *corruption in selection of military leadership directly undermines the state's ability to effectively implement population centric counterinsurgency*. This claim makes no judgment about the other effects of such corruption, or of the larger phenomena of state and military corruption.

To be clear, my claim is not that corruption through non-merit-based appointments is the only possible form of corruption within a military organization, or that other forms of corruption are not important. Corrupt appointments only represent a small sliver of the broader phenomena of military or state corruption. Many other forms may influence military performance. I do argue, however, that a merit-based appointment system is necessary to conduct effective PCC, and that its centrality and importance is significant enough to make it worthy of study on its own.

Challenges in Identifying and Measuring Merit

In defining non-corrupt appointments and promotions as "merit-based," I do not deny the difficultly of assessing individual military leaders' performances. There is a clear difference between imperfect assessment and failure to assess. At least two factors complicate performance assessment. First, there is no way to fully evaluate combat performance outside of war itself, nor even fully anticipate the types of war a military may face in the future. In peacetime, promoting authorities must rely on the imperfect measures of performance in training and in peacetime duties. Given these information limitations, militaries also make use of seniority as a proxy for experience and ability. All else being equal between two officers, one can expect the more experienced officer to be more capable.[61] This is distinct from promotion based on loyalty to

31, no. 2 (Fall 2006); Johathan M. Powell and Clayton L. Thyne, "Global Instances of Coups from 1950 to 2010: A New Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 2 (Mar. 2011); Caitlin Talmadge, "The Puzzle of Personalist Performance: Iraqi Battlefield Effectiveness in the Iran-Iraq War," *Security Studies* 22, no. 2 (May 2013); Vipin Narang and Caitlin Talmadge, "Civil-Military Pathologies and Defeat in War: Tests Using New Data," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62, no. 7 (2018); Talmadge, *The Dictator's Army*.

[61] David W. Moore and B. Thomas Trout, "Military Advancement: The Visibility Theory of Promotion," *The American Political Science Review* 72, no. 2 (Jun. 1978): 453.

one's year group as part of a network of military patronage, as shown in Chapter 5. Despite these difficulties, professional militaries go to great lengths to measure officer competence and potential in peace time. This is the reason for evaluation and efficiency reports and formalized promotion boards.

However, the onset of war provides increased information upon which to judge an officer's effectiveness. Leaders display their capability and efficacy at wartime specific tasks. In a merit-based system, those who demonstrate high performance are rewarded with increasingly higher office. Those who underperform in wartime tasks are removed.

Second, even the best-designed merit-based personnel system cannot fully control for non-merit-based factors. Janowitz identifies the importance of "organizational accident" in promotion, that is, of being available in the right place, at the right time, and at the right level when opportunities arise. For instance, for the West Point class of 1915, sometimes called "the class the stars fell on," timing, not some a-typically high distribution of talent, was likely the major contributing variable to the fact that the class produced a higher percentage of general officers than any other. They, along with the classes shortly before, were uniquely positioned for senior billet expansion at the onset of the Second World War.[62] Moore and Trout also highlight the difficulty of objectively evaluating the performance of senior military leaders given the ambiguous nature of their responsibilities and the importance of "visibility," or the degree to which an officer's current position makes him or her visible to influential seniors, regardless of performance. Even so, they note the requirement for a baseline of competence.[63] Golby finds that American presidents are more likely to select personnel for key four-star billets with compatible

[62] Janowitz notes a gradual increase in general officers produced by each class from 1905 to 1917, followed by a return to previous baseline, attributing the change to the opening of new general officer billets during World War II. Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, 126-27.

[63] Moore and Trout, "Military Advancement."

political outlooks, though he suggests this may have to do with shared views about the appropriate use of military force and strategy as opposed to political patronage.[64] All of these factors complicate attempts to evaluate merit, but they do not replace it as the baseline criterion.

Nor is loyalty an illegitimate consideration in merit-based appointments. The key question is "loyalty to whom and what?" Loyalty to the military organization, its mission, and to the state is a component of military merit. A tactically and operationally competent commander with loyalty elsewhere could pose a threat to the state. By contrast, two other loyalty related factors dominate in corrupt appointment systems. First, the selectee's loyalty lies not primarily with the state and its military, but with particular patrons – whether individuals, political factions within the state, cliques within the military, or social, economic, or political factions within society – who provide appointment to the billet the leader occupies. Second, it is this loyalty, not capability demonstrated through performance, that is the dominant factor in selection for and maintenance of one's position.

In short, the ideal type military promotion system selects personnel for leadership positions based on merit as measured through performance. In corrupt promotion and appointment systems, loyalty to particular patrons, whether individuals or factions, is the primary determinant in obtaining and maintaining leadership positions. The second may provide some benefits to the state, but PCC effectiveness is not one of them.

[64] James Thomas Golby, "Duty, Honor…Party? Ideology, Institutions, and the Use of Military Force" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2011).

2.4.2 Corrupt Appointments and Adverse Selection

To unpack how corrupt appointments undermine PCC effectiveness, it is again useful to turn to a mechanism from economics.[65] The adverse selection problem occurs when an employer seeks to hire a new employee. The employer seeks the candidate with the greatest skill and the highest motivation and sense of duty to fulfill the organization's purpose or mission. By contrast, self-interested potential employees seek the position that will provide them the highest possible remuneration for the lowest effort. Potential employees have incentives to misrepresent their expertise and motivation, exaggerating both in an effort to obtain the most personally advantageous position possible. Like the agent in the principal-agent problem, potential employees also have an information advantage. They can misrepresent their qualifications, and only they can possibly know their true level of motivation and commitment.

Militaries face similar challenges in selecting personnel for organizational leadership. Beyond expertise and motivation, military effectiveness also requires high tolerance for hardship and for personal and organizational risk. There is no complete solution to the information asymmetry, especially in first time appointments. However, personnel appointments and promotions based on past performance maximize the likelihood of expert and motivated office holders. Merit-based selection and promotion systems act as both a selection mechanism and an incentive mechanism. They allow organizations to select the most capable and committed personnel, but also incentivize personnel to perform to the maximum of their talents and capabilities in hopes of future promotion.

[65] For discussions of adverse selection see Moe, "The New Economics of Organization," especially 754-58. For application to military organizations in the context of insurgencies (as opposed to counterinsurgencies) see Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, 127-59.

By contrast, appointment and promotion systems dominated by personal and factional loyalty relationships or desire for personal gain undermine the organization's ability to select expert leadership committed to organizational ends. The problem is more severe than simple information asymmetry between the appointing and appointed personnel. Worse, instead of organizational commitment as the discriminating factor for selection, commitment to political factions or individual patrons dominates. Corrupt appointments do this in two ways. First, they remove past performance as a filtering mechanism to determine baseline competence and capability. This is not to suggest that a leader appointed through patronage or corruption cannot be competent, but given that the selection prioritizes other factors, competence is less likely. Second, loyalty to organizational mission and loyalty to patrons or factions will inevitably conflict. Corrupt appointments specifically select against motivation and commitment to the organization. In essence, they are a bargain in which the officer makes positional gains in return for providing loyalty to the patron.

2.4.3 Effects of Corrupt Appointments and Promotions on Command Structure

Corrupt appointments undermine effective monitoring and subvert organizational culture, exasperating the principal-agent problem, in five ways. They discourage internal organizational evaluation of effectiveness, subordinate organizational ends to patron interests, blur lines of authority within chains of command, directly encourage shirking and subverting, and dilute the overall expertise of the organization. Nor can military training, the traditional means of increasing expertise, overcome these negative effects on its own. At best, training can provide marginal improvements.

First, patronage-based systems discourage internal monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness, both of organizational activities and of an organization's members. Van Evera and

Wildavsky note that all organizations struggle with the problem of "non-evaluation." Internal evaluations of organization effectiveness, if their outcomes reveal deficiencies, threaten the status of incumbent leadership. Wildavsky finds that in such cases, "the needs of the members displace the goals of the organization," and the members suppress evaluation.[66] This is a problem for any organization, but it is especially acute in organizations in which incumbents rose because of their dedication to a patron, whose goals they privilege over those of the organization. In such cases, objective evaluation of effectiveness in achieving organizational ends is likely to highlight incumbent shortcomings.

Second, and closely related, organizations evolve to support their clients' interests. Dedication to client interest can impede monitoring, evaluation, and change when the client's interests diverge from the organization's formal purpose. Wildavsky explains that organizational leaders are likely to view changed objectives "as proposals for 'selling out' the clients they wish to serve."[67] While a military's official client may be the state, and its official objective state security, in practice, its clients will be those individuals or groups who control military leaders' appointments. A shift in strategy, operations, or tactics may lie well within the interest of state security, but the change risks abandoning patron interests. Senior personnel may know what the organization must do to be militarily effective, and may even announce strategies and policies in line with the requirements of effectiveness, but they will not monitor and evaluate their subordinates based on those requirements because doing so would jeopardize incumbents' status.[68]

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[66] Aaron Wildavsky, "The Self-Evaluating Organization," *Public Administration Review* 32, no. 5 (Sep./Oct. 1972): 513, https://doi.org/10.2307/975158. See also Stephen William Van Evera, "Causes of War" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkley, 1984), 435.

[67] Wildavsky, "The Self-Evaluating Organization," 510.

[68] Though speaking of politicians' role in reforming military organizations and activities, Shafer captures this logic with his claim that in counterinsurgency, often, "The difficulty was not that politicians did not understand the need for reform, but that understood all too well what reform would mean for them." The same logic holds for

Divergence in client and organizational interests also gives leaders an incentive to actively subvert mission based organizational culture. To develop a culture that prioritizes the organization's purpose and encourages self-evaluation, leaders must persuade subordinates that commitment to both is an essential part of organizational membership.[69] Officers appointed through patronage have no incentive to undertake such persuasive efforts, and even have an incentive to undermine them. Subordinates who prioritize organizational ends are more likely to question the legitimacy and authority of an incompetent or patronage-based chain of command.

Training and indoctrination patterns provide useful examples of these incentives at work. As a component of military training, ideological indoctrination can build loyalty to national and organizational objectives and create an environment of peer policing. Both are dangerous to an incompetent or corrupt leader. In his history of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), Bingham notes that Diem aggressively resisted military indoctrination programs that emphasized South Vietnamese nationalism, even though such indoctrination might have fostered more intense duty to country and loyalty to the military. In the words of one ARVN officer, "They forbade us to do much political training because they did not want an army of nationalists. That would have placed their own precarious political careers in constant jeopardy."[70] Given the thoroughly corrupt nature of the South Vietnamese government and its military, senior officials feared that soldiers indoctrinated in nationalist ideals might turn against corrupt leaders they saw as detrimental to the nation and the war effort.[71]

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political patrons of military officers and of the officers tied into patronage networks. D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 226.

[69] George A. Boyne et al., "Toward the Self-Evaluating Organization? An Empirical Test of the Wildavsky Model," *Public Administration Review* 64 (Jul./Aug. 2004): 464-65; Wildavsky, "The Self-Evaluating Organization," 511, 13.

[70] Robert K. Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army* (2006: University of Kansas Press, 2006), 47.

[71] Brigham, *ARVN*, 47.

Taken together, these considerations have important practical implications for militaries that wish to make reforms in both operations and promotion systems. Patronage based systems are "sticky," and their members will resist changes and resist monitoring and evaluating those changes if implemented. Change threatens both their patrons and their own personal standing. In addition to new strategies or new rules for promotion, change may require a purge of patron promoted officers.

Third, patronage-based promotion systems blur formal authority lines. They undermine the ability for a commander and headquarters to enforce rules, evaluate subordinate performance, and monitor compliance. If one's patron is not one's immediate commander, patron interests will trump formal authority when the two conflict. An agent serving two principals will prioritize the needs of the one who can provide promotions and punishment. If there are multiple patron networks operating within the same military, the dissatisfied officer can use those networks to "jump the chain of command," sidelining an immediate commander by looking for a more senior commander within his or her own patron network. Even if the patron and commander are the same person, formal and patronage interests will inevitably conflict, and the later will take priority. If a dutiful agent does try to buck patron loyalty requirements in favor of the organizational mission, he or she will likely be selected out of the system. The inevitable result is ambiguous authority within the chain of command.

Fourth, corrupt appointments directly encourage subordinate shirking and subversion. When leaders within a command structure are both invested in organizational success and competent, subordinates have greater faith that they can rely on support when undertaking high-risk activities. When leaders are not competent or are committed to maximizing their personal gains and safety, subordinates will refrain from taking risks that might require support from

adjacent or senior elements within the organization. Weinstein explains, "Leaders must show that regardless of their position at the top of the principal-agent hierarchy, they will not renege on the commitments made to their members."[72] A patrol or attack that is likely to come into heavy enemy contact may be a reasonable risk if one believes that a higher headquarters is capable and willing to provide support if things go wrong. Without that confidence, it may be too great a risk for even a commander with a deep sense of duty. Instead, remaining on base or patrolling in safe areas provides the lower risk option. Again, in the words of an ARVN soldier dealing with a corrupt and inept chain of command, "Our captain was brave, but it was clear to me that he was not going to risk his career on clearing out the Viet Cong at Tan Thoi. He just did not know what to expect from his commanders."[73]

Finally, the relationship between promotion criteria and competence deserves special attention. As described here, PCC is a complex endeavor. A counterinsurgent military may put great time and money into training its personnel in basic counterinsurgency tasks. In recent history, this has historically been the case when outside powers partnered with a counterinsurgent state and its military force. For instance, the United States has gone to significant lengths and made great expenditures to assist the Iraqi and Afghan security forces in training basic soldier and PCC skills. Unfortunately, while training may lead to increased competence among individual members of a military force, it cannot compensate for a promotion system that does not promote based on merit.

The ideal organization is one in which personnel are highly competent and devoted to the organizational mission, as depicted in quadrant one below. Merit-based promotion systems foster mission based organizational loyalty, as already discussed, but they also lead to higher

[72] Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, 132.
[73] Brigham, *ARVN*, 82.

organizational competence. The most competent members of the organization will rise to the most senior positions, with the greatest responsibility and influence. In such organizations, senior leaders will be committed to monitoring and evaluating their subordinates, both because achieving organizational ends is a cultural norm and because their own advancement is dependent on doing so. They will also have the expertise to conduct such monitoring. Organizational culture will be mission focused and encourage self-policing and peer-policing.

By contrast, the worst possible world for a military organization is when organizational competence is low or inconsistent and loyalty to organizational ends is subordinated to loyalty to patrons, depicted in quadrant four. Corrupt promotions foster these conditions. This is not to suggest that organizations that promote on non-merit-based grounds entirely lack competent personnel.[74] However, because competence is not the criterion for advancement, such personnel will be distributed unevenly through the organization. Competence will be inconsistent. As discussed above, leaders in such organizations have powerful incentives to avoid monitoring and evaluation, even if they are competent. They may also lack the basic expertise to evaluate if they are not. Organizational culture will focus on patron interests, not personal interests, and discourage self or peer-policing.

Militaries in quadrant four can move to quadrant one if they can transition from corrupt to merit-based promotion systems. Merit base promotion both maximizes competence in senior

[74] Exact costs of training in contemporary counterinsurgency can be difficult to calculate for at least two reasons. First, training costs are often combined with infrastructure and equipment costs. Second, in the case of allied partners operating together, training and operations may occur simultaneously, through the same activities. For instance, between fiscal year 2002 and March 2019, the United States spent $83 billion on salaries, training, infrastructure, and equipment for the Afghan National Defense and Security Force. However, this does not include the costs related to tactical US units partnered with Afghan units, simultaneously conducting training and operations. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress: 30 Apr 19* (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, 2019). https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2019-04-30qr.pdf.

positions and fosters monitoring and mission-based culture. For this reason, militaries in quadrant three should be rare.

Figure 2.1: Relationship Between Competence, Loyalty, and Effectiveness

Competence	Primary Object of Loyalty: Organizational Mission	Primary Object of Loyalty: Patron
High	**(1) Highest PCC Effectiveness** **Monitoring - Strong** - Seniors committed to organizational mission: *willing* to monitor and evaluate - Seniors competent: *capable* of monitoring and evaluating effectiveness **Organizational Culture - Mission Oriented** - Self and small unit evaluation and peer policing - Individuals and units act for organizational ends	**(2) Moderate to Low PCC Effectiveness** **Monitoring - Weak** - Seniors loyal to patron: *unwilling* to monitor / evaluate (undermines personal position and "sells out" patrons) - Seniors competent: *capable* of monitoring **Organizational Culture – Personal / Patron Oriented** - No self or small unit evaluation or peer policing - Individuals and units act for personal / patron ends
Low / Inconsistent	**(3) Moderate to Low PCC Effectiveness (Rare)** **Monitoring - Weak** - Seniors committed to organizational mission: *willing* to monitor and evaluate - Seniors competence varied: some *incapable* of monitoring **Organizational Culture - Mission Oriented** - Self and small unit evaluation and peer policing - Individuals and units act for organizational ends	**(4) Lowest Effectiveness at PCC** **Monitoring - Weak** - Seniors loyal to patron: *unwilling* to monitor / evaluate (undermines personal position and "sells out" patrons) - Seniors competence varied: some *incapable* of monitoring **Organizational Culture – Personal / Patron Oriented** - No self or small unit evaluation or peer policing - Individuals and units act for personal / patron ends

But what about militaries that improve overall competence and expertise through increased training while maintaining corrupt appointments and promotions, as in quadrant two? *Certeris paribus*, more competent personnel will perform better than less competent personnel, but the gains will be marginal. By divorcing merit from promotions, the organization cannot ensure that the more competent personnel assume senior leadership positions, while those in

leadership will have all the same incentives to minimize monitoring and evaluation, regardless of personal competence. Culture will also still center around personal and patron interests, not organizational interests. Thus, while building expertise through training may be necessary to achieve PCC effectiveness, it is a wasted effort without a supporting merit-based promotion system.

In sum, appointments and promotions based on personal or factional loyalties such as patronage, cronyism, or nepotism provide powerful incentives for leaders to refrain from monitoring subordinate behavior and create an organizational culture oriented on patron and personal gain. They create a self-reinforcing system, deviation from which directly threatens the interests of both patrons and organizational leadership. They also create incentives for subordinates to shirk danger and hardship. Finally, they deprive the organization of consistent, competent leadership, a defect that more training to increase expertise cannot remedy. Figure 2.3 provides a summary of this theory and its causal logic.

Figure 2.2: Expanded Summary of Causal Logic

Independent Variable: Appointment Process

Military appointments and promotions are determined by merit or through corrupt means. Merit selects on demonstrated performance. Corruption includes loyalty based (nepotism, cronyism, patronage) and payment based (bribery) appointments/promotions.

Adverse Selection to Command Structure

Maximum organizational effectiveness requires personnel with maximum competence and dedication to achieve organizational ends. Merit-based promotion selects on past demonstration of these traits. Corrupt based appointments select personnel who privilege loyalty to patron and personal gain over loyalty to organizational missions and ends.

Intervening Variable: Command Structure

Command structures filled based on merit maximize expertise. They facilitate internal monitoring and the establishment of a culture of impersonal norms of loyalty to the institution. Structures filled through corrupt appointments do not select on expertise, embed norms of personal gain and patron loyalty over institutional loyalty, and have competing lines of formal and informal authority.

Causal Mechanism: Principal-Agent Problem

PCC requires high-risk, undesirable activities with limited oversight. Lack of direct oversight provides units with plentiful opportunities to shirk and subvert. The solutions to this problem are monitoring and mission focused organizational culture.

Impediments to Monitoring: Difficult in all wartime conditions (ambiguous measures, outcomes too late); monitoring and evaluation threatens incumbents and patrons; blurring of formal and patronage-based lines of authority and responsibility

Impediments to Mission Based Organizational Culture: Self-interested leaders seek maximum personal benefit at minimal cost; leadership cannot enforce norms of impersonal duty and merit-based advancement: doing so would undermine their source of legitimacy/authority; risk aversion: subordinates lack confidence in senior's competence and willingness to support high-risk activities necessary to achieve organizational ends

Dependent Variable: Population Centric Counterinsurgency Effectiveness

Control: risk adverse personnel shirk more dangerous small unit dismounted patrols and civilian contact; avoid permanent presence for relative safety and material comfort of fortified bases

Selective Violence: risk adverse personnel shirk more dangerous discriminatory use of force required to protect civilians; self-interested personnel subvert by victimizing civilians for gain

Service Provision: self-interested culture increases internal graft/corruption; lack of local small unit presence decreases understanding of population service requirement; lack of oversight and security increases predation and sabotage

2.5 Hypotheses on Appointments, Promotions, and PCC

From this discussion of the effects of corruption on military command structure and the previous discussion of the elements of effectiveness in PCC, I derive a set of hypotheses about the relationship between appointment and promotion methods and effectiveness:

> **H1:** *All other factors held constant, military organizations that increase (decrease) merit-based appointment and promotion will increase (decrease) population centric counterinsurgency effectiveness.*

This is because each of the components of effective PCC will benefit from merit-based appointment and promotion. Corrupt appointment and promotion systems will undermine each component.

Population control, service provision, and selective violence all require small unit independent ground patrolling. Military units must position themselves forward with a persistent presence in the population to establish control. They must maintain frequent contact with the population to obtain information and accurately assess required services. They must also make discriminate use of force and minimize collateral damage when they do selectively apply violence. All of these activities increase risk to military forces.

When monitoring is low and organizational culture does not prioritize impersonal duty to the organization's mission, military units and leaders will shirk this difficult and dangerous work in favor of the protection of remaining on protected bases, large scale patrols, heavy armor, and indiscriminate use of force. Likewise, when the organizational culture centers on personal gain, organizations will demonstrate a higher tolerance for predatory behavior against civilians, further increasing indiscriminate violence.

By contrast, increased monitoring and mission focused organizational culture increase the likelihood of effective execution of these higher risk missions. Subordinate leaders have greater

relative commitment to organizational ends and less relative commitment to personal gains and to patrons. They also have greater confidence in both the competence and willingness of peers and senior leaders to support them. Finally, increased monitoring coupled with a merit-based promotion system provides incentives for even entirely self-interested leaders to fulfill organizational ends, lest their failure to do so preclude future promotion or even result in removal from their current position.

> **H1A:** *Decreased (increased) corruption in appointments/promotions will increase (decrease) independent small unit operations necessary to gain and maintain population control.*

> **H1B:** *Decreased (increased) corruption in appointments/promotions will increase (decrease) selectivity in violence and decrease (increase) civilian victimization.*

Research on aid and services suggests that it is most effective when tailored to local needs, secured from insurgent sabotage, and protected from predation. Low monitoring and culture centered on personal gain impedes the military's ability to effectively pursue such public works provision projects. Because they will shy away from civilian contact, they will lack understanding of what services are most required. Lack of continual presence will undermine security for service provision, subjecting it to insurgent attack and predation. More importantly, an organizational ethic of self-interest will increase tolerance for gain through graft and corruption.

> **H1C:** *Decreased (increased) corruption in appointments will increase (decrease) accurate understanding of required services.*

> **H1D:** *Decreased (increased) corruption in appointments/promotions will diminish (strengthen) tolerance for graft and corruption in public works and services.*

Taken together, these subordinate hypotheses support the simple claim in H1. Corrupt appointments undermine PCC effectiveness, while merit-based appointments increase it.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This short chapter links the theory proposed in the previous chapter to the historical cases I use to probe the plausibility of the theory. The chapter has five objectives. First, I identify the theory's scope conditions and limitations. Second, I apply these conditions to identify my universe of cases. Third, I explain my selection of two cases, the Huk rebellion in the Philippines and El Salvador's civil war, for detailed case studies. Fourth, I describe my research design and methodology. Finally, I provide more explicit measurement criteria for my variables.

3.1 Scope Conditions

This dissertation limits its study to a particular subset of cases in which the state seeks to control and govern its population, including the segments of the population that provide the insurgency with sanctuary. It includes both "coercive" and "hearts and minds" or "good governance" tactics as part of population centric counterinsurgency. Both types of tactics aim to separate the insurgent organization from a population the state seeks to govern.

It excludes a subset of cases in which the incumbent government's sole approach is the use of brute force to eliminate (as opposed to govern) the population providing the insurgency sanctuary – in short, where genocide or mass killing of large groups is the government's primary strategy. One survey of post-World War II counterinsurgencies finds that states adopted a "crush them" approach of "escalating repression and collective punishment" with little discrimination between insurgents and the potentially supportive civilian populations at some point in their

counterinsurgency campaign in thirty-four of seventy-one cases (approximately 48 percent).[1] Because the states involved seek to eliminate as opposed to govern the population in question, many of these cases lie outside of my scope conditions.[2]

More complicated are cases in which the state pursues multiple strategies over time and space, including both strategies to gain control of the population in order to assert governance and strategies to kill large segments of the same civilian population. I include these cases, where PCC and "drain the sea" approaches are both pursued, if PCC played a significant role in the government's overall strategy. To exclude such cases would too easily allow the exclusion of cases in which PCC was attempted but executed poorly due to a non-selective application of violence – one of the very phenomena I am trying to explain.

The dissertation is also limited to cases in which the insurgent organization seeks to control and govern some segment of the population, either through capture or overthrow of the incumbent state, or through secession from the incumbent state. Day and Reno identify a subset of cases in which the insurgent does not seek governance of terrain or population, but instead fights for access to existing state patronage networks. In these cases, cronyism and corruption might be a useful tool to integrate the insurgency into the state.[3] My theory has little to say here.

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[1] Christopher Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2013), 107-09.

[2] As a classic example of a combined mass killing and forced migration approach, anthropologist Louis Dupree described the Soviet approach in Afghanistan as "migratory genocide." The Soviets showed little interest in gaining compliance from the population, and instead bombed villages to make them uninhabitable, destroyed fields and orchards through burning, mining, contaminants, and incendiary munitions, and poisoned or used chemical weapons against civilians, livestock, and water supplies. Their campaign turned five million Afghans, approximately one-third of the population, into refugees. Dupree quoted in Geraint Hughes, "The Soviet-Afghan War, 1978-1989: An Overview," *Defence Studies* 8, no. 3 (September 2008): 339. On these Soviet methods and their effects, see also Edward Girardet, *Afghanistan: The Soviet War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 41, 99; Milan Hauner, *The Soviet War in Afghanistan: Patterns of Russia Imperialism* (Philadelphia, PA: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 1991), 99; M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invation and the Afghan Response, 1979-1982* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 236; Scott R. McMichael, *Stumbling Bear: Soviet Military Performance in Afghanistan* (New York: Brassey's, 1991), 54, 266.

[3] Christopher D. Day and William S. Reno, "In Harm's Way: African Counter-Insurgency and Patronage Politics," *Civil Wars* 16, no. 2 (2014).

The dissertation does not directly address either the numerous other forms of corruption that might occur within a military organization, or corruption within non-military state institutions. I fully acknowledge that other forms of corruption may have important causal effects on military performance and that they are worthy of study in their own right. I address them when they are either a cause or an outcome of corrupt appointments and thus relative to my theory, but otherwise treat them as outside of my scope.

If the theory is correct, then merit-based promotions and appointments should be a minimum requirement for effective PCC for both home state counterinsurgents and for foreign states providing military forces to assist them. However, in the case of foreign intervening forces, additional considerations such as language skills, cultural awareness, and potential nationalist backlash may also influence effectiveness. Thus, to control for these other variables, in this study, I focus on the effectiveness of home state militaries. For instance, were I to consider the Vietnam War, I would focus on the effectiveness of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam.

These scope conditions significantly limit the universe of relevant cases. However, this does not undermine the importance of understanding effectiveness in cases in which the state does pursue a PCC strategy. Population centric counterinsurgency is the official doctrine of, among others, the United States, Great Britain, and many of their NATO allies.[4] These are highly interventionist states. Historically, they have pushed their clients to accept PCC strategies and

[4] The classic early 21st century explanation of US counterinsurgency doctrine is United States Army, *U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24 / U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5: Counterinsurgency*, The University of Chicago ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007). While subsequently revised, the most recent formal doctrine maintains this population centric approach. See Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-24: Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 25 April, 2018). On Britain, see British Army, *British Army Field Manual Volume 1 Part 10: Countering Insurgency* (October, 2009).

are likely to do so in the future. Understanding whether and if those clients can effectively execute PCC is an important contribution.

All cases considered also meet the following criteria: fighting between a state and non-state actor to control a government or region; at least 1,000 casualties, with an annual average of at least 100; at least 100 people killed on both sides; and exclusion of coups, countercoups, and insurrections.[5] These are common criteria in the civil war literature. The criteria ensure that the cases considered are of significant magnitude and that they are actually wars, as opposed to massacres by a single side.

Finally, I limit my universe of cases to the post World War II era. Scholars have noted significant differences in the character of insurgencies and counterinsurgencies in this era compared to previous history. Mack notes that before this period, major powers generally crushed insurgencies rapidly, while the post-1945 era marked a "radical break with the past" in which vastly materially and technologically superior powers frequently lost. He also notes that this phenomenon is not unique to colonial insurgencies.[6] Arreguín-Toft supports this distinction with his finding that the strong actors won asymmetric conflicts in between approximately 65 and 88 percent of cases before 1950, but in only approximately 49 percent after 1950.[7] Similarly, Lyall and Wilson attribute an 81 percent success rate to great powers in insurgencies before World War I, but a 40 percent success rate after World War I, with similar results for minor

[5] Christopher Paul, Colin P. Clarke, and Beth Grill, *Victory has a Thousand Fathers: Detailed Counterinsurency Case Studies* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2010); Christopher Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Detailed Counterinsurgency Case Studies* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2013).

[6] Andrew Mack, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict," *World Politics* 27, no. 2 (Jan 1975): 175.

[7] Specifically, Arreguín-Toft finds that strong actors win 88.2 percent of asymmetric conflicts between 1800 and 1849, 79.5 percent between 1850 and 1899, 65.1 percent between 1900 and 1949, and 48.8 percent between 1950 and 1999. Ivan Arreguín-Toft, *How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 4.

powers.[8] Each of these works provides a different set of explanations for the variation, ranging from intensity of interests to selection of strategy to mechanization and tactics, but together they suggest significant differences in pre and post-World War historic periods and the need to control for these differences.[9]

3.2 Overview of the Case Population

I begin with the universe of counterinsurgency cases between 1945 and 2010, drawing on the data set developed by Fearon and Latin's 2003 "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War" and updated in a 2010 Rand study.[10] I use the Rand study because it includes the additional set of cases from the close of the Fearon and Latin study to 2010. I cross-reference with the Uppsala Data Conflict Program (UCDP) and the Correlates of War (COW) Intra-State War Data (v4.1) to ensure that I am considering all relevant cases.[11]

For purposes of understanding causal mechanisms, I am especially interested in cases with within case variation, either in my independent variable, or in the major competing explanatory variables. For this reason, I narrow the cases I consider for detailed case study to those in which the counterinsurgent state showed significant change in corruption levels over the course of the war. The Rand study divided seventy-one insurgencies into multiple phases based

[8] The Correlates of War coding defines great powers as the United Kingdom, France, Russia/Soviet Union, Germany, Austria (1815-1918), Italy (1860-1945), the United States (1898-2005), and China (1950-2005). For non-great power counterinsurgent states, the pre-World War I success rate was 80 percent, while post-1918 success rate was 33 percent. Jason Lyall and Isaiah Wilson, "Rage Against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars," *International Organizations* 63, no. 1 (January 2009): 69-70.

[9] For a similar discussion, see Shawn T. Cochran, "Civil Military Balance of Resolve: The Domestic Politics of Withdrawl from Protracted Small War" (PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 2012), 110.

[10] James D. Fearon and David D. Latin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *The American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (Feb. 2003). For Fearon and Latin replication data, see https://web.stanford.edu/group/ethnic/publicdata/publicdata.html; Paul et al., *Paths to Victory*, 13. Rand Case Data available at https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG964.html.

[11] For UCDP data, see https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/#d3. For COW data, see http://www.correlatesofwar.org/data-sets/COW-war.

on insurgent and counterinsurgent activities. For each phase, it coded 300 characteristics of the conflict, including whether the incumbent state made "significant government or military reforms in phase." Of the seventy-one cases, governments in sixteen made significant governance or military reforms.

While "significant government or military reforms" included reforms outside the scope conditions of this study, it is inclusive of major within military reforms, including those to the personnel system. From this winnowed base, I eliminated cases in which the state or military reforms focused on organizational systems other than appointment and promotions (e.g. non-military governance reforms, reforms to military intelligence processes, etc.) These included the British cases of Malaya, Cyprus, and Northern Ireland.[12] Similarly, while counterinsurgency theorists often cite the Dhofar rebellion in Oman is as a classic case of successful counterinsurgency reform, the British Army provided the officer corps, including a seconded British officer as commander of the Omani forces, and essentially ran the war.[13] Corruption in appointments and promotions in these British cases was consistently low, and the British command structure was Weberian. With the exception of Cyprus, where the British contingent was vastly undermanned and national interest was limited, effectiveness levels were generally high in these cases. These values correlate with the predictions of my theory, but the lack of

[12] Generally, I found little evidence of corruption in British promotion and appointment systems. As a partial exception, the British did remove corrupt local police chiefs in rural areas in Malaya, but for the most part, their military reforms there and in the other cases focused on improving intelligence systems, better training, and improved tactics while maintaining existing merit-based promotion systems. On Northern Ireland, one could argue that given its exclusion of the Catholic population, the Royal Ulster Constabulary was in a sense corrupt in its personal processes. Further, "…it was demonstrated beyond any doubt that the RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary] was a sectarian force that would not enforce the laws impartially." John Newsinger, *British Counterinsurgency*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 161. However, I found no clear evidence of corrupt appointment and promotion practices within the organization, nor in the British Army.

[13] To review various interpretations of Oman, see Geraint Hughes, "A 'Model Campaign' Reappraised: The Counterinsurgency War in Dhofar, Oman, 1965-1975," *Journal Of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 2 (2009). For an argument that Oman fell short of its common narrative as an ideal hearts and minds case, see Newsinger, *British Counterinsurgency*, 136-56.

within case variation would reduce my ability to draw within-case causal inferences. I also eliminated cases in which the state predominately pursued a mass killing strategy as outside my scope conditions (e.g. Columbia, *La Violencia*, 1948-1958; Baluchistan, 1973-1978; Indonesia, Ache, 1976-2005).[14]

Remaining candidate cases for detailed study included the Greek Civil War (1945-1949), Philippines - Huk Rebellion (1946-1956), Philippines - Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) (1971-1996), El Salvador (1979-1992), Peru (1980-1992), and Senegal (1982-2002). Of these, the fact that Greece was essentially a newly formed state developing its military institutions simultaneous with fighting the war adds significant complexity and impedes isolating the effects of appointment and promotion systems. The magnitude of variation in Philippines personnel systems from 1971-1996 is more ambiguous, limiting causal leverage. Senegal did show significant reforms across the whole of government, but the case is of less interest given the weak threat posed by the insurgency, which never seriously challenged the state.[15]

[14] Pinilla made limited and temporary governance reforms in Columbia 1954, but the state never undertook a significant population centric strategy. The decisive battle of Chamalang in Baluchistan included the intentional mass killing of civilians by strafing encampments to draw insurgents out of mountain hideouts. Paul, Clarke, and Grill, *Victory has a Thousand Fathers: Detailed Counterinsurgency Case Studies*, 40-50, 357-59. In the Ache case, Indonesia did undertake a variety of strategies, to include concessions, but at various periods during the on and off insurgency relied on "shock therapy" that included indiscriminate attacks on civilian, torture, rape, and arbitrary detention. It rarely relied on population centric counterinsurgency as defined here. Just as the British cases serve as examples of continually low corruption, the Indonesian case might serve as an example of continually high military corruption and its negative effects on effectively implementing a PCC strategy. Ross argues that "The military's failure to contain the rebel movement could be attributed to ineptitude, corruption, and profits generated by ongoing conflict. Up and down the chain of command, soldiers profit from the war, and the war has given a political boost to the military as an institution." Michael L. Ross, "Resources and Rebellion in Aceh, Indonesia," in *Understanding Civil War*, ed. Paul Collier and Nicholas Sambanis (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2005), 50.

[15] Senegal combined harsh repression, coercion, co-option, and, in later phases, transitioned to hearts and minds focused counterinsurgency. However, the case is of less interest given how little threat the Movement of Democratic Forces of the Casamance (MFDC) actually posed to the state. Anne Theobald, "Successful or Failed Rebellion? The Casamance Conflict from a Framing Perspective," *Civil Wars* 17, no. 2 (2015): 185; Ferdinand de Jong and Geneviève Gasser, "Contested Casamance: Introduction," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 39, no. 2 (2005): 214.

3.3 Selected Cases

Of the remaining cases, I selected the Philippines Huk Rebellion and Salvadoran civil war for detailed case studies. The Philippines serves as a paradigmatic case of promotion system reforms, providing extreme variation on the independent variable. While the rest of the Philippine regime remained highly corrupt throughout the war, Secretary of National Defense Ramon Magsaysay made major reforms to the military's appointment and promotion system, providing significant within case variation over time.[16] The Huk Rebellion poses a most likely case for the theory because "the independent variables posited… are at values that strongly posit an outcome or posit an extreme outcome."[17] This makes the Philippines a "must win" case for my theory.

Potential downsides for the Philippines case include the fact that the Philippines Armed Forces did expand significantly over the course of the war and the Philippines reforms correlated with Magsaysay becoming Secretary of National Defense, a change in leadership. Both of these increase the difficulty of isolating promotion system change as the single causal variable at play. Given that force expansion is a common phenomenon in the wars in my universe of cases, this is a difficult alternative to eliminate through case selection. I mitigate this concern by a careful examination of what types of activities the Philippines Armed Forces undertook with the forces they had, regardless of force size. I address the concern about personal leadership by paying particular attention to the period between Magsaysay's resignation as Secretary of National Defense and his election as President, including military performance and effectiveness during the 1953 elections. If his individual leadership was the primary determinant of effectiveness, as

[16] On within case variation as a criterion for case selection, see Stephen William Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1997), 82-83.

[17] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 121.

opposed to systematic reforms he implemented, effectiveness should decline in this interim period. I also pay particular attention to *how* Magsaysay affected his reforms and whether changes to the promotion and appointment system played a dominant role.

El Salvador provides a different form of analytical leverage. By most indicators except promotion system reform, the Salvadoran military should have developed into a significantly more effective PCC force over the course of the war. José Napoleón Duarte's 1984 election provided El Salvador with an elected, reform minded leader with a past record of political effectiveness, and at least some analysts viewed Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova, who became Minister of Defense in 1983, as highly competent, with a better understanding of PCC than his predecessors. Salvadoran forces more than tripled in size over the course of the war. Extensive US funded training, both in El Salvador and overseas, raised basic levels of competence for individual soldiers and officers. However, El Salvador was never able to break its timeline-based promotion system and its appointment system based on cronyism, patronage, and political competition between *tandas*, or military academy graduating classes. Thus, alternative theories predict significant effectiveness increases, while mine predicts only minor improvements and middling performance due to some increases in competence, but an overall ineffective military force.

El Salvador also offers useful leverage to compare my theory with those based on formative wars for two reasons. First, the insurgency varied its tactical and strategic approach over the course of the war. The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) fought more conventionally before 1984, then adopted a Vietnamese style "people's war." It also launched major, largely conventional offensives in 1981 and 1989. If formative wars create military archetypes that in turn determine what types of future wars a military fights effectively, one

would expect great variation in Salvadoran effectiveness based on opposition tactics. While my theory does not explicitly address conventional war, when coupled with complimentary conventional war focused theories like Talmadge's, which also consider the role of merit-based promotions and rely on similar causal logics, my theory predicts consistently ineffective performance by the Salvadoran military.

Second, with US assistance, El Salvador created specialized units specifically designed and trained for counterinsurgency. Given that these units did not share a common history with the rest of the Salvadoran Army but were instead born out of the civil war, one would expect them to adopt a more counterinsurgency appropriate archetype.[18] In short, in the Salvadoran case, my theory makes significantly different predictions from all of the alternative theories.[19]

While the two cases are imperfect candidates for a full comparative study, together, they also provide some leverage on the interacting effects of promotion systems and competence for command structure. In the Philippines case, I find limited evidence of extensive expansion of external military training of the Philippines Armed Forces. Some officers continued to attend US military schools, but many of these programs existed before the war. In contrast, by the middle of the war in El Salvador, over half of the officer corps was trained in the United States or US funded bases outside of El Salvador. By selecting the most competent personnel, the Philippine Armed Forces ensured they would assume positions of greater influence, raising overall organizational competence. By contrast, in the Salvadoran case, the additional training served as an exogenous means to increase competence of individual members, but without a promotion

[18] See, for instance, Long's discussion of the difference in organizational culture between regular Army forces and the Special Forces community in the US Austin Long, *The Soul of Armies: Counterinsurgency Doctrine and Military Culture in the US and UK* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016), 58-61, 110-12.

[19] On selecting cases in which competing theories make different predictions, see Van Evera, *Guide to Methods*, 83.

system that used that competence as a criteria for advancement. If my theory is correct, the Philippines Armed Forces should demonstrate a dramatic change in effectiveness, while Salvadoran improvements in effectiveness due to increased training and expertise should be marginal.

Figure 3.1: Within Case Relationship Between Competence and Loyalty

		Primary Object of Loyalty	
		Organizational Mission	**Patron**
Competence	**Higher**	Philippines (1950-1956)	El Salvador (1984-1991)
	Lower / Inconsistent		El Salvador (1979-1984) Philippines (1946-1949)

Both cases have additional advantages. Both are data rich, with a wealth of sources.[20] They are both "substantively important" cases and have significant contemporary policy relevance. Cases are substantively important "…because of a past or current major role in domestic or international politics."[21] Counterinsurgency theorists often cite the Huk Rebellion as a model counterinsurgency case.[22] The Salvadoran case is highly contentious. Some scholars and policy makers highlight the brutality of the Salvadoran government, especially early in the war. Others extol it as a success of limited footprint, low cost intervention to support a counterinsurgent state.[23] In itself, substantive importance does not affect the leverage a case

[20] Van Evera, *Guide to Methods*, 79.

[21] James Mahoney and Gary Goertz, "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research," *Political Analysis* 14, no. 3 (Jul. 2006): 242.

[22] See Anthony James Joes, *America and Guerilla Warfare* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2000), 103-29; Anthony James Joes, "Counterinsurgency in the Philippines 1898-1954," in *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*, ed. Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian (New York: Osprey Publishing, 2008), 47-54; Daniel L. Magruder, Jr., *Counterinsurgency, Security Forces, and the Identification Problem: Distinguishing Friend from Foe* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 59-103.

[23] As an example of how competing claims about El Salvador are relevant to contemporary policy debates, as late as 2019, Trump administration official Elliott Abrams and Congresswoman Illhan Omar clashed in US Congressional hearings regarding the nature of the war, the role of the United States, and its relevance for US policy towards Venezuela. Niraj Chokshi and Matthew Hagg, "Why Ilhan Omar and Elliott Abrams Tangled Over U.S. Foreign Policy," *The New York Times* (New York), 14 Feb. 2019, Politics,

provides in making causal claims.[24] However, given the frequent use of the two cases in the counterinsurgency and policy literature, a better understanding of the mechanisms at play can help us revise our conceptions and assumptions about counterinsurgency effectiveness.

Finally, the fact that both cases include significant US involvement poses both a threat to inference and an advantage for relevance. I carefully process trace and clearly acknowledging any causal role on home-state effectiveness played by US support. Acknowledging this requirement, three factors weigh in favor of examining these two cases. First, external involvement in counterinsurgency is a common phenomenon within the larger universe of cases. The US role was not particularly unique. Second, in both cases, US involvement was limited, primary consisting of material support, a small number of advisors, and training. It did not commit combat troops to fight the war for the host nation as in a number of other cases (e.g. United Kingdom in Cyprus, Oman, and early Greece; United States in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan; Soviet Union in Afghanistan; India in Sri Lanka between 1987 and 1990; etc.) The limited US combat involvement allows me to focus on the home state's military as opposed to that of a third-party intervener.

Third, important elements of both cases closely resemble current policy concerns, making them worth study.[25] The United States, Britain, and their NATO allies have adopted PCC as their military doctrine and have applied it in aggressive interventionist policies around the world for several decades.[26] These countries continue to advise and provide material support to counterinsurgent states, even as they draw down commitments in Afghanistan, and some analysts

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https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/14/us/politics/ilhan-omar-elliott-abrams.html. For an example of using El Salvador as a model case in doctrine, see United States Army, *Field Manual 3-24: Counterinsurgency*, 201, 11.

[24] Mahoney and Goertz, "A Tale of Two Cultures," 243.

[25] On resemblance to contemporary policy concerns as a criterion for case selection, see Van Evera, *Guide to Methods*, 83-84.

[26] British Army, *Countering Insurgency*; Department of Defense, *JP 3-28: Counterinsurgency*; United States Army, *Field Manual 3-24: Counterinsurgency*.

have suggested the sort of limited partnership demonstrated in these two cases is a superior and less costly option to "boots on the ground" troop commitments. Understanding the determinants of effectiveness (and ineffectiveness) in similar cases can offer insights into likelihood of success in future such endeavors.

3.4 Research Design

I use detailed case studies to probe the plausibility of my theory for two reasons. First, the theory offers a detailed, complex, mechanism-based account of the effects of appointment and promotion systems on military effectiveness. Case studies are the preferred method for testing complex mechanisms.[27] Second, the form of counterinsurgency it addresses, population centric counterinsurgency, accounts for an important but limited subset of the larger universe of counterinsurgency cases. Given the limited number of cases in which this strategy is dominant, "large-N" comparative studies are of low utility. However, detailed examination of internal mechanisms can increase confidence in the validity of a theory.[28] If I were simply interested in outcomes, I would include more cases. Instead, my research design, using detailed case studies and focusing on longitudinal change, allows me to isolate the problem of effectiveness from outcomes and to test whether Weberian command structures are a necessary condition for effectiveness.

[27] George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 127-49; James A. Caporaso, "Is there a Quantitative-Qualitative Divide in Comparative Politics? The Case of Process Tracing," in *The Sage Handbook of Comparative Politics*, ed. Todd Landman and Niel Robinson (London: Sage Publications, 2009).

[28] Collier, Mahoney, and Seawright argue that in relatively small-n universes of cases, cross case comparison can aid in framing analytical problems, but that detailed case studies provide more leverage for causal inference. David Collier, James Mahoney, and James Seawright, "Claiming Too Much: Warnings about Selection Bias," in *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*, ed. Henry E. Brady and David Collier (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 100.

I adopt two primary approaches within the case studies: the congruence method, and process tracing. Where relevant, I make secondary use of cross-case comparisons in a "supporting role," but I draw primarily on detailed within-case study of the two cases for causal inference.[29]

The congruence method begins with the value of the independent variable, then determines the predictive value of the dependent variable based on the theory.[30] The method is particularly useful when competing theories predict different outcomes for the dependent variable and it can increase confidence in a given theory when it disconfirms rival theories. Specifically, I examine longitudinal variation in the independent variable over a case, identifying causal variable changes, then determining whether effectiveness varies as the theory (or its rivals) would predict.[31] On its own, the congruence method has limitations. It cannot account for spuriousness, hidden variables, or for mechanisms and causal depth.[32] However, this longitudinal within case approach offers a means to control for spuriousness and hidden variables by allowing me to hold other factors constant. If significant changes in my independent and dependent variable are closely correlated, unless alternate theories' independent variables change near simultaneously with mine, the credibility of the causal claims of the theory is significantly strengthened.

To achieve the "multiple within-case comparison," I apply time slice analysis to within case variations in each case. For the Philippines, I slice at the point at which the Philippine Armed Forces underwent significant personal reforms focused on removing incompetent and

[29] Goertz and Mahoney explain that "In small-N qualitative research, the main leverage for causal inference derives from within-case analysis, with cross-case methodologies sometimes playing a supporting role." Gary Goertz and James Mahoney, *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 89.

[30] George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 182.

[31] Van Evera, *Guide to Methods*, 61-63.

[32] George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 185-88.

crony appointed leaders and promoting officers with demonstrated competence. In El Salvador, I slice at 1984, when Duarte assumed the Presidency, shortly after Vides Casanova become Minister of Defense, and when the FMLN transitioned from a more conventional strategy to a "people's war." This slicing gives me analytical leverage on my and competing explanations as the later should predict a significant change in effectiveness.

To assess the validity of the theory's proposed mechanisms and to address shortcomings of the congruence method, I also apply process-tracing. "The process-tracing method attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanisms – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable."[33] George and Bennett explain that process tracing "can be combined with the congruence method to assess whether the congruence between the independent and dependent variable is causal or spurious…"[34] Following Lyall, in the previous chapter, I elaborated a detailed theory, its mechanisms, measures for those mechanisms, and "mapped out" the "the sequence by which a process or effect is created."[35]

Within and between each time slice, I apply the following structured, focused questions:

(1) How are appointments and promotions within the military organization determined?

(2) What methods, if any, does the military utilize to provide internal monitoring to ensure that subordinate personnel and organizations are executing orders and directives? Are these methods effective? Why or why not?

(3) Does organizational culture prioritize individual and patron interests, or does it prioritize the organization's mission and strategy (e.g. through peer-policing, self-sacrificing activity, etc.)?

(4) How does the organization perform in the three components of population centric counterinsurgency? Specifically, does it conduct independent, small unit activities? Does it

[33] George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 206.
[34] George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 182.
[35] Jason Lyall, "Process Tracing, Causal Inference, and Civil War," in *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytical Tool*, ed. Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 193.

maintain a presence in the population? How does it treat civilians? How does it manage service provision, if at all?

This approach is structured because it "deals selectively with only certain aspects of the historical case…and focused because it employs general questions to guide the data collection and analysis in that historical case" using terms that are "of a general nature, not couched in overly specific terms relevant to only one or another case but applicable to all cases within the class of events in question."[36]

I predominantly use secondary sources for the Philippines case. In the Salvadoran case, I supplement these with publicly available interviews conducted by other researchers of Salvadoran military and government leaders, rebels, and especially US advisors/trainers. Where secondary source interpretations differ significantly in relevant ways, I identify the competing positions and, when I must choose between them, the evidence I find for treating one interpretation as most compelling. Likewise, with primary sources, I attempt to weigh biases, perspectives, and motivations.

3.5 Measurement

My theory includes three variables: promotion systems, command structure, and counterinsurgency effectiveness. Measurements of these variables are inherently qualitative. In this section, I define the values that these measurements may take and the observable indicators I will look for to assess these values.

[36] Alexander L. George, "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison," in *Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy*, ed. Paul Gordon Lauren (New York: Free Press, 1979), 61-62. See also George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 67-72.

I define appointment and promotion systems as merit based if skill and expertise, as demonstrated through past performance, are the primary criteria for promotion and for appointment to key leadership positions. Basic indicators would include the advancement of high performers, removal or relief of poor performers, and the presence of an evaluative system with defined criteria for advancement. I define promotions as corrupt if the dominant factor in promotion is personal loyalty and personal gain manifested through cronyism, nepotism, patronage, or bribery. Indicators would include the promotion of officers who are well connected within patronage networks but substandard performers. Another indicator would be organizational wide leadership changeover that favors an incoming faction when the new faction seizes senior positions of power.[37]

Figure 3.2: Promotion System Measurement

Value	Observable Indicators
Merit Based	• Evaluative system in place to measure performance • High performance evaluation leads to promotion • Poor performance evaluation leads to relief / removal
Corrupt	• Personal connection / loyalty to powerful patrons leads to promotion • Poor performers with patrons maintain position / promoted • Mass leadership changeover when new patron network gains power

Command structure has two components – the existence and strength of monitoring mechanisms and organizational culture. On monitoring, I examine whether mechanisms exist, their effectiveness in analyzing organizational and individual behavior, and whether they apply punishment for behavior that deviates from and undermines the organization's mission or strategy. The key concern for organizational culture is loyalty. Specifically, in an ideal Weberian command structure, both leaders' and members' primarily loyalty will be to organizations ends.

[37] In personal conversation, Alexandra Chinchilla pointed out this sort of widespread leadership changeover as a potential indicator of a corrupt promotion system.

Conversely, in sub-optimal command structures, loyalty lies with patrons who provide appointments and positions. As indicators, I look for events in which personal loyalty and the requirements of the organizational mission conflict. In these cases, I determine which set of interests wins out. A second indicator is the willingness of the organization's members to accept danger and hardship in service of the organizational mission.

Figure 3.3: Command Structure Measurement

	Value	Observable Indicators
Monitoring	**High**	• Robust formal systems in place to monitor compliance with PCC requirements • Active evaluation of performance of subordinate personnel and units • Deviation from organizational regulations, rules, and norms punished
	Low	• Lack of formal monitoring systems • No evaluation or negative evaluations actively suppressed • If identified, deviations not actively punished
Loyalty	**Organizational Mission**	• Leaders actively evaluate effectiveness • When requirements for effectiveness and patron interests contradict, effectiveness wins • Subordinates and subordinate organizations willing to accept risk and hardship for organizational ends
	Patron	• No evaluation of accomplishment of ends • When requirements for effectiveness and patron interest conflict, patron wins • Subordinates and subordinate organizations shirk high risk and difficult activities

Finally, I measure PCC effectiveness in terms of whether the military organization undertakes the key tactical tasks necessary to gain control of the population, whether it discriminates between insurgents and civilians, targeting the former while protecting the later, and whether it effectively undertakes programs to expand government reach through the provision of services.

Figure 3.4: Indicators of PCC Effectiveness

Elements of PCC Strategy	Indicators of Effectiveness	Indicators of Ineffectiveness
Control	• Permanent presence • Simultaneous provision of population security and pursuit of insurgents • Small unit, long duration, decentralized operations • Frequent (non-predatory) military-civilian contact	• Force remains on large, well-defended bases • Limited patrolling or presence • Small operations that do occur limited to high security areas • Large unit, short duration operations • Little direct contact with civilians
Selective Violence	• Violence applied only against insurgents • Active measures to avoid collateral damage • Refrain from collective punishment • Refrain from predation and severely punish if it occurs	• No planning to limit collateral damage • Collective punishment • Civilian predation
Service Provision	• Services/aid follow security • Services/aid based on local requirements • Services conditional on compliance • Professional administration	• Service/aid distributed without regard to local security • Service/aid generic (not tied to requirements) • Services provided unconditionally • No professional consultation in administration

Figure 3.4 provides the key indicators of effectiveness in each of the essential components of PCC strategy as developed in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 4

THE HUK REBELLION, 1946-1956

The Huk Rebellion provides an ideal case study to examine the effects of promotion and appointment systems on PCC effectiveness. From the beginning of the rebellion until 1950, appointments in the Philippine Armed Forces (PAF) were determined by patronage networks. Senior army and Philippine Constabulary (PC) leaders were selected based on their relationship with the President and senior politicians, while leaders in the field were advanced based on their relationships with local politicians and the landed elite. Civil Guard, though formally recognized by the state, were employed by landlords. After 1950, the Philippine security forces underwent significant reforms. The PC reorganized under the Department of National Defense. The Department relieved incompetent officers, court martialed corrupt officers, and tied promotions to officers' military performance, defined as their effectiveness against the insurgents and their treatment of civilians. If my theory holds, PAF monitoring should increase, organizational culture should become more mission focused, and PCC effectiveness should improve after the 1950 changes. I find significant support for the theory.

This chapter is divided into four parts. Part one provides background to the conflict. Parts two and three examine the PAF's performance from 1946 to 1950 and from 1950 to 1956. For both periods, I identify PAF's appointment and promotions mechanisms, then evaluate command structure based on formal organization, organizational culture, and monitoring mechanisms. I then evaluate PCC effectiveness across three elements for each period: tactics and operations to achieve population control, selectivity of violence, and service provision. Section four evaluates competing explanations for effectiveness in this case.

4.1 Background to the Conflict

The deep sources of the Huk rebellion lie in early 20th Century changes to the tenant-landlord relationship. As the Philippines' national economy transitioned to market capitalism, political power shifted to the capital in Manila, and the nation's population increased dramatically. These developments gave rise to an agrarian reform movement. During the Japanese invasion and occupation in the Second World War, agrarian organizations militarized to form an anti-Japanese guerilla opposition. After the war, the Philippines returned to a harsher version of its land-tenure system and cut off legal channels for agrarian reform. During this period, the PC acted as an army of enforcement for the landed elite. The post-war repression and closure of legitimate reform channels drove the now armed and militarized guerillas to oppose the Philippine state.

4.1.1. Deep Sources of the Conflict

Fundamental changes to tenant-landlord relationships drove mid-century Huk resistance to the Philippine regime. These changes included transition to market capitalism, centralization of authority in Manila, and rising population.[1] At the onset of World War II, the Philippines had the highest average standard of living of any country or colony in the region. Average wealth, however, was deceptive. Income inequality was dramatic, with a wealthy upper 5 percent, a small middle class, and poverty for 90 percent of the population. The average farmer lived on eighty-five dollars per year.[2]

More important than poverty was the changing nature of the relationship between landowners and tenants. In the early 1900s, the relationship shifted from one of paternalism to

[1] Much of the analysis in this section is drawn from chapter 1 of Benedict Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977).

[2] Robert Ross Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency: Political, Social, and Military Factors* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1963), 12-13.

one dominated by capitalist imperatives for profit maximization. In the traditional system, landlords lived on their farms and integrated into peasant life, sponsoring baptisms, weddings, funerals, and education. Farmers provided tenants low or no interest loans of money, seed, food, and essentials. Because rice crops came in only once a year at the time, credit was especially important to the tenant farmer. Peasants frequently ran short of food between harvests, depending on ration loans for survival.[3]

US colonial policies drove both the transition to more "businesslike" landowner management of farms and to centralization of authority in Manila, trends that reinforced each other. Whereas landlords had previously lived near their tenants and formed disperse centers of social and political power in Philippine society, they began moving to the new center of power in Luzon, detaching themselves from the traditional social order. They used expansion of central government authority to their advantage, as formal laws regarding land titles were more favorable to landlords than traditional practices regarding the rights of peasants with longstanding claims of cultivation.[4] When law failed, they tampered with land records to deny land to peasant claimants.[5]

Coupled with this detachment from the traditional land-tenure systems was increased focus on cash crops, which in turn required squeezing more profit out of land, capital, and labor. Formal legal contracts replaced traditional relationships, denying peasants customary rights and privileges. In the process, landed wealth increased, while peasants saw no standards of living improvements.[6] Both sides accused the other of wrongdoing and abuse. Landlords practiced

[3] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 11-17; Eduardo Lachica, *The Huks: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt* (New York: Praeger, 1971), 47, 61.
[4] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 22.
[5] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 66.
[6] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 17-22.

usurious lending, ejected peasants in favor of mechanization, and cheated in weighing and dividing crops. Landlords' accusations against peasants included raising their own food crops and livestock on landlord land and time, feeding personal animals on landlords' fields, and cutting palay early to sell for personal profit.[7] Landlord accusations often had less to do with changes in peasant practices than changes in what landlords allowed as they transitioned to formal, contractual understandings of peasants' rights, privileges, and obligations.[8] Population increases, outpacing expansion in cultivation of fertile land, induced further peasant hardship. Tenancy rates increased with population, from approximately 33 percent in 1903, to 54 percent immediately before World War II, to 60 percent in 1948. The changes were most extreme in the five provinces of central Luzon. Central Luzon had a combined population of approximately one million in 1903, but tripled to three million by 1960. As population and tenancy increased, cultivated land per capita dropped from 0.9 acres in 1918 to 0.5 acres in 1948.[9] Tenancy in Luzon correlated closely with Huk activity. Activity was highest in Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, and Bulacan, which had four of the five highest percent of land cultivated by tenants and were among the highest in percent of tenant farmers.[10]

[7] Lachica, *The Huks*, 61.
[8] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 10.
[9] Lachica, *The Huks*, 41.
[10] Lachica, *The Huks*, 42-43.

Table 4.1: Tenancy Rates in Central and South Luzon, 1939

Province	Percent of Land Cultivated by Tenants [a]	Tenant Farmers as Percent of All Farmers [b]
Bataan	46.7	52.4
Batangas	47.8	44.9
Bulacan	66.5	64.2
Cavite	58.5	54.5
Laguna	44.5	41.3
Nueva Ecija	67.8	66.4
Nueva Vizcaya	25.5	66.4
Pampanga	67.0	70.4
Pangasinan	33.8	33.1
Quezon	35.7	36.3
Rizal	39.0	36.6
Tarlac	52.4	53.0
Zambales	29.2	31.8

SOURCES: [a] Lachica, *Huk: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt,* 42; [b] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion, 24*.
NOTES: Lachica draws from Sturtevant, "Philippine Social Structure and Its Relationship to Agrarian Unrest." Kerkvliet draws from the Census of the Philippines, 1939, vol. 2, 970. Kerkvliet includes all provinces in the Philippines, but only one outside of those considered here, Negros Occidental, rises about 50 percent to 67.9 percent.

4.1.2 Initial Organization and Resistance

In response to changes in the landlord-peasant relationship, peasants created the organizations and developed the leadership that would undergird Huk resistance to the Japanese, and later, Huk resistance to the post-World War II Philippine state. Landlord and government response to peasant organization would define the peasant relationship to the PC and the PC's role as an armed tool of the landed class.

Organization and Unrest

In the 1930s, tenants organized in groups such as the National Society of Peasants in the Philippines (*Kalipunang Pambansa ng mga Magsasaka sa Pilipinas*, KPMP). The KPMP demanded reforms but did not seek to fundamentally overturn the landlord-tenant system. Demands included low or no interest money and seed loans, fishing rights in local rivers (an important traditional source of peasant food that landlords increasingly prohibited), increased harvest shares, the right to settle shares in the field, and irrigation expenses. Many of these demands amounted to a restoration of longstanding relationships. Demands also included the

right to union organization, prohibitions on strikebreaking, and provision for peasants injured in performance of their duties. They sought three-month notices and cause for evictions and enforcement of tenancy laws, which landlords avoided, claiming that previously signed contracts took precedent.[11]

Organizational structure grew in the 1930s, as did unrest and protests. The Manila Times reported thirteen incidents of unrest in Central Luzon and seven in Southern Luzon in 1930. With some variation, these numbers generally rose annually, with 148 in Central Luzon and 13 in Southern Luzon by 1940.[12] While protests included isolated cases of violence, they were generally peaceful and law abiding.

As organizations expanded, social networks grew, leadership developed, and political strength increased. Pro-peasant candidates won election to local offices.[13] Kerkvliet identified two types of leaders – local peasant leaders and leaders responsible for multiple barrios or more. The latter, who often held senior offices in the KPMP or the General Workers Union or League of Poor Laborers (*Aguman ding Malding Talapagobra*, AMT), included a mix of peasants and middle class. Of note, however, the Philippines Communist Party (*Partido Komunista ng Philipinas*, PKP) remained distant from the peasant movement during this period, maintaining a focus on urban workers.[14]

Repression and Landlord-PC Relations

Landlords and the PC responded to peasant organization through a pattern of repression that would extend into and past World War II. The PC, the national police force, acted as "practically an army for the landed elites." They arrested hundreds, if not thousands, of peasants,

[11] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 26-31, 42-43.
[12] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 40-41.
[13] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 44-46.
[14] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 48-53.

broke strikes, and attacked organizers. At the same time, Kerkvliet could not find a single newspaper report of PC or local municipal police arresting or threatening to arrest a landlord, despite well documented landlord use of violence and violation of tenancy laws.[15] Tactics included policies of "shoot on site" of "suspicious characters," and tenants accused the PC of "shooting people down like dogs."[16]

That the PC served the landed class is not shocking given the broad overlap between landed elite and the government. President Manuel Quezon (1935-1944), much of his bureaucracy, and a significant portion of Congress were Central Luzon landlords.[17] The political hold on the PC extended locally. J.R. Hayden, a vice-governor, referred to the PC as "political henchmen" for local political bosses and "the instruments of oppression rather than agents of the law."[18] Landed elite hold on the PC was so strong that the Labor Department admitted that it was helpless in enforcing existing tenancy laws that should have protected peasants.[19]

4.1.3 Hukbalahap Against the Japanese

In response to the Japanese invasion, the agrarian movement transitioned from peaceful organizations for peasant rights to armed guerilla resistance. In the process, it gained discipline and military experience that would prove formative in opposition to the post-World War II Philippine state. The occupation also placed the agrarian movement in greater tension with the United States and with the PC, which continued its role of enforcement for landowners while simultaneously collaborating with the Japanese.

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[15] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 54.
[16] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 57.
[17] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 56-57.
[18] D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 207.
[19] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 58.

Organization and Activities

While the PKP took a limited role in agrarian issues, focusing instead on urban labor organization, it did respond to a call at the 1935 Seventh World Congress of the Comintern in Moscow for a unified leftist front against fascism.[20] As the potential for Japanese invasion approached, in 1938 it merged with the Socialist party, which had closer ties with the agrarian movement. The communists took many of the key leadership roles, including the Chairmanship, and retained the party name.[21] By 1942, the merged party served as the leading organization of the Unified Front, an association that included the KPMP, AMT, Civil Liberties Union, Philippine Youth League, and a host of peasant and labor organizations. The PKP was the dominant organization in the group, but it never fully asserted control over the peasant movement, which arose separately and would maintain significant independence of action.[22]

In March 1942, the People's Anti-Japanese Army (*Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon*), commonly shortened to Hukbalahap or Huk, formed as a guerrilla force to resist the Japanese. Luis Taruc, formerly a young but senior Socialist Party leader, served as head of the PKP's military committee and "Supremo" of the Huk.[23] The Huk built on the existing structure and social networks of the peasant movement. They formed 100 person squadrons, divided into platoons and squads, with two squadrons per battalion and two battalions per regiment.[24] By

[20] Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), 338; Lachica, *The Huks*, 101.

[21] Karnow, *In Our Image*, 338; Luis Taruc, *Born of the People* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1953), 46; Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 19, 26.

[22] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 98-100.

[23] Taruc claims that initial planning for guerilla military resistance to a potential Japanese invasion began in 1941 in the AMT, which was closely associated with the old Socialist party. When the Huk formalized in 1942, Taruc preferred the name "Philippine Army of Liberation" but gave into the majority preference on naming the force. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 67-75; Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 26-28; Taruc, *Born of the People*, 24, 65-66; Luis Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger: The Story of an Asian Guerrilla Leader* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1967), 22.

[24] Taruc, *Born of the People*, 67; Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger*, 22.

September 1942, it numbered 30 squadrons of about 3,000.[25] By the end of 1943, it had divided Central Luzon into military districts, later called regional commands, typically covering one to two provinces.[26]

Huk efforts included the establishment of clandestine organizations for self-rule. Huk created Barrio United Defense Corps (BUDC) in barrios and villages which provided guerillas with food, intelligence, sanctuary, and recruits. BUDCs served as underground governments, keeping order, developing dossiers, and fostering anti-Japanese public sentiment.[27] BUDCs would strain future Huk-US relations.

Japanese-Landlord-PC Relations

The Japanese occupation intensified the division between peasants and landlords, the later supported by the PC. The Japanese sought rice and sugar. The Japanese provided troops to assist the PC and local police in peasant repression. In return, landlords and businessmen supported the Japanese.[28] The PC, in addition to acting as a landlord army, were coopted by the Japanese, joining in raids on villages, killing, and torture. One peasant explained, "It wasn't just what the Japanese themselves did. What I fought against was the damn PC. I know others who did too. The PC had been the pawns of the landlords before. Now they were even worse – pawns of the Japanese military. They were even more ruthless than the Japanese."[29]

US-Huk Relations

Huk relations with US forces also foreshadowed post-war cleavages. Though one of the largest guerilla organizations, the Huk were hardly the only one. Over a dozen other

[25] Lachica, *The Huks*, 108.
[26] Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 30.
[27] Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 24, 38.
[28] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 210-11; Napolean D. Valeriano and Charles T.R. Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations: The Philippine Experience* (Westport, CT: Prager Security International, 2002), 103.
[29] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 68.

organizations, made up of a combination of Filipinos and American soldiers who neither escaped the islands nor were captured, manned these guerilla bands. The United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) organized and oversaw many of these groups.[30] The PKP made a public loyalty pledge to the United States and the Philippine government, but the Huk refused to subordinate itself in a military chain of command, a source of considerable tension. The USAFFE also opposed Huk moves to expand into the area of operations of other guerilla organizations.[31]

The two organizations also held fundamentally different concepts of operations. Per direction from General Douglas MacArthur, the USAFFE viewed guerilla groups as intelligence gathering organizations until main force US units could return to liberate the island.[32] Since many USAFFE groups included US soldiers, they had to operate from hiding as they could not blend back into the population. These factors resulted in a policy of refraining from aggressive attacks, an approach Huk viewed cowardly.[33] Both groups also charged each other with banditry. There was likely some truth to the charges as young men fled urban areas and joined guerilla bands to survive, and families and clans took the opportunity to settle old scores. However, bandits were known to falsely identify as both the Huk and USAFFE as it met their needs.[34]

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[30] Lachica, *The Huks*, 111-13.

[31] The Huk initially made some progress in developing a relationship with US forces during negotiations with American Lieutenant Colonel Clause Thorpe, but this halted when Thorpe was captured by the Japanese in September 1942. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 114-15; A.H. Peterson, G.C. Reinhardt, and E.E. Conger, eds., *Symposium on the Role of Airpower in Counterinsurgency and Unconvnetional Warfare: The Philippine Huk Campaign* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, July, 1963), 2-4; Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 30, 41; Taruc, *Born of the People*, 71-72.

[32] As an indicator of the US military's view of the role of Philippine guerillas, even after the US Sixth Army landed in Luzon, the G-2 (Intelligence Directorate) managed guerilla affairs. Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 43. See also Wray R. Johnson and Paul J. Dimech, "Foreign Internal Defense and the Hukbalahap: A Model Counter-Insurgency," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 4, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 1993): 39.

[33] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 72; Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 45.

[34] Karnow, *In Our Image*, 310; Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 42.

Despite the PKP's declaration of loyalty and the fact that communism was not explicit in the Huk charter, American forces did not trust the Huk's political intentions.[35] A G-2 report on 26 October 1944, six days after US forces landed in Luzon, classified the Huk as socialist, communist, anti-American, and willing to work with the Japanese against the Americans.[36] A Southwest Pacific Command monograph acknowledged Huk promises to preserve private property, but saw this as a short-term ploy, stating, "reports indicate that their policy is definitely communistic and that their plans include the establishment of a communistic government in the Philippines after the war, on the early Russian model."[37] Looking to re-establish the Philippine government on American terms, the US military was also concerned about the BUDCs' local quasi-governments and the fact that the Huk held gubernatorial elections in Pampanga and Laguna.[38]

These concerns did not preclude incidents of cooperation. Silvestre Liwanag's Huk force assisted US and USAFFE forces in Western Pampanga and Bataan, fought with them in Orani and Samal, and in the liberation of the Pasumil central and Floridablanca airfield.[39] Huk played a significant role in the rescue of American prisoners at Cabanatuan and Los Banos prison, worked with the 11th Airborne Division in South Luzon, and served as guides for the 37th Infantry Division's drive to Manila.[40] A US military study held that Huk "...services were of value in routing the enemy from Central Luzon. In terms of value in dollars and cents and American lives

[35] The Huk charter stated, "The object of this army is to drive out the Japanese fascist aggressors from the Philippines; to safeguard the lives, properties and democratic rights of the people and for the people. But before this government is in its proper function, it is under the Command of the People's Anti-Japanese Military Committee which is organized by the Anti-Japanese people of the Philippines…The Army cooperates with the United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE), for the resistance against the common enemy – the Japanese fascist aggressors." Quoted in Lachica, *The Huks*, 109.

[36] Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 47-49.

[37] Quoted in Lachica, *The Huks*, 113-14.

[38] Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 22, 38, 52-53.

[39] Lachica, *The Huks*, 116.

[40] Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 52.

that were saved, the work of the Hukbalahap compare favorably with that of any other guerilla unit throughout the Philippines."[41] This cooperation would later engender bitterness as US policy shifted towards Huk detentions and arrests.

4.1.4 Liberation and Rise of the Huk Resistance

The US reestablishment of the Philippine government after liberation further entrenched the pre-war land tenure system. This, along with grievances over suppression, lack of recognition of soldiers, and the promotion of Japanese collaborators to the highest levels of Philippines government provided the impetus for reassertion of Huk militancy.

Peasant Grievances

Despite Huk support for MacArthur's forces, the United States treated the Huk differently from the other guerilla forces. The United States formally recognized many guerillas in USAFFE affiliated forces as US soldiers, extending back pay and veterans' benefits. Given the Huk role in fighting the Japanese – in their minds more aggressively than USAFFE guerillas – the Huk also hoped for official recognition.

The United States offered no such recognition.[42] Instead, the Huk faced repression. Taruc and other senior Huk leaders were arrested and jailed in late February 1945, released in hopes that they would persuade their followers to lay down arms, and jailed again in July.[43] Even Liwanag and his unit was disarmed and imprisoned on grounds of being a communist shortly

[41] Quoted in Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 108.

[42] There were exceptions. Kerkvliet notes four Huk units of about 2,000 who were recognized. Greenberg notes two units (possibly from the same group) offered integration into the armed forces, along with back pay and veterans' benefits. However, these were by far the minority. Many Huk fighters viewed these limited offers as an effort to divide them and refused any compensation if not offered to all. A US military study from the period confirmed this divide and rule approach. Lawrence M. Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection: A Case Study of a Successful Anti-Insurgency Operation in the Philippines, 1946-1955*, Historical Analysis Series, (Washington, DC.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1987), 33-34; Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 112-14.

[43] Adding insult, they were held in Iwahig Prison on Palawan Island with Japanese collaborators. Lachica, *The Huks*, 116-17; Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 55-56.

after the fighting ended.[44] Huk were arrested at meetings, demonstrations, and their homes. US policy required the Huk to turn-in weapons. Local security forces then used weapons turn-in lists as hit lists to track-down and kill those who complied.[45] US forces approved, or at least passively stood by, as other guerillas and the landed elite attacked Huk fighters. Rival guerilla chief Adonais Maclang executed 100 Huk with the blessings of US officers and was rewarded by appointment as mayor of Malolos. One historian referred to Huk treatment as a "near pogrom."[46]

Adding insult from the perspective of the Huk, the United States not only enshrined the old order, but did it by advancing Japanese collaborators. Officially, MacArthur promised to "run down every disloyal Filipino." Harold Ickes, US Interior Secretary, then Philippines High Commissioner, promised prosecution of "timid, craven, opportunistic helots who basely collaborated with the enemy" and threatened to withhold US funding if the new Philippine government did not punish collaboration. In practice, however, this would have required excluding large segments of the business and landed class and political elite from government.[47]

The restoration of collaborators extended from the highest reaches of government down to the PC. In April 1945, MacArthur exonerated Manuel Roxas, considered by many a collaborator, promoting him to Brigadier General and positioning him to run for President. MacArthur's own counterintelligence chief, Brigadier General Eliot Thorpe, said, "[Roxas] developed a well-organized propaganda campaign to persuade the world that all those who collaborated with the Japanese had done so only for the finest motives of patriotism, and that the

[44] Lachica, *The Huks*, 116.

[45] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 143-46.

[46] Karnow, *In Our Image*, 304. In their defense, collaborators claimed both that it was unfair for the United States to hold them accountable when the United States failed in its obligation to protect them from the Japanese and that they operated under extreme duress and coercion. In many cases, the later was true, but many also profited from their relationship with the Japanese. Robert Aura Smith, *Philippine Freedom, 1946-1958* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), 125.

[47] Karnow, *In Our Image*, 327.

nation should really be grateful to them."[48] In August, MacArthur freed another 5,000 collaborators.

Of most immediate concern to the Huk in terms of collaborator restoration – and to this study in terms of security force composition – was the temporary transition of PC to the new Philippine Military Police Command (MPC). To address PC corruption, MacArthur established the MPC as a replacement. However, the MPC largely drew from the PC.[49] Just as the PC, it became an armed force for landed elite, breaking up agricultural organization rallies and meetings and ransacking opposition political headquarters.[50]

Of greatest frustration to the peasant movement was the escalation of the abuses of the land-tenure system. MacArthur initially indicated some inclination towards liberalizing reforms of monopolies and land system as he had undertaken in Japan. However, political expediency (and possibly his long-established relationships with the ruling class) precluded major changes.[51] Landlords who fled the countryside during the occupation returned to their farms and demanded back pay for rent. Pressed for cash in the economic aftermath of the war, they demanded a larger portion of the harvest and charged higher interest rates. [52] Pre-war grievances and repression intensified, though peasants were now better organized and had guerrilla experience.[53]

[48] Roxas' case is complicated. The Japanese offered him a puppet presidency, which he turned down. However, he arguably played both sides, managing food distribution for the Japanese installed administration while providing intelligence to the US Karnow, *In Our Image*, 307, 27-28, quote 28.

[49] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 118.

[50] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 146-48.

[51] Karnow, *In Our Image*, 325.

[52] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 120-21.

[53] Even Philippine Colonel Napolean Valeriano, a well-known advocate for the Philippines' counterinsurgency campaign (and in peasant circles, infamous for accusations of brutality) acknowledged the continuation of legitimate political grievances: "But what I want to emphasize is that the motivation for guerilla movements in Central Luzon was the pre-war social and economic restlessness and discontent," which he tied to "injustices under almost feudalistic condition." Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 5.

Elections and the Rise of Resistance

The PKP, labor, and agrarian movements initially committed to work through legal channels, forming the Democratic Alliance (DA). The DA advocated for independence from the United States, veteran recognition for all guerillas, and civil rights. It was emphatically anti-collaborationist. It did not call for radical land reform or use Marxist rhetoric. In the 1946 election, it supported President Osmeña against Roxas, viewing Roxas as a collaborator and hopeful that Osmeña might support reforms.[54]

Roxas won the election and lit the spark for Huk re-militarization. He worked with Congress to refuse to seat several elected House and Senate members, including Taruc and five other DA Congressmen from Central Luzon. The official reason was that the group supposedly used terrorism to win election.[55] Given the violent nature of elections, including violence perpetrated by Roxas' Liberal Party, and the fact that twenty-one Congressmen and fourteen Senators who held positions in the Japanese government were seated, the justification rang hollow.[56] The real reason was that the unseated members opposed the Philippine Trade Act of 1946, passage of which was a precondition of US aid and portions of which required a two-thirds majority vote.[57]

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[54] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 139-40; Lachica, *The Huks*, 120.

[55] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 150-51; Lachica, *The Huks*, 120-21.

[56] Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 59.

[57] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 150-51; Lachica, *The Huks*, 120-21. Among the components of the trade act were the pegging of the peso to the US dollar, unrestricted Philippine access to the US economy *except for goods that would compete with American goods* (which essentially foreclosed Philippine industrial development), and eventual phasing in of quota and tariffs. Of particular contention, Americans were to be guaranteed equal legal rights and privileges to Filipinos in the exploitation of Philippine natural resources during a preferential period, privileges that were not reciprocal. Opponents viewed this as a reinstitution of colonial exploitation, while proponents justified it based on the need for foreign investment. The United States tied passage of these conditions to future aid. For an overview of both the substance and the Philippine legal and constitutional issues involved in passage, see Karnow, *In Our Image*, 334-36; Smith, *Philippine Freedom*, 127-30. Smith has a favorable bias towards the agreement, but outlines the Philippine legal issues involved.

Roxas' refusal to seat the DA signaled to the peasant movement that it had no legal pathway to reform. The murder of peasant movement spokesman Juan Feleo on 24 August 1946 further reinforced this conclusion.[58] Taruc sent a letter to Roxas on 29 August 1946 declaring that he would join armed resistance.[59] Taruc said of the election and murder, "Soon, one of our leaders and many of our rank and file were murdered. It seemed to us that democracy had no meaning for those who used its tools against us and forged them into weapons on behalf of the privileged."[60] The end of August marked the beginning of the insurrection. In November 1948, Taruc's armed wing renamed itself the People's Liberation Movement (*Hukbong Magapalaya ng Bayan*, HMB).[61]

It is worth noting the division between the PKP and Taruc's HMB. As late as January 1947, the PKP still advocated working through legal channels. It would not formally change this position until a mid-1948 leadership change. The difference was indicative of a longer-term division between the PKP and peasant movement. The former was committed to the classic Marxist belief that successful rebellion must start with the urban working class. It saw peasant "self-defense" as a weak basis on which to build armed resistance.[62] That Taruc and the HMB acted anyway demonstrated the independence of the agrarian movement.

Nor did Roxas or his successor, President Elpidio Quirino, act to alleviate the belief that he closed legal means as a pathway to reform. In August of 1946, he promised to crush the revolt

[58] Feleo, his wife, and five others were kidnaped by men in MP uniforms on the way to a meeting with Luis Taruc and Casto Alejandrino. Their bodies were found decapitated in September in the Pampanga river. One popular suspicion was that Civilian Guards committed the murder on the direction of Nueva Ecija and Bulacan landlords and possibly Roxas himself. (For a discussion of the larger role of Civilian Guards, who were formed by landlords but recognized by and integrated into government forces, see section 4.2.) Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 45; Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 153-54.

[59] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 45; Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 153-54.

[60] Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger*, 26.

[61] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 62; Lachica, *The Huks*, 122; Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger*, 73.

[62] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 179-87.

in sixty day.[63] Roxas and Quirino oversaw a series of corrupt and violent elections. The 1947 election was the bloodiest to that date in Philippine history. Even government sources estimated 12 percent of ballots were fraudulent.[64] Intimidation, violence, and fraud in the 1949 elections were worse.[65] Official sources estimated one-fifth of ballots were fraudulent. Quirino's votes outnumbered voters in two provinces and exceeded the total population of many districts.[66]

4.2 1946-1950: The Effects of Corrupt Appointments and Promotions

After the liberation from Japan through 1950, the MPC then the PC served as the dominant state security force, responsible for the campaign against the Huk. It operated in coordination with local Civilian Guards and local police forces. In all three – the PC, the Civilian Guard, and local police – loyalty to political and landed elite was a major determinant of appointments. The local elite and their appointees undermined professional command structures, subverting monitoring mechanisms and organizational culture. The result was a force that avoided risk, inflicted great civilian harm, and provided few services or incentives to gain popular support or address grievances.

[63] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 44; Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 189; Lachica, *The Huks*, 121. Oddly, despite his promise to crush the Huk in January 1947 and his subsequent claim in July 1947 that he had achieved success and restored peace to the central plains of Luzon, Roxas did not actually declare the Huk illegal until March 1948. In any case, he, the PC and Home Guards certainly treated them as such during the entire period. Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 73; Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 179, 91; Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 70.

[64] Stephen R. Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency in the Philippines," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 7, no. 2 (1 Jan. 1977): 154.

[65] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 63; Edward Geary Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars: An American's Mission to Southeast Asia* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1991), 28; Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*; Smith, *Philippine Freedom*, 138; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 80.

[66] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 63; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 28; Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 221; Smith, *Philippine Freedom*, 138; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 80.

4.2.1 Promotion and Appointment Systems in Philippine Security Forces

Merit and effective performance against Huk insurgents played little role in appointments, promotions, or assignments of the PC, Civilian Guard, or local police. Instead, local elites either selected leaders, or, when they did not, ensured that leaders assigned to their areas pliably served elite interests.

A fair evaluation of the PC must first acknowledge challenges it faced. From the pre-liberation period to the immediate post-independence period, Philippines security forces shrank dramatically, from 132,000 to 37,000.[67] Moreover, the PC was implicated in directly collaborating with and supporting brutal repression by the Japanese, a fact General Douglas MacArthur recognized when he cited the PC as "a notorious form of oppression" and replaced the PC with the MPC in November 1945.[68] However, the new force was still plagued by "favoritism, the back pay question, and general corruption" that "seriously weakened the leadership within the MPC."[69] While the initial small size of the MPC/PC may in part explain its early difficulty in dealing with the Huk, it cannot explain its abusive behavior towards civilians, its indiscriminate use of force, or its commitment to serve the interests of the landed elite in clear violation of existing law. Nor did the PC show significant improvement as its numbers again increased.

Roxas' decision to reestablish the PC did nothing to address these problems. In 1948, in part in response to dismal operational failures, he reorganized the MPC, again as the PC. [70] At

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[67] William C. Moore, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency, 1948-1954: An Analysis of the Roles, Missions and Doctrine of the Philippine Military Forces* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1 March, 1971), 9; Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 63-64.

[68] Dana R. Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 6, no. 3 (1995): 284.

[69] Moore, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 9; Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 63-64.

[70] Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 284; Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 69. Lachica credits Quirino with the transition from MPC back to the PC. Lachica, *The Huks*, 122. The discrepancy is likely due to Roxas' 1948 death and Vice President Quirino's succession to President.

the top, he appointed Brigadier General Alberto Ramos as PC Commander. Philippine Secretary of National Defense Ruperto Kangleon claimed that Ramos was "personally responsible for the execution of American and Filipino guerrillas at the hands of the Japanese."[71] The US embassy assessed that Ramos, who was also accused of illegal arms trafficking, "does not appear to be well qualified for the job" beyond a single qualification – personal loyalty to Roxas.[72] This loyalty would prove important for Roxas' Liberal Party as the PC served as its electoral tool, attacking opposition, shutting down newspapers, and falsifying election registers.[73]

Patronage based corruption extended well down the chain of command in the PC. Officially, subordinate PC units worked for a chain of command that extended up to Ramos in Manila. In practice, PC company commanders worked for local governors and congressmen. Often, these political elite were also the economic elite of their region, meaning that PC company commanders worked for the most powerful landlords. Commanders who displeased their unofficial political and landed supervisors faced relief or transfer to undesirable or dangerous assignments. The result was a force stacked with political loyalists from the company to the national level.[74] Further, at the lowest level, the PC ranks drew from both collaborators and bandits.[75]

Even more than the PC, personnel systems in the Civilian Guard and local police were under the influence of local political and landed elite patronage and crony networks. The Civilian Guard began as personal militia of landlords, designed to protect estates and suppress peasant

[71] Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 284.
[72] Walter C. Ladwig, III, "When the Police are the Problem: The Philippine Constabulary and the Hukbalahap Rebellion," in *Policing Insurgencies: Cops as Counterinsurgents*, ed. Christine C. Fair and Sumit Ganguly (Oxford: Oxfored University Press, 2014), 26.
[73] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 26.
[74] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 26.
[75] Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 14-15.

labor organizations.[76] With individual units sometimes as large as 1,000, the Civilian Guard were formally recognized by the MPC and PC. In addition to protecting landed estates, they also forcibly collected back rent from peasants and attacked peasant organizations.[77] Some were former USAFFE, which put them in direct conflict with the Huk given the acrimonious relationship between the guerilla organizations during the Japanese occupation. However, according to one army officer assigned to Central Luzon, they were also often "local gangsters, goons, people of bad reputation out to make good with the law, avoid punishment, and make a living besides," along with Japanese collaborators.[78] By formally recognizing and working with the Civilian Guard, the state essentially privatized a significant portion of its military force, handing over leadership staffing decisions for that portion to the landed elite. Nor were local police an improvement. Municipal governments did have their own police forces. However, the PC often supervised them.[79] Regardless, jobs at the local level were also awarded on primarily political grounds.[80]

4.2.2 Command Structure

The patronage and crony networks that determined PC and Civilian Guard appointments and decided the future careers of officers dis-incentivized both active pursuit of the Huk and meaningful overtures to the civilian population. Shafer provides a succinct summary of the relationship between appointments and command structure:

> In a system where success depended on "*kilaia*, *kapit*, and *pakikisama* [who you know, good connections, good personal relationships]," demands for bureaucratic rationalization, merit-based promotion, and corruption control posed problems. Similarly, calls for removal of those who had collaborated with the Japanese threatened many in

[76] Andrew Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine 1942-1976* (Washington, DC: United States Army Center of Military History, Sep., 2006), 58; Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 125.
[77] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem."
[78] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 149, 96.
[79] Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 28.
[80] Smith, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 64.

> government who themselves had collaborated and the reciprocal ties of family and interest that bound politicians to collaborators outside the government. As for curbing security forces, they were enforcing politicians' interests, often under orders.[81]

Little in Philippine security forces resembled a Weberian command structure. Merit was a secondary concern. To the degree that any sort of monitoring did occur, it was monitoring by elite to ensure that security forces served their interests, not written law, military effectiveness, or the national interest.

Formal Organization

The formal structure and dispersion of Philippine forces did little to increase effectiveness, though this was far from the most serious of its issues. Assigned to the Department of the Interior, the 24,000 members of the PC were organized approximately 98 people to a company.[82] Companies were in turn organized under Provincial Provost Martials, later called Provincial Commanders, with one to fifteen companies per province.[83] Often, PC members dispersed in groups as small as five to fifty to a location.[84] In such small numbers, they could neither take offensive action against the Huk nor undertake patrols and mobile operations that might put them in direct contact with the civilian population. Instead, they were devoted to securing fixed sites.[85]

Organizational Culture

Qualitative based indicators suggest that the PC and Civilian Guard had little devotion to counterinsurgency success and instead focused on short-term landlord interests and personal

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[81] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 227.

[82] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 24-25; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 92. Greenberg estimates the overall force size of Armed Forces and the PC by the end of 1946 as 37,000, though this may either be low or Ladwig's 24,000 for the PC may be high given that Greenberg estimates 25,000 to the Armed Forces (PC not included) alone. Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 56, 67.

[83] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 93.

[84] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 25-25; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 92.

[85] Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 284.

enrichment. Valeriano and Bohannan note that, "They went through the motions. They maintained garrisons…Aside from these sporadic efforts, the Constabulary and the army units attached to them were sitting out the war."[86] Given the combination of politicization and lack of direct monitoring and oversight, it is also little surprise that constabulary units frequently provided false reports to Manila, providing the impression that the Huk were nearly defeated, when in actuality, the PC hardly sought contact with the Huk.[87] PC members served patron and personal interests before the mission of the organization. A 1952 US Army report noted that their primary function was to protect landlord property and interests, with secondary focus on administering extortion rackets. It also noted that the PC commonly sold weapons to the Huk.[88]

Monitoring Mechanisms

A larger problem than dispersion was that senior government and security leaders did not hold PC and other security forces accountable for effective counterinsurgency activities. Officially, the Interior Secretary gave the PC Chief "carte blanche authority" to manage the PC, which should have included monitoring, accountability, and inspections.[89] However, from the most senior down to individual tactical level, inspections and accountability were a rarity.[90]

Instead of monitoring tactical and operational counterinsurgency effectiveness, which might have required activities disruptive of elite interests, the Ministry of Interior focused the PC on support to the Liberal Party. The PC falsified election registers, attacked political opposition to the party, and shutdown opposition friendly newspapers. It served the parochial, personal, and ideological interests of the Minister of Interior quite well, given that the US Embassy described

[86] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 94.
[87] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 26.
[88] Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 284.
[89] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 190.
[90] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 101.

him as “a reactionary member [of the] landed gentry.”[91] However, these activities directly clashed with the requirements of effective counterinsurgency. The politicization extended down to the local level. For instance, Governors were not officially in the chain of command of the Provincial Provost Martials, but held them under “practical compulsion,” especially when the governor was of the same party as the national administration. Governors sometimes discouraged aggressive PC pursuit of the Huk or traditional PCC tactics for fear that they would undermine local political stability.[92]

The state formally recognized and partially paid and armed the Civilian Guard, but Guard loyalty and accountability lines extended directly to the landowners who hired them. Civilian Guard malfeasance and terror tactics were so extreme that even the PC sometimes sought to rein them in, but with limited mechanisms to do so.[93]

4.2.3 Counterinsurgency Effectiveness

The PC and the Civilian Guard focused neither on actively defeating the Huk nor on gaining popular support for the Philippine government. In short, they were neither “population focused” nor “enemy focused.” Instead, they served the short-term interests of local land owning and political patrons, protecting private estates while taking care not to act overly aggressively for fear of endangering electoral prospects for local leaders. Nor did they demonstrate willingness to take significant personal or small unit risks. They did, however, demonstrate great willingness to inflict violence, collective punishment strategies, and predation against civilians.

[91] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 26.
[92] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 93.
[93] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 196.

Tactics and Operations to Gain Control

To establish and maintain control, a military organization must maintain a constant presence within the population. Instead, the PC, Civilian Guard, and local police focused on protecting landed estates and fixed sites, while avoiding combat with the Huk and contact with the civilian population. In the process, they ceded nearly complete spatial and population control in much of Central Luzon and failed utterly at collecting intelligence that would facilitate future targeting of insurgents. They actively avoided risk and demonstrated the ineffectiveness not just of their tactics, but through show operations and false reports, of their command structure's ability to effectively monitor their activities and behavior. The exceptions to their fixed site approach were rare large sweep operations that proved too cumbersome to have effects.

Tactics and Operations. Philippine tactics read like a demonstration of exactly what a counterinsurgent force ought not do in order to establish population control. The focus of the PC and the Civilian Guard during this period was fixed security of the estates and private property of the landed elite and larger towns and villages.[94] The PC adopted a garrison-focused mentality. "Operations," to the degree that they occurred, were often a response to political pressure from Manila after major Huk attacks or negative press coverage.[95] Operations focused on patrols along roads and establishment of easily bypassed checkpoints.[96] Because they rarely deviated from the roads, the PC limited their contact with the civilian population, reduced their own ability to gather intelligence, and did not gain an understanding of the areas in which they were operating. Patrols were generally of short duration, providing no permanent presence, and followed with

[94] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 93.
[95] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 94.
[96] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 24-25; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 134.

quick returns to bases without follow-on operations. Nor did they patrol at night, effectively ceding times of darkness to the Huk. [97]

The dispersed nature of the PC likely accounted for some of its reluctance to aggressively patrol. While PCC requires independent small unit operations, units must be able to mutually support each other.[98] The smallest PC units were both too dispersed for effective command, control, and mutual support and too small for effective presence.

However, the very structure and dispersion of Philippine forces itself demonstrated the corrupting influence of a system were cronyism and patronage dominated over effectiveness. The government distributed forces ineffectively because doing so served the short-term interest of landed and political elite by securing locations of value to them, in spite of its clear longer-term ineffectiveness at defeating the Huk. Further, PC behavior on the limited operations they did conduct demonstrated failure in both monitoring and organizational culture. PC "went through the motions," but avoided risk of combat. They frequently limited patrols to areas they knew to be secure to avoid the possibility of Huk contact.[99] PC left their bases on "attack and disperse missions," fired a few rounds for show, then returned to their bases claiming success. Even after PC size increased significantly in 1949, they tended to remain within their village areas and often developed a "tacit modus vivendi between the police and guerrillas."[100] False reports back to Manila of hundreds of Huk killed or dispersed and of victory in sight were common.[101] Their willingness to conduct farce operations and to provide wildly false reports

[97] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 73-77.
[98] Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency 1942-1976*, 59-60.
[99] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 25.
[100] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 75.
[101] Smith, *Philippine Freedom*, 145-46.

suggests an organization culture that placed greater emphasis on personal gain than effectiveness. The fact that it could so easily occur suggests a failure in monitoring.

The exceptions to these lethargic operations were the occasional large unit operations, often prompted by negative media coverage. During these large sweep operations, the military would encircle an area with infantry, followed by a combination of artillery bombardment and tightening of the infantry cordon to "sweep" a suspected stronghold clear.[102] These large operations were ineffective for a number of reasons. The Philippine army and PC lacked detailed intelligence on Huk locations. By contrast, the Huk had robust intelligence networks in the villages and barrios the troops passed through on their way to the operations. Such large operations could take hours to days to prepare and assemble, giving the Huk significant advanced warning to displace or escape in small groups.[103] Typical was a major March 1947 offensive that was the largest to that date. Three battalions of regular forces and military police surrounded Mount Arayat, joined by spectators and reporters. Despite the spectacle, the government captured only a handful of Huk and the operation had no significant effects.[104]

Spatial and Population Control. The Philippine combination of fixed site security and a few large unit sweeps undermined its ability to establish control over Central Luzon. The Huk dominated the provinces of Pampanga, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, and Bulacan, which because known colloquially as "Huklandia." Through the late 1940s, they were able to expand beyond this smaller area. According to Philippine Colonel Napolean Valeriano, "By 1950 the Huk area of control had expanded to all of Central Luzon and large areas of South Luzon, with definite signs

[102] Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 21.
[103] Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger*, 40-42, 55.
[104] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 69.

of established bases in North Luzon and Hukbalahap agents reportedly active in the southern islands of the Archipelago."[105]

The Huk roamed these regions freely, engaging and disengaging Army and PC outposts at will. They seized towns, established martial law, spread influence, and gained new recruits. Government forces, bloodied by initial contacts, became increasingly reluctant to challenge their dominance.[106] As one indicator of Huk dominance, even in areas in which government officials could operate during the day, by 1950, they refused to remain in Central Luzon past nightfall, traveling to and from Manila daily.[107]

Philippine intelligence continued to lag during this period. Reluctance to patrol denied Philippine forces access to the population. As described below, the contact that did occur was often violent and predatory. Thus, it is not shocking that a PC officer explained to a Manila newspaper in 1948 that the peasants would not cooperate with the PC, while the rebels had good intelligence.[108] The occasional large-scale operations that did occur contributed to a vicious cycle. The operations were ineffective due to a lack of intelligence, but such operations could not provide the sort of fine-grained intelligence necessary to target insurgents.[109] Nor did it help that the Philippine government contained over a dozen separate intelligence organizations independently operating between 1946 and 1950.[110] Under ideal conditions, such a complex bureaucracy would struggle with accurate and timely dissemination of information. In a factionalized bureaucracy and security force, interagency cooperation was even more complex.

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[105] Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 10.
[106] Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency 1942-1976*, 56; Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 56-57.
[107] Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 16; Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 23.
[108] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 175.
[109] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 31.
[110] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 138.

Selective Violence

While PC and Civilian Guards avoided direct contact with the Huk, when in contact, they applied violence liberally with little concern for collateral damage. Worse, they practiced brutal collective punishment and abuse of the civilian population with little regard for combatant/non-combatant distinctions. In short, they incentivized civilian support for the Huk, even among those who might not share the Huk's political agenda.

Collateral Damage. Philippine tactics demonstrated little concern for civilian casualties. Between 1940 and 1950, they made heavy use of "mortars, machine guns, heavy artillery bombs, and airplanes" in populated areas.[111] Artillery and aerial bombardment of villages suspected of containing Huk was common practice, forcing civilians to flee populated areas. "In the process, they destroyed villages and killed many people not directly involved in the rebellion," often more of such innocents than actual Huk.[112] The PAF's limited air power, including US provided P-51s, ran strafing and bombing missions that also often killed more civilians than Huk.[113] On routine patrols, ground forces practiced "recon by fire," firing into areas where guerillas might be hiding for an ambush to provoke a response, but with little regard for civilians.[114]

Collective Punishment. Civilian casualties were not limited to collateral damage, but included planned efforts at collective punishment. With their lack of fine-grained intelligence, PC and soldiers viewed the local population as either Huk or collaborators.[115] The PC practiced

[111] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 158, also 89. Also see Lachica, The Huks, 121.

[112] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 37. Even Valeriano, who peasants accused of adopting brutal tactics himself, declared that the use of heavy weapons such as artillery was often unproductive and harmed more civilians than Huk. Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 107.

[113] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 76; Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 35.

[114] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 155.

[115] Douglas S. Blaufarb, *The Counter-Insurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance 1950 to the Present* (New York: Free Press, 1977), 26.

mass punishment to include slaughter of livestock, destruction of crops, mass arrest, and summary execution. They burned entire villages and barrios and destroyed crops.[116]

The 1950 Good Friday Massacre in Miliwalu, Bacalor, Pampanga provided perhaps the most egregious and publicized example. Troops killed 100 men, women, and children. They burned 130 homes in retribution for the Huk killing of an officer and for the town's unwillingness to provide intelligence.[117] Yet this was not an isolated event. For instance, in Laguna, 50 farmers at a community ceremony were summarily executed as "suspected Huk."[118]

Also illustrative was the inability of the central government to control its forces during a 1948 amnesty period. After President Roxas died in April 1948, new president Elpidio Quirino temporarily attempted a new, conciliatory approach. He negotiated a truce and a potential amnesty with the Huk between 21 June and 15 August 1948. The government even provided Taruc back pay for his seat in Congress and allowed him to speak at public forums. In return, the Huk were to register their weapons. In practice, and in violation of the central government's policies, local forces demanded weapons turn-in as opposed to weapons registration. The registration list again became a targeting list for the PC and the Civilian Guard to hunt down Huk, beat them, and take their weapons. These local actions ensured future Huk refusal to cooperate.[119]

Predation. PC, Guard, and Army troops also directly exploited civilians for their own benefit. At checkpoints, soldiers demanded illicit tolls or so called "coffee money" from traveling civilians. Security forces established illicit profit schemes between the military and commercial truckers. The PC collected illegal taxes and forced peasants to thrash their rice at PC

[116] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 32; Moore, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 10.
[117] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 76; Moore, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 33.
[118] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 76.
[119] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 200-02.

run mills for a charge. All three forces regularly confiscated basic supplies and food from civilians and beat or killed peasants who would not comply.[120] One peasant in San Ricardo explained that, "By 1947, it was unbearable. We couldn't take it anymore. The worst part was the civilian guards and the soldiers. They brought nothing but terror. They'd come and demand maybe five cavans of bigas from each family here. If you didn't give, they'd say you were a Huk and arrest you, take you to the garrison."[121] Her son added, "They could even beat you up or kill you."[122] Another explained that, "Once in 1947, ten or fifteen civilian guards came to my house when I was out in the fields plowing. They took my chickens, a large bag of rice, and other things. Our neighbor tried to stop them. They just beat him up."[123] Such accounts appear repeatedly as part of the Philippine security forces' method of operation.

A major contributing factor to this abuse was low pay. The government paid soldiers, police, and guards too little to live, forcing them to "live off the land." The pay that they were entitled to receive was often in arrears.[124] Low pay, however, cannot explain the violence and brutality with which they acted, and while it may address theft of food, it does not explain the full spectrum of activities to include burning houses and rape. Government forces were not just hungry, but also undisciplined and predatory. Nor could their equally or even more corrupt officers provide them control and discipline.[125]

The combination of collateral damage, collective punishment, and civilian predation was severe enough that all sides – government, Huk, and American – identified it as a serious problem. In December 1947, even before the Good Friday Massacre, Philippine Representative

[120] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 76; Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 31; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 30; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 79, 134.
[121] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 161.
[122] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 161.
[123] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 159.
[124] Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 17.
[125] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 74.

Felixberto Serrano referred to Roxas' approach as "a policy of madness" inspired by "a spirit of revenge."[126] Taruc claims that indiscriminate violence, arrests, and torture by the government drove peasants to Huk ranks.[127] As explained by one Huk fighter, Jose Sulit, "What would you do if someone killed your brother and there was no way to get justice done? And if the murderers were government soldiers – the PC? This is what happened to me. That's why I joined. After all, if the law is killing people, especially your relatives, where else can you turn."[128] The abuses allowed the Huk to provide protection and revenge as incentives to join.

Nor was the magnitude or effect of the indiscriminate violence lost on the United States. A US Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research report in September 1950 stated, "Poor discipline…and their harsh treatment of the civilian population have made the Constabulary at least as feared as the [Huks]…Indeed, peasants are reported to have declared that the only difference between the Constabulary and the Huks is that the Huks did not physically injure the farmers and local citizens."[129] The problem was not knowledge of the counterproductive abuse, but the failure to curtail it.

Two factors accounted for this inability of the government to control its own forces in perpetrating retaliatory violence against civilians. The first related to formal oversight mechanisms. Shafer has argued of counterinsurgency in corrupt states, "The difficulty was not that politicians did not understand the need for reform, but that they understood all too well what reform would mean for them."[130] The claim holds for the Philippines. Security force commanders gave primary loyalty to local provincial officials and landlords who ensured their

[126] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 194.
[127] Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger*, 38.
[128] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 166.
[129] Quoted in Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 220.
[130] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 226.

positions.[131] Aggressive monitoring and evaluation by the state would directly conflict with the interests of those patrons who handed out security force positions.

The second factor related to organizational culture. As Greenberg explains, "…compounding all of these deficiencies, the soldier was poorly educated as to the purpose of the campaign. He simply didn't understand his role and therefore lacked motivation. Those above him seemed as equally unconcerned, more interested in graft, corruption, and a comfortable life than with fighting."[132] When leadership disregarded effectiveness, there was little chance that the ranks would adopt a culture of mission accomplishment if it required personal danger, hardship, control of desire for revenge, or profit from predation that the leaders themselves shirked.

Services

Government attempts to provide services during this period were minimal. The Roxas government did purchase a few landed estates to sell to peasants, but the project was insignificant in size and the land sold at prices too expensive for peasants to afford. Congress passed laws to protect peasants' share of harvests, but these were little better than earlier laws already in place. In any case, the tenancy laws were not actually enforced in much of the country, including Central Luzon.[133] Again, real reforms would have directly conflicted with landed and political interests.

[131] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 202.
[132] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 78.
[133] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 198-99.

4.3 1950-1956: The Effects of Appointment and Promotion Reforms

1950 marked the high point of Huk power. Estimates of Huk strength vary greatly, but official government estimates sat between 10,000 and 15,000 active fighters and approximately 54,000 to 250,000 supporters across Central Luzon.[134] Despite differences in estimates between sources, within source trends consistently suggest that 1950 was the apex for both fighters and support. The Huk were also at their boldest in the 1949 to 1950 period. While their military activity still focused on hit and run tactics, they increased direct attacks on government forces and frequently captured towns and barrios. For instance, in August 1949, they disarmed police in Arayat, burned public records, and carried away medical and office supplies.[135]

Between 1950 to 1956, the Huk were essentially defeated, with only remnants remaining. From 1950 to 1955, the government would kill over 6,800, capture over 4,700, and accept over 9,000 surrenders.[136] By February 1952, Huk Supremeo Luis Taruc issued a call for peace, ultimately leading to his suspension and his brother's expulsion from the Communist Party. In May 1954, Taruc surrendered.[137] Though some level of resistance would continue for decades, by 1955, the Huk could field less than 1,000 fighters, mostly relegated to live as bandits in hiding in the wilderness. [138]

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[134] Lansdale claims that official government estimates were 10,000 fighters, but believes this was an underestimate. Dillon estimates a peak of 15,000 active fighters in 1950. Drawing from J-2 (intelligence directorate) estimates, Lachica suggests 12,800 members and a "mass base" of 54,000 (p. 14). Greenberg estimates the much larger supporter base of 250,000. On the difficulty of estimates and variation among sources, see Lachica, 13-15. Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 291; Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 117; Lachica, *The Huks*, 13-15; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 23.

[135] Moore, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 26-28. Valeriano and Bohannan argue that the Huk posed a real threat "to seize the seat of power" and wreak "havoc on the national government," but that they lacked the power to seize lasting power and govern. Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 47.

[136] Lansdale reports 6,874 killed; 4,702 captured; and 9,458 surrendered. This might suggest that he was correct in his belief that the estimate of a peak of 10,000 active fighters was an underestimate, but continual influx and exit of fighters could also account for the discrepancy in numbers.

[137] Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger*, 121-22, 34-47.

[138] Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency 1942-1976*, 64.

4.3.1 Changes to Promotions and Appointments

Upon his rise to Secretary of National Defense, Ramon Magsaysay significantly overhauled the Philippine officer corps, both within the military and in the PC. He conducted a wide scale purge of incompetent officers and elevated combat effectiveness – which he measured in terms of both killing or capturing Huk and of treatment of civilians – as the criteria for promotion.

Magsaysay's Rise

Any account of the Philippine defeat of the Huk must take into consideration the role of Magsaysay in reforming the Philippines Armed Forces (PAF) as Secretary of National Defense. In part due to a US effort to build Magsaysay's image both as Secretary and later as a candidate for President, separating myth, exaggeration, and fact about him is difficult. As one historian begins the tale, "Ramon Magsaysay was born in 1907 in a hut made of bamboo and cogon grass, *the Philippine equivalent of Abraham Lincoln*."[139] The Magsaysay legend portrays him as a self-made man born to an impoverished family who began as a mechanic and eventually worked his way up to senior leadership of a bus company. In realty, his father was middle class and a family member owned the company.[140] Whatever the embellishments on his early life, Magsaysay gained a guerilla background in the Second World War and rose to command 10,000 USAFFE fighters around Mount Pinatubo as commander of the Zambales military district. He impressed MacArthur, who made then Major Magsaysay military governor of Zambales in February 1945. He initially turned down Roxas' offer to join the Liberal Party in 1946 due to differences between the two. Eventually, he would resign his commission and join, supposedly after 11,000

[139] Italics added for emphasis. Mark Moyar, *A Question of Command: Counterinsurgency from the Civil War to Iraq* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 97.
[140] Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency," 158-60.

of his men petitioned him, winning an overwhelming victory in election to the Philippines' House of Representatives.[141]

Multiple actors within the United State advocated for Magsaysay's ascension to Secretary of National Defense. He made trips to Washington, DC, in 1948 to advocate for Philippine veterans' benefits and in 1950 to advocate for aid. During the 1950 trip, Magsaysay met with Edward Lansdale and his Central Intelligence Agency boss Frank Wisner. Wisner was impressed and sent Assistant Secretary of State Livingston Merchant to Manila with a proposal to President Quirino to make Magsaysay the Secretary of National Defense in return for an increase in US aid. Lansdale made much of his personal role, claiming that he was responsible for recruiting Magsaysay. There can be little doubt that Lansdale later played a key role in building Magsaysay's image in American media. However, US Ambassador Myron M. Cowen was already pushing Quirino to appoint Magsaysay, as was Major General Leland Hobbs, Joint US Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG) Chief.[142]

Whatever role Americans played, Magsaysay was already a well-established, shrewd politician.[143] He built a reputation and constituency as an advocate for USAFFE veterans and served as the head of the House Committee on National Defense. He also aligned himself closely

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[141] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 80.

[142] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 82; Karnow, *In Our Image*, 346; Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency," 158-60. The US established the JUSMAG in March 1947 with the intent of assisting the Philippines to move towards independent security capabilities. Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 285.

[143] Based on the accounts of both Lansdale and of Magsaysay's opponents, one gains the impression that Lansdale was the essential player in Magsaysay's rise. See for example, American communist and Huk William J. Pomeroy in *The Philippines: Colonialism, Collaboration, and Resistance!* (New York: International Publishers, 1992), 204. Lansdale certainly played a key role in developing Magsaysay's image, but for a refutation that Magsaysay was an American puppet or reliant on the US for his rise, see Nick Cullather, "America's Boy? Ramon Magsaysay and the Illusion of Influence," *Pacific Historical Review* 62, no. 3 (Aug. 1993).

with Philippine Speaker of the House Eugenio Perez, who advocated on his behalf with Quirino. In short, he was a "natural choice" for the position, independent of his American backers.[144]

Magsaysay refused Quirino's offer to serve as Secretary several times.[145] He accepted in September 1950 under the condition that he be "given a free hand" in reforming the PAF.[146] However one weighs US pressure, Perez's advocacy, and Magsaysay's own actions in his rise, US conditional aid did give him leverage to make controversial reforms that might otherwise have faced insurmountable resistance.[147]

Changing Appointments and Manning

Magsaysay's initial assessment of the PAF was damning. He found the officer corps ridden with factionalism and cronyism. The supply system was plagued with corruption. The Army, like the PC, had a defensive, barracks prone mindset, and he assessed Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces Major General Mariano Castañeda and his General Staff as "hidebound and leisurely."[148] The PAF was also torn between personnel who worked with the Japanese and former guerillas.[149] In the short-term, he addressed these issues through wide scale relief of incompetent and corrupt officers. In the long-term, he reformed the promotion system to select based on combat performance.

Quirino granted Magsaysay authority to relieve PAF officers, along with authorization to recommend combat promotions, battlefield commissions of enlisted personnel, and the right to order courts-martial upon evidence of misconduct.[150] Magsaysay established a "Fact Finding

[144] Cullather, "America's Boy?" 310-11.
[145] Cullather, "America's Boy?" 310-11.
[146] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 82.
[147] Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency," 158-60.
[148] Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 37.
[149] Donn V. Hart, "Masaysay: Philippine Candidate," *Far Eastern Survey* 22, no. 6 (May 1953): 67.
[150] Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 43.

Commission," later renamed a "Special Board of Inquiry," to investigate misbehavior.[151] Key targets were officers who demonstrated incompetence, rose in ranks through cronyism, participated in graft, or resisted field time in favor of the comfort of Manila headquarters.[152] Courts-martial results were widely publicized as examples to demonstrate enforcement and change organizational culture.[153]

Removals were swift. Within the first month, he removed 13 senior ranking PC officers, now under control of the Department of National Defense, and replaced them with "action prone officers." Within three years, between the PC and the PAF, the security forces removed over 400 officers through courts-martial, relief, or pushing them to retirement. This included Castañeda, a trusted friend of Quirino, and Chief of the Constabulary Brigadier General Ramos.[154] The purge extended into the enlisted ranks, where incompetent and corrupt soldiers and non-commissioned officers received dishonorable discharges without compensation.[155]

Magsaysay then tied future promotion to performance. Early in his tenure, he sat on an officer promotion board in which he noticed that none of the officers under consideration had combat experience. Furiously, he asked of each officer, "How many Huk has he killed?" He declared that he would not consider promotion without combat experience and turned each officer down "at this time," refusing to advance the list to the President.[156] That board set the standard for future promotions. He publicly stressed two key qualifications in consideration for promotion: "first, to act as an ambassador of good will for the government to the people; second,

[151] Hart, "Magsaysay."
[152] Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 288; Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 83.
[153] Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 18.
[154] Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 288; Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 83; Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 30; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 44.
[155] Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 18.
[156] Blaufarb, *The Counter-Insurgency Era*, 30; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 45.

to kill or capture Huk."[157] Valeriano and Bohannan found that, "Certainly nothing would qualify a man for promotion except to be an effective ambassador and an effective fighter. This policy would govern all actions, and he and his staff would be checking on it."[158] In a force that had been barracks bound, avoided contact with the enemy, and abused the civilian population when it did conduct operations, both requirements were a significant change in focus. Moving forward, he selected young officers who demonstrated competence for command, ended favoritism, and pre-empted the promotion of those who relied on it. He also adopted a practice of periodically rotating units to new areas to undermine factionalism, cliques, and the power of local political and landed patrons.[159]

4.3.2 Command Structure

The Department of National Defense significantly restructured its forces, taking control of the PC and organizing the army around Battalion Combat Teams. As important as the formal organization, its purge and changes to the promotion system led to an increase in expertise, while it simultaneously implemented internal monitoring mechanisms. The effects, as described in the subsequent section on elections, included a culture that shifted away from patron loyalty in favor of formal, impersonal duty.

Formal Organization

The Philippines government implemented significant structural changes to its security forces in 1950, the most important of which included moving the PC from the Department of the Interior to the Department of National Defense and restructuring the army. Quirino faced considerable pressure, both internally and from the United States, to make changes. Internally, he

[157] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 166.
[158] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 166.
[159] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 187.

faced criticism for a tenfold increase in rates of Huk attacks from pre-1950 levels.[160] Externally, JUSMAG reports portrayed the PC as poorly trained, undisciplined, under incompetent leadership, and too small.[161] Major General Leland Hobbs, the JUSMAG Chief, advised the consolidation of distant security detachments, realignment of the PC under the Department of National Defense, and a shift in both personnel and responsibility for the campaign from the PC to the PAF.[162] The United States threatened to cut military aid if Quirino did not carry out the transfer. Ultimately, Quirino moved the PC before Magsaysay took office, reduced it to 7,000 men, transferred 17,000 PC to the Army, and gave the PAF responsibility for the counterinsurgency campaign.[163]

The PC move was not without opposition from Quirino's own Liberal Party. By moving the PC to Defense, the more politicized Department of the Interior would lose the ability to control the organization for political ends such as election meddling. The Speaker of the House led a Congressional attempt to move the PC back before the 1953 elections, but the United States responded with threats to cut military aid.[164]

The army also restructured its force. The Battalion Combat Team (BCT) replaced the PC Company as the main unit of action against the insurgency.[165] The new BCTs were trained in guerilla warfare with focuses on patrolling, night patrols, squad and platoon sized operations, and

[160] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 65.
[161] Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 287.
[162] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 56.
[163] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 28. There is some variation in accounts of when the actual transfer was effective. Kerkvliet dates it to March 1950 (p. 241), while Lachica dates "operational control" to July 26 (p. 130).
[164] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 247.
[165] The new BCTs were composed of three 110 person infantry companies, a heavy weapons company, reconnaissance company with armored cars, a Headquarters and Service Company, and an Artillery Battery for a full strength of 1,074 personnel. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency 1942-1976*, 63; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 99.

the use of guerilla like hit and run tactics.[166] They were generally assigned sectors that included one or two provinces or major terrain features such as Mount Arayat.[167] The model rapidly expanded through the Army, which initially created eleven BCTs, but expanded to twenty within a year and to twenty-six by 1954[168]

The restructuring had several effects. Under Defense's control, Magsaysay's purge of incompetent or shirking officers included the PC. The move allowed the less politicized and freshly purged Department of National Defense to provide direct oversight of the PC. It also helped to solve the problem that all counterinsurgency forces face – how to simultaneously secure the population while actively pursuing insurgents. The PC reverted to a population security role, while the army could focus more of its resources, effort, and training on killing and capturing Huk.

Organizational Culture

Observers on all sides claimed a significant change in military culture. Jose Crisol, then an Army officer and a future Philippines Secretary of National Defense, argued that 1950s reforms emphasized both training and military professionalism.[169] Lansdale claimed that the Secretary's presence was a morale boost for soldiers, as they saw senior leaders forward in the field with them, as opposed to hidden in the safety of a Manila headquarters – and that they responded through more aggressive operations.[170]

Given the intertwining of his reputation with Magsaysay's, thus his personal interest in promoting Magsaysay, one should be cynical of Lansdale's praise. However, Luis Taruc, the

[166] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 88.
[167] Moore, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 41-42.
[168] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 110; Lachica, *The Huks*, 131.
[169] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 241.
[170] Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 86.

senior Huk commander, also noted the difference in Philippine Army discipline, morale, and treatment of civilians. Taruc explained that, "The Philippine armed forces were drastically reorganized, and army discipline and public relations were strictly supervised and improved."[171] He went on,

> The new discipline he [Magsaysay] imposed within the army, his good public relations, and his treatment of Huks who had surrendered or had been captured and who were willing to turn over a new leaf, seriously threatened the morale of our rank and file…And while the morale of our fighters diminished, that of the government troopers rose, and their discipline improved.[172]

While Taruc focused on Magsaysay personally, Magsaysay affected his changes through replacing incompetent personnel, implementing a promotion system based on merit, and a regiment of inspections.

The reformed PAF was far from perfect. Individuals still committed abuses of civilians, but far less frequently. Officers were also still subject to local political pressure. Valeriano and Bohannan relate the story of a town mayor in this period who was particularly good at winning votes for his party, but who also supported the Huk. The local military commander arrested the mayor, who was then released on order of the governor and national party chair. The commander arrested the mayor a second time. Ultimately, the commander came under so much political scrutiny that Magsaysay worked with the President to send the officer to the United States to protect the officer's career as political resistance cooled down.[173] The anecdote suggests that local political leaders would still attempt to influence military commanders and operations for their own gain. However, it also demonstrated a changed military culture. The officer took the

[171] Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger*, 90.
[172] Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger*, 97.
[173] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 88.

risk of bucking local crony networks twice on the knowledge that he would receive support and protection from senior PAF leadership for doing so.

Monitoring Mechanisms

Beginning in 1950, Philippine forces began a new monitoring regime from the top down. Magsaysay himself flew around the country in a short takeoff and landing (STOL) aircraft or Piper Cub, making unscheduled, unexpected inspections to tactical units. His inspections focused on treatment of civilians and aggressiveness of commanders in pursuing the Huk. Relief of inept personnel – or at least the reputation that they would be relieved – was commonplace.[174] Valeriano explained, "No commander, even in the most isolated outpost could go to bed at night sure that he would not be awakened at dawn by an irate Secretary of National Defense."[175]

Of course, one individual could not monitor compliance of an entire force. Magsaysay also created a Civil Affairs Office in Manila and assigned Civil Affairs officers to the BCT level. These officers had authority to investigate incidents against civilians and act against perpetrating soldiers.[176] This gave Manila a mechanism to directly monitor treatment of civilians, to identify and rectify predation and abuse, and coupled with an increased willingness to conduct courts martial, to punish it.

Magsaysay had initially intended to disband the Civil Guard, but found that he did not have enough personnel to make up for the loss. To provide monitoring and oversight of Civilian Guard units, he detached soldiers to train with them and in some cases, PAF officers to command

[174] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 84-86; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 21; Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 48; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 166.
[175] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 85.
[176] Moore, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 44; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 170-71.

them.[177] Again, this provided the Department of Defense with a direct monitoring mechanism over local forces.

4.3.3 Elections as Indicators of Weberian Command Structure

Philippine security forces' changing roles in national elections serve as an indicator of the transition to a Weberian command structure, especially its shift towards norms of impersonal institutional loyalty. As described previously, the PC and to a lesser degree the military had served as tools of the dominant Liberal Party and local politicians in breaking up opponents' rallies, violent attacks on the opposition, and electoral fraud. The PAF played dramatically different roles in the 1951 and 1953 elections. Its relative neutrality serves as evidence of the break in patronage ties.

1951 Elections

All initial indicators were that the Liberal Party would carry out the same practices in the 1951 election that they had in the past. Quirino's brother Antonio led a goon squad that practiced intimidation, kidnapping, and assassination. Quirino knew that an honest election would likely lead to defeat for the Liberal Party. Whatever the long-term danger of the Huk, the immediate existential political danger for his faction lay in the election.[178] "If matters had been left in his hands," Blaufarb argues, "another rigged election would have been inevitable."[179]

The plan for the 1951 election developed while Quirino was in Spain on vacation after surgery in the United States at Johns Hopkins. By Philippine election law, an Independent Commission on Elections was responsible for counting ballots. The law also authorized the

[177] Citing Goodwin, Slater claims that Magsaysay disbanded the Civilian Guard. However, Valeriano and Bohannan state that while he initially wanted to do so, he assessed that he would not have the necessary force size without them and instead asserted greater direct government control over them. Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 104; Dan Slater, *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 99.

[178] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 235.

[179] Blaufarb, *The Counter-Insurgency Era*, 34.

Commission to request any necessary support in the election process. The Commission requested the assistance of the PAF, the National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL), and the Philippine News Service (PNS). In a coordinated effort, the military, along with college and high school Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets, secured polling places to preempt voter intimidation and violence. NAMFREL provided poll watchers, and the PNS obtained unofficial vote counts and telegraphed them immediately back to Manila to preempt tampering with ballot boxes in transit.[180]

With 26 people killed, the election was far from perfect, but compared to several hundred killed in 1949, it was viewed as relatively clean and legitimate. About 4 million voters turned out and the Nacionalista Party won in a landslide, despite the fact that the government and PAF were controlled by the Liberals. Most importantly, the military assisted while remaining neutral.[181]

The legitimacy of the election cannot be attributed exclusively to the PAF. The United States demanded a clean election, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) may have funded NAMFREL. JUSMAG provided a small contingent of 25 poll watchers. The United States also complimented the PNS reporters at key polling places with American reporters as a deterrence to violence or fraud.[182] The Catholic Church also took a prominent public stand against electoral corruption.[183] Still, the role of government security forces was a dramatic change, significant in securing an outcome accepted as legitimate.

Political factions still attempted to pressure PAF members, and Magsaysay moved officers out of districts where he thought they might face personal pressure.[184] The experience of

[180] Blaufarb, *The Counter-Insurgency Era*, 34; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 88-91; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 191-92.

[181] Anthony James Joes, *America and Guerilla Warfare* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2000), 193; Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 132.

[182] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 132.

[183] Joes, *America and Guerilla Warfare*, 193.

[184] Smith, *Philippine Freedom*, 161.

Colonel Jesse Vargus, who ran the Department of National Defense's Election Assistance Program, is illustrative of the overall change. Vargus was on the promotion list to general. On election day, a high-ranking political official called him and demanded that he remove troops from precincts in the Manila suburb of Caloocan, threatening that if he did not comply, he would never see general. Vargus resisted the pressure, refused to remove the troops securing the polling place, and went on to serve as a general officer.[185] While only a single anecdotal case, it was representative of the larger a-political role of the PAF and of its increased ability and willingness to resist pressure to serve as an electoral tool of the political elite.

1953 Elections

The 1953 election presented a greater challenge to the command structure of the Philippine Armed Forces. Despite attempts by Quirino and cronies to change the make-up of the officer corps, it still managed to generally remain neutral. In November 1952, the Nacionalista and Citizens parties merged. Magsaysay resigned as Secretary of National Defense to run as the Nacionalista candidate against Quirino.[186] In response, Magsaysay's successor tried to reverse reforms and appoint Quirino men before the election. This included the President's brother Tony Quirino, who took a commission inside the Military Intelligence Command with the intention of leading a group of thugs, including prisoners pardoned by his brother, to influence the election.[187]

Magsaysay won by a two to one margin and captured two-thirds of legislative seats. Again, the election was not perfect and the United States played a mixed role. By all accounts,

[185] Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 91-92.
[186] Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 103.
[187] Lansdale also claims that the PC attempted to break up at least one Magsaysay rally, but given his work in advocating for Magsaysay, it is difficult to evaluate his credibility on issues related to the election without outside verification. Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 290; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 108, 16, 19.

the US government wanted minimal violence and an honest vote count, likely because it fully expected its preferred candidate, Magsaysay, to win. However, the CIA also helped funnel illegal American business donations to Magsaysay's campaign, using NAMFREL and the PNS as fronts. At $250,000, the amount was small, but important during a period of low campaign funding. Both sides also likely engaged in vote buying. Lansdale also arranged positive international press coverage through the Luce newspapers, Time, Life, and Fortune.[188] None of these deficiencies, however, directly relate to the military's role or undermine its generally a-political performance.

Despite the attempts of the Quirino regime to penetrate the PAF and by US agencies and business to affect the election for Magsaysay, the PAF generally resisted pressure, held its neutral position, and provided essential election security.[189] The JUSMAG Chief Advisor, Major General Robert Canon, reported that, "The conduct of the armed forces was particularly reassuring. Great pressure was placed on them by both civilian and military officials. The armed forces proved steadfast and reliable and it is generally conceded that their actions did more to insure a clean honest election than any other factor."[190] Low levels of violence serve as an indicator of the quality of security. The toll of nine dead, twelve wounded, and "several score" missing was again small by past Philippine standards.[191]

Election Significance

For the larger anti-Huk effort, the 1951 and 1953 elections played important roles in bolstering the legitimacy of the Philippine government. However imperfect, ineffective, and

[188] Cullather, "America's Boy?" 320-23; Karnow, *In Our Image*, 353; Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency," 170-71.
[189] Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 290; Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency," 171.
[190] Quoted in Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 290.
[191] Cullather, "America's Boy?" 331.

corrupt the government might be in other ways, the elections provided hope for some level of responsiveness, especially given the high level of violence in previous elections. It indicated that legal political action through the electoral process was again at least a possibility as a pathway towards reform.

For this study, the more important takeaway from the elections was their role as an indicator of change in the Philippine command structure. Before 1950, Philippine security forces, military and especially PC, openly interfered with campaigns and elections in favor of national and local political patrons. In the 1951 and 1953 elections, the PAF provided neutral security for the election process and demonstrated impartial loyalty to state institutions, as opposed to the individual patrons in roles of authority in those institutions. They did this despite tremendous political pressure, especially in 1953.

4.3.4 Counterinsurgency Effectiveness

After the transformation to a more merit-based personnel system, the PAF adopted tactics and operational art better suited to establish population control. It also took efforts to reduce collateral damage, collective punishment, and predation. In these areas, military formations accepted increased short-term risk in exchange for increased effectiveness. The PAF also increased provision of basic services to the population, and while these services fell short of addressing the full range of peasant grievance, they played an important propaganda role in shifting peasant support.

Tactics and Operations to Gain Control

PAF tactics and operations from 1950 forward increasingly modeled the prescriptions of sound population centric counterinsurgency. The previously barracks and fixed site bound forces engaged in long-duration, small unit patrols and interacted more regularly in non-violent ways

with the civilian population. It increasingly took back control of the population from the Huk during this period. With control came improved intelligence from the population.

Tactics and Operations. The PAF became more aggressive against the Huk, while at the same time providing local security to the civilian population. The army's BCTs blanketed Huk controlled areas, establishing permanent presence, forcing guerillas out of populated areas, and severing logistic links between guerillas and the population.[192] Once seized, the government then held these areas with Civilian Guard and PC. Both the Guard and PC forces, in contrast to their previous fixed site security approach, began regular local patrolling. To mitigate the risk of such patrols, the PC and Guard coordinated for support from local army units in case they should come into significant enemy contact. Such cross-unit coordination required both an increased level of organizational competence and of mutual trust. The PC and Civilian Guard also took on an increased role in population protection and intelligence gathering.[193]

The constant presence forced the Huk out of villages and barrios and denied them essential food and resources. Relieved of the burdens of local population security, the army then pursued the Huk in the countryside. Instead of large, ineffective sweeps, they adopted small unit, long duration patrols. The army did not make the changes immediately, but rather over the course of 1950 and 1951. Over that time, "long range reconnaissance patrols, raids and ambushes by squad and platoon sized units became the principal tactical modus operandi of the army."[194] The extreme models for this new approach were Scout-Ranger teams assigned to each battalion. They penetrated deep into Huk areas to distribute propaganda and commit acts of sabotage.[195]

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[192] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 32.
[193] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 30; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 102.
[194] Moore, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 51.
[195] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 118.

These small unit patrols marked a dramatic departure from the previous approach. While the Scout-Rangers were the extreme, even standard BCT patrols were small and mobile, often a half of a squad to a platoon in size. Patrols coordinated to allow units to operate independently, but with the capability of providing timely mutual support should a small unit come into heavy enemy contact.[196] Both the standard BCT mission and the Scout Ranger mission required a high level of tactical and operational expertise to plan, resource, and execute. These small unit activities entailed increased unit and soldier risk compared to the previous large sweep operations. The Scout Ranger patrols were even more vulnerable, acting deep in Huk territory without external support.

The Army did not eliminate large operations, but two new features made them more effective. First, they were willing to penetrate deep into Huk held terrain. Second, after large operations, the PAF maintained a residual force to secure the areas they seized. For instance, in 1952, the 7th and 16th BCTs launched a large offensive in Zambales Province. The seventy-two-day operation initially only resulted in seventy-two Huk killed or captured. However, unlike previous operations, the Army left well-armed platoons after the operation to secure the area and continue hunting for insurgents.[197] This feature of maintaining a long-term presence and holding areas seized was a significant change from the pre-1950 period.

Spatial and Population Control. PAF internal training and professionalism increased the proficiency of the force, allowing for fewer troops to secure static sites and population centers,

[196] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 104.

[197] Eventually, the army ceded the terrain gained in the 1952 operation during a truce period, but doing so was a political decision to facilitate negotiations. As another example, Operation Saber in late 1950 extended deep into Huk territory. The Huk launched a major offensive that included bank robbery in Binan, an attack on the Zambales PC, the burning of twenty-five houses, killing of seventy-two people, and kidnapping of ten in San Marcelino and a massacre in Aglao in late 1950. In response, the army launched Operation Saber, a major offensive to clear Huk and seize terrain near Mount Arayat and Mount Dorst, the heart of Huk Territory. Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 128-30, 35.

freeing more to pursue the insurgents. By occupying villages and barrios permanently, the army, PC, and Civilian Guard established and held control of population centers while cutting Huk ties to logistical support. This forced the Huk to the countryside to fight as "semi-autonomous bands," constantly moving and under pursuit. In the words of one guerilla who fought in Nueva Ecija, "We [Huks] spent more and more of our time just trying to elude the soldiers…trying to get enough food and ammunition to stay alive."[198]

The establishment of control through long duration presence allowed the government to protect civilian informants. It also created the impression that the government was winning and a safer long-term bet to support. These factors contributed to a significant increase in intelligence.[199] These were not the only factors incentivizing intelligence collection. The Philippine "carrot" in the "carrot and stick" of coercive counterinsurgency included large cash rewards for intelligence, ranging from 5,000 pesos (ten times the average agricultural worker's wages) to 10,000 for senior commander.[200] While the large payments likely played a significant role in the decision to inform, the guarantee of security and protection was a prerequisite.

Selective Violence

The PAF took measures to reduce indiscriminate violence in 1950 and after. It reduced collateral damage and prohibited collective punishment. Besides prohibiting civilian predation, it identified and removed incentives to such victimization by measures such as increasing soldier pay. Even the Huk noted the transition to more selective application of violence. Taruc claimed that, "Once more, the government began to respect the civil liberties of the people.

[198] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 208.
[199] Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency 1942-1976*, 60, 63.
[200] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 35.

Consequently, as the army's public relations improved, the people cooperated more willingly with government troops."[201]

Collateral Damage. The PAF took several steps to limit collateral damage to civilians. It took heavy weapons away from the PC and armed them with .30 caliber rifles and billy clubs, weapons more appropriate to their population security function. It also limited heavy weapon use in the army. It replaced battalion artillery and heavy mortars with extra rifle companies. This increased reliance on smaller impact, direct line-of-sight weapons systems meant that the user could directly observe his target and apply force more selectively.[202] The PAF also banned reconnaissance by fire.[203] There is some debate among historical sources about the use of napalm. The PAF wanted it but could not obtain it in the earlier period, though they may have created a makeshift version. In any case, Magsaysay opposed and prevented its use for fear of killing civilians.[204]

Crisol also explained how the new tactics allowed for greater discrimination between civilians and guerillas. Because the PAF had secured populated areas and forced Huk into the countryside, the Huk could no longer easily blend into the population and small units could more discriminately and accurately target them. "These reforms were not only more militarily effective, but they were less damaging to civilians."[205] Thus, establishment of control and reduction in collateral damage were mutually reinforcing.

Collective Punishment. Magsaysay's stated policy of "All out friendship or all out force," requires explanation, as it is easily subject to misunderstanding. The friendship he was offering

[201] Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger*, 97.
[202] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 37; Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 112.
[203] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 155.
[204] Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 57.
[205] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 241.

was to Huk who were willing to defect, and the force was against Huk who did not. The force component of the policy did not apply to the civilian population.[206] The official policy of the PAF precluded collective punishment. Magsaysay directed the PAF to be "helpful rather than abusive to civilians," which Joes argues was his singularly "most important military measure."[207] As a small indicator of the changing approach to civilians, soldiers changed weapons postures when entering populated areas, no longer patrolling with weapons pointed outward ready to fire. The goal was psychological, to ensure civilians that the military was not targeting them.[208]

Predation. The PAF also took steps to reduce the incentive for military members to steal from civilians by increasing pay. Initially, PC and soldier pay was too low to even cover daily meals, forcing soldiers to "live off the land." Ration allowances increased more than three times, from 30 centavos per day to 1 peso per day (100 centavos), leaving soldiers sufficient funds to pay for meals and to fraternize with the civilians they purchased food from.[209] In addition to reducing the incentives towards predation, the presence of civil affairs officers in each BCT with the authority to investigate civilian abuse provided a monitoring mechanism, while the increase in courts-martial and reliefs provided an enforcement mechanism.

This is not to suggest that abuses never happened. Joes suggests that on occasion, "Terrorism and misconduct continued, albeit on a lesser scale."[210] Moreover, the AFP perversely benefited from its earlier abuses, as any reduction was likely to seem significant in comparison to the previous intense abuse.[211] However, the changes were significant. Both Huk and non-Huk

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[206] Moore, *The Hukbalahap Insurgency*, 47-48.

[207] Daniel L. Magruder, Jr., *Counterinsurgency, Security Forces, and the Identification Problem: Distinguishing Friend from Foe* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 80; Joes, *America and Guerilla Warfare*, 195.

[208] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 165.

[209] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 85; Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 37; Peterson et al., *Symposium on Airpower*, 18.

[210] Joes, *America and Guerilla Warfare*, 196.

[211] Magruder, *Counterinsurgency, Security Forces, and the Identification Problem*, 81-82.

peasants cited the successful implementation of Magsaysay's reforms as their reason for turning to the state. He "cleaned up the PC and the Philippine army" and "understood that we weren't criminals and just wanted what was rightfully ours," explained one peasant.[212]

Services

The PAF assumed many of the service roles traditionally assigned to other government agencies during this period.[213] In reality, the services provided were too limited to solve the deep-rooted land tenure problems that gave rise to peasant grievances in the first place. However, two factors contributed to the operational and strategic success of military led service provision. First, the PAF tied the services that it did provide to peasant desires. Second, despite the limited scope of these projects, the Department of National Defense did a masterful job of publicizing them, creating hope among peasants that the government had become more responsive.

Between 1952 and 1958, the increase in rural public works included agriculture extension programs, agrarian courts, construction of health clinics, hundreds of miles of new roads, and new canals.[214] In 1953, the Philippine Congress passed the Elementary Education Act, providing free, compulsory elementary education along with seven years of intermediate and secondary education.[215] As was the case in previous Philippine laws to benefit peasants, passage and implementation were separate problems. The PAF vacated the schoolhouses they had occupied, apart from soldiers who were qualified to teach. Army engineers prepared 4,000 prefabricated schoolhouses that either civilians or troops could erect.[216] The government also worked with the

[212] Peasant quoted in Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 208.
[213] Blaufarb, *The Counter-Insurgency Era*, 31; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 64.
[214] Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency 1942-1976*, 65; Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 139-40; Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 239; Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 33.
[215] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 139.
[216] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 86.

US government and with private donors in Manila to construct 2,000 wells to provide sanitary water in the countryside through the "Liberty Wells Association."[217]

Two of the more innovate services provided were a complaint line and the use of military lawyers for peasant legal representation. In 1951, Magsaysay established a telegraph line through which civilians could make complaints to the Ministry of National Defense at the reduced cost of ten centavo with the promise of an initial response within twenty-four hours. He then established a special staff to receive the calls, investigate, and follow-up. Use was initially limited, but calls eventually flooded the Ministry of Defense.[218] However many problems the complaint line ultimately solved, it was at least a useful propaganda tool in signaling responsive government.

The military could not change the land tenure system itself. It did drain parts of the Candaba swamp, providing land to peasant settlers. This effort addressed only a small part of the problem.[219] However, the PAF did address one major peasant grievance related to land laws. Often, landlords exploited peasants not because the law itself favored landlords, but because peasants had neither the knowledge not the legal resources to adequately represent their claims in court. The PAF made Judge Advocate General lawyers available to represent peasants at no cost, giving them a chance in their legal claims against landlords.[220] The Department of National Defense was fortunate in that it received a limited number of requests for this service. Had it received a large influx, its limited legal capacity might have been overwhelmed. Again, however, the propaganda value was significant as word of the service spread quickly.[221]

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[217] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 139-40; Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 33; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 77-78.

[218] Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 48-49; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 86; Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 237.

[219] Cullather, "America's Boy?" 313.

[220] Joes, *America and Guerilla Warfare*, 206; Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 88; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 48; Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 237; Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 54-55.

[221] Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency," 162.

Perhaps the most heralded military program related to land tenure grievances was the Economic Development Corps (EDCOR) land development and resettlement program. EDCOR was modeled off a JUSMAG 1950 proposal and off the Land Settlement and Development Corporation (LADESCO), a Quirino administration program.[222] However, EDCOR targeted Huk insurgents who surrendered with the possibility of a homestead. Beginning in February 1951, army Engineers began clearing plots of land at Kapatagan, Lanao on the southern island of Mindiano.[223] The island, about the size of the US state of Indiana but with a population under half a million, was selected because it was underdeveloped and because it placed the settlements out of reach of Huk sabotage.[224] Huk who surrendered and underwent an indoctrination program were eligible for resettlement, along with a group of Philippine veterans and their families who the government believed would provide stability. While the official intent was to provide land for reformed Huk, Lansdale confirmed in classified correspondence that it would also "be used for poor tenants and other *taos* (common man) who are about ready to join the Huks in desperation."[225] The government assisted resettled Huk to clear a ten to fifteen acre plot and build a small home. The government provided animals, seed, and initial food on credit, and forbid tenancy. Settlers who worked the land for several years took legal ownership.[226]

Demand to participate was high. Eventually the program spread, with additional sites in Mindanao established in 1952 and 1954. As the government grew more confident, it established another site in 1953 only about 100 miles from Huk dominated areas, with the proximity

[222] Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency 1942-1976*, 63; Cullather, "America's Boy?," 313; Joes, *America and Guerilla Warfare*, 194-95.
[223] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 89-92.
[224] Smith, *Philippine Freedom*, 172.
[225] Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency," 162.
[226] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 89-90; Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 33; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 52-58.

providing greater propaganda value. Again for propaganda value, the government also offered relocation to homesteads for residents of San Luis, Pampanga, Huk leader Taruc's hometown.[227]

The value of EDCOR on public and Huk perceptions was vastly disproportionate with its value in alleviating actual land problems. Between 950 and 1200 families were resettled, only about 220 to 250 of them former Huk. By 1959, EDCOR's total population was only 5,709.[228] Even Valeriano, the Philippine Colonel who became a prominent spokesperson for the PAF's approach to counterinsurgency, acknowledged,

> The projects did not in themselves make a significant contribution to the economic or social welfare of the country. They helped few people, perhaps all told a thousand families were benefited directly by their assistance. Probably two or three thousand more were benefited indirectly and unintentionally by establishment of these new communities which brought new businesses and new security to relatively untapped areas.[229]

However, the government went to great lengths to publicize the project, both domestically and internationally. It brought EDCOR participants back for tours of central Luzon to tout their experience. It even allowed Huk to visit with safe passage, then released them on return in hopes that they would spread positive accounts through Huk ranks.[230] By 1955, 1,500 guerillas has surrendered and applied for participation in the program, a significant number from a force estimated at 15,000 at its peak.[231] The key to EDCOR's success was that it denied the Huk one of their most important recruiting tools, embodied in their slogan "land for the landless."

Overall, the services provided, from land to schools to wells, simply could not address the full needs of peasants nor fundamentally reform the land tenure system. Still, they seem to

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[227] Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 52-58.

[228] Exact numbers resettled vary by source and by specific time measured. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency 1942-1976*, 63; Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 239.

[229] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 180.

[230] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 178.

[231] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 33.

have had significant effects in gaining popular support and in attracting Huk defection. Likely to his great frustration, Communist party leader Jesus Lava claimed, "All the reforms that were promised and partially implemented, even though small and show-case in nature, were encouraging for the people. Many people believed in the government."[232] These programs were effective because however limited in scope, they "were almost surgically precise in attacking the principle grievances of the movement's rank-and-file" and because the Department of National Defense treated them as psychological operations, ensuring they were well publicized.[233] The reformed PAF, with PC actually filling its formal role of providing local security, were also able to secure projects. PAF developed projects too large to guarantee local security, such as the early EDCOR settlements, in already secure areas. In short, Philippine forces transitioned from providing almost no services at all to a service provision program that, while limited in scope, met basic requirements of security and tied closely to local needs.

4.4 Assessing Explanations

It is now possible to compare explanations for effectiveness of the PAF. Neither of the primary alternative theories – individual leadership or formative wars – offers a better explanation for the Philippines' increase in military effectiveness. The individual leadership explanation does offer some key insights, but it overstates the role of a single individual and undervalues the role of organizational change to the command structure. Increased force size and ratios may also have been a necessary condition for fully effective PCC, but cannot explain all the significant changes in PAF behavior. Changes in appointments and promotions provides the most comprehensive explanation for increased PAF effectiveness.

[232] Lava goes on to cite the reforms within government troops as perhaps the most important. Quoted in Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 238.

[233] Johnson and Dimech, "Foreign Internal Defense," 44.

4.4.1 Alternative Theoretical Explanations

Individual Leadership

It is tempting to think of the Philippines case entirely in terms of a "great commander" story. The Philippines effort was badly bolloxed until a savior leader in the person of Raymon Magsaysay rescued the nation and won the counterinsurgency. Historian Mark Moyar is not entirely baseless when he claims,

> The defeat of the Huk Rebellion illustrates splendidly how a single leadership change at the top can alter the entire complexion of a counterinsurgency. Ramon Magsaysay, with some help from Edward Lansdale, engineered the government's meteoric transition from failure to success, primarily by replacing poor field commanders and finding good officers to take their place… Magsaysay roused his officers to new heights of performance through natural charisma and exemplary conduct [234]

The danger in explanations like Moyar's is the temptation to place too much focus on one man's "natural charisma" and too little on "replacing poor field commanders and finding good officers" and the systemic changes required to do the second.[235]

There is no doubt that Magsaysay as an individual mattered. He provided a powerful example for subordinates, demonstrated to them his own willingness to take personal risks, and implemented top down monitoring with his regular inspections to the field. However, as even Moyar acknowledged, it was the BCT commander who had direct oversight, dictated small unit operations, and could monitor behavior on a daily basis.[236] Magsaysay's greatest contribution was to transition the PAF to a merit based command structure that selected battalion commanders (and other leaders) on competence and impersonal loyalty to the organization.

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[234] Moyar, *A Question of Command*, 106-07.
[235] Moyar, *A Question of Command*, 107.
[236] Uldarico S Baclagon, *Lessons from the Huk Campaign in the Philippines* (Manila: M. Colcol & Co., 1956), 46-48; Moyar, *A Question of Command*, 102.

In considering the relative effects of Magsaysay himself versus the effects of the systemic promotion system changes he implemented, it is useful to reconsider the period after his resignation through the end of the 1953 election. Unlike in 1946 and 1949, where security forces provided armed intimidation for the incumbent party, in 1951 and 1953, the PAF and PC acted in a generally a-political manner to secure legitimate elections. The 1951 performance might be attributed to Magsaysay's leadership, but he was no longer in a position to supervise the PAF in the 1953 election. However, the PAF generally remained neutral, both against tremendous political pressure to favor Quiríno and against any personal loyalty members may have felt towards now candidate Magsaysay. Changes to the promotion and appointment system, which the theory predicts will result in a shift away from personalistic and factional loyalty and towards abstract institutional loyalty, offer a more consistent explanation for the initial change in performance after 1950 and the continuity in performance in 1951 and 1952.

Even charismatic leaders must have sources of leverage to change deeply entrenched systems protected by powerful interests. Magsaysay gained leverage both due to the magnitude of previous failures and from US willingness to tie aid to reform. Against the claim that "natural charisma and exemplary conduct" are sufficient to implement major reforms, as President, by contrast, Magsaysay failed to make inroads against larger Philippine government corruption.[237] A combination of factors undermined early attempts at government-wide reform. Among these were competing domestic interests among the coalition that supported his election and a loss of US provided leverage as Philippine-US interests diverged and Eisenhower cut fiscal support.[238] In both the military and the Philippine state, structure and institutions mattered. Individual leadership and personality alone were insufficient to affect change.

[237] Slater, *Ordering Power*, 99-105.
[238] Cullather, "America's Boy?" 332-33, 38.

Formative Wars

The case for past military experience in formative wars as a determinate of performance is not without some evidence, but it provides a weak explanation of the within case variation in the Philippines. Early reliance on large sweep operations might indicate a conventional bias.[239] However, a conventional bias does not explain the larger issues of the barracks mentality, focus on fixed site security, or civilian predation.

In support of this "military archetype" explanation, Magsaysay did have a guerilla background. Referring to their conventional background and training, he told his General Staff,

> Gentlemen, I know all of you have graduated from military establishments here and in the United States. Now I am telling you to forget everything you were taught at Fort Leavenworth, Fort Benning, and the Academy. The Huks are fighting an unorthodox war. We are going to combat them in unorthodox ways. Whatever it was that hurt me most as a guerrilla is what we are going to do now to the Huk.[240]

Despite this claim, however, Magsaysay continued to send soldiers and officers to US military schools. The US training influence was never near as significant as we shall see in the El Salvador case, where the United States trained over half the officer corps and formed and trained entirely new battalions. However, in 1951 alone, 249 officers and soldiers attended 85 schools in the United States.[241]

The background of PAF officers varied. The PAF included personnel with both conventional training and personnel with guerilla experience during the Japanese occupation. One might hypothesize that a shift between these two groups accounted for a change in organizational culture towards a more unconventional force. However, I found no evidence of

[239] Valeriano and Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations*, 54, 80.
[240] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 87.
[241] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 108.

this balance changing dramatically before and after 1950, nor did I find evidence of Magsaysay applying past guerilla or conventional experience as a differentiating criterion for promotion.[242]

The most important disconfirming evidence of theories based on formative wars is that the PAF demonstrated significant changes in effectiveness. Formative war theories assume that conventional or counterinsurgent archetypes are sticky and do not change quickly. However one defines the PAF's formative war archetype, there is no evidence that it somehow dramatically changed in 1950, yet the PAF changed dramatically after the 1950 reforms.

Force Size

I cannot dismiss the potential importance of the expansion of the PAF. Any attempt to calculate force to population ratios in the Philippines will necessarily be approximate for several reasons. First, the Philippines government conducted censuses in 1939, 1946, and 1960, leaving gaps in our knowledge of population size. Second, while post-1950 annual national population estimates are available for non-census years from sources such as the United Nations or World Bank, they do not account for provincial population. Finally, available force size data focuses on the PC and the PAF, without the Civilian Guard or local police forces.

With those caveats, the PC and PAF 1946 force ratio was approximately 1.3 troops for every 1,000 civilians, while the 1954 ratio was approximately 2.3 troops for every 1,000 civilians. However, this is deceptive as the insurgency was active primary in Tarlac, Nueve Ecija, Pampanga, and Bulacan. If the PC and PAF could focus all of its forces in these four provinces, the ratio for this area of Central Luzon in 1946 would have been approximately 22.7

[242] One might hypothesize that officers with guerilla experience were in general higher performers, and thus more likely to advance in a merit-based system on strictly performance-based criteria. While I found no explicit evidence to support this hypothesis, promotion rates by background is an area worthy of future research.

troops for every 1,000 civilians, while the ratio for 1954 would have been approximately 28.2 troops for every 1,000 civilians.

Table 4.2: Approximate Philippine Troop to Civilian Force Ratios (PAF and PC only)

	Population Estimate			Force Ratio Estimate	
	1946 [a]	**1948** [b]	**1954**	**1946** [e]	**1954** [e]
National Population	18,846,800	19,234,182	21,416,000 [c]	1.9:1,000	2.4:1,000
Tarlac	310,500	327,018	364,113 [d]		
Nueve Ecija	511,900	467,769	520,830 [d]		
Pampanga	434,200	416,583	463,838 [d]		
Bulacan	374,600	411,382	458,047 [d]		
Four Province Total	1,631,200	1,622,752	1,806,828	22.7:1,000	28.2:1000

SOURCES: [a] Republic of the Philippines Bureau of Census and Statistics, *Yearbook for Philippine Statistics 1946* (Manila: Bureau of Printing: 1946), 10. Yearbook numbers are approximations that, problematically given the proximity to World War II, "do not take into account the effects of war and migration…"; [b] Republic of the Philippines Bureau of Census and Statistics, *Summary and General Report on the Census of Population and Agriculture: 1948*, ed. Department of Commerce and Industry, vol. III, Part I - Population, Census of the Philippines: 1948 (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1954), 4, 7; [c] "World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision (Philippines)," updated 7 Dec 17, 2017, accessed 13 May 18, 2019, http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?q=population&d=PopDiv&f=variableID%3a12%3bcrID%3a608%3btimeID%3a6%3bvarID%3a2%2c3%2c4&c=2,4,6,7&s=_crEngNameOrderBy:asc,_timeEngNameOrderBy:desc,_varEngNameOrderBy:asc&v=1.
NOTES: [d] There is no census data for 1954, while UN data does not disaggregate population based on province. I have assumed provincial growth consistent with the national growth of approximately 11.34 percent from 1948 to 1954. [e] Force ratios are based on population estimates and Greenberg's force estimates of 37,000 (PAF and PC) in 1946 and 51,000 in 1954. Greenberg, The Hukbalahap Insurrection, 56, 110. This accounts for all PAF forces including the small Air Force and Navy but does not account for local police or Civilian Guard.

It is tempting to draw conclusions from these ratios in support of the 20 to 1,000 rule of thumb. The 1946 upper end ratio of 22.7 PAF and PC to 1,000 civilians was an impossible ideal given the need to secure the rest of the country. However, the PC and PAF did concentrate forces in the four provinces and faced no serious foreign or domestic threats during the war. Further, these numbers do not include local police or Civilian Guard, for which we lack detailed data. Adding in those additional forces, it is reasonable to expect that the sum total of Philippines security forces likely exceeded the 20:1 ideal threshold.

The data, when taken together with the qualitative history of the case, suggest two points. First, force size does matter for population centric counterinsurgency. PCC calls for dispersion among the population along with mass to attack guerrillas. This necessities a sizable force, though there is likely no magic ratio. The PC and PAF demonstrated this dispersion versus mass

conundrum when they spread troops in handfuls across the country, in groups too small to actively patrol and defend themselves.

Second, counterinsurgent forces benefit when the enemy is concentrated in a limited geographic areas. The Huk's concentration in Central Luzon opened the possibility of significantly increasing force ratios in that area. Had the movement been country wide, meeting the population control requirements of PCC would have been far more difficult. This aspect of the Philippines case should serve as a warning to those who want to use it as a model case for achieving successful counterinsurgency outcomes.

Acknowledging the importance of force size does not negate this dissertation's theory. Too few troops may preclude effective PCC, an important limitation to the theory but one true of effectiveness in any military strategy. However, like any form of warfare, no number of troops, however large, is a guarantee of effective execution. The theory explains the tactical and operational behavior of a PCC force. The full spectrum of Philippines security forces – PAF, PC, local police, and Civilian Guard – together likely had the ability to achieve something near the 20:1 ratio before the 1950 reforms, but that alone did not make them effective.

4.4.2 Alternative Empirical Explanations

Two potential empirical explanations require consideration – the division within the Huk insurgency and the role of US assistance.

Huk Division and Weakness

PKP-Huk division weakened the movement, and after the 1950 reforms, the state was able to exploit these differences.[243] The agrarian movement predated the alliance with the PKP and did not share the PKP's urban focus or desire for a complete overhaul of the Philippine

[243] Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 192-201.

economic and political order. In cases where policy preferences of the two groups diverged, the Huk generally carried out their own preferences.[244] Huk peasant claims, such as, "They said we were communists. I didn't even know what a communist was, and I still don't," were indicative of the division.[245] Lachica went as far as to claim that the communists "got a free ride on an essentially indigenous protest movement" which was primarily interested in moderate reforms.[246]

This serves as an important caution against holding the Philippines case up as evidence that an effective counterinsurgency strategy alone will determine victory or defeat. The best one can say about the Huk case is that the PAF defeated an already divided insurgency operating in a limited, rural part of the country. However, acknowledging Huk vulnerability does not explain why the post-reform PAF was better able to exploit those vulnerabilities. Nor does it explain why the PAF showed marked improvements in the post 1950 period in each of the components of PCC. In other words, analysis of PKP-Huk divisions offers more insight into the war's outcomes than to PCC military effectiveness.

US Assistance

The United States provided no direct support in the form of troops to the Philippines. JUSMAG was a small advisory force, at its largest consisting of thirty-two officers, twenty-six enlisted, and nine stenographers.[247] With the exception of Lansdale and Bohannan, its members were not allowed to accompany the PAF to the field until 1953.[248] Critics suggest that JUSMAG

[244] Johnson and Dimech, "Foreign Internal Defense," 35-36, 43. Much of the secondary source literature accepts the division between the Huk and PKP. It is a significant theme in Kerkvliet's seminal work. For a counterargument from a senior PKP leader, see Jesus Lava, "Review of The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines, by Benedict J. Kerkvliet," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 9, no. 1 (1 Jan. 1979).
[245] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*.
[246] Lachica, *The Huks*, 25.
[247] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 104.
[248] Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 97, 109.

was ineffective, focused on shaping a conventional military, and largely ignored by the AFP.[249] However, JUSMAG recommended the transfer of the PC to the Department of National Defense, supported Magsaysay's rise, and recommended the BCT restructure – all significant components of Philippine military reforms.[250]

The United States provided support for PAF reforms in the form of advice, direct funding, and use of that conditional funding as leverage. US support in itself was not the key causal variable that changed Philippine military effectiveness. It was at best one of several antecedent variables that facilitated appointment system reform.

Possibly the most important US contribution was the provision of conditional aid, for two reasons. First, the United States tied aid to reform. This gave both the United States and Magsaysay leverage against entrenched political elite. Second, peaking in 1951 at 11 percent of Philippine government revenue, US aid helped mitigate a huge Philippine deficit, may have prevented a national economic collapse, and helped to finance reform measures such as increases in soldier pay and expansion from ten to twenty-six BCTs.[251]

However, aid in itself cannot account for change in PAF operations and behavior. Effective use of resources relied on a command structure that could implement its counterinsurgency strategy. Creating that command structure required replacing patronage with merit as the criterion for appointments. That the United States provided Magsaysay leverage

[249] Karnow, *In Our Image*, 38; Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 218. By contrast, Joes argues that JUSMAG advocated against organizing based on American style conventional divisions. It also provided assistance through the establishment of an intelligence school that trained 240 officers and 570 enlisted in 18 months. Joes, *America and Guerilla Warfare*, 200-01; Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency," 163.

[250] Ladwig, "When the Police are the Problem," 28.

[251] On levels of US aid over time and its effects, see Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency 1942-1976*; Dillon, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies in the Philippines," 287; Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection*, 107, 11; Kerkvliet, *The Huk Revolt*, 193, 244; Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency," 165-66.

through conditional aid to make these changes does not negate the causal importance of the changes themselves.

4.4.3 Conclusion: Corruption and Effectiveness

Philippine performance in the Huk rebellion offers a textbook case of the role of appointments and promotions as a determinant of counterinsurgency effectiveness. Networks of cronyism and patronage determined appointments and promotions within Philippine forces before 1950. The primary loyalty of leaders from Manila down to the company level lie with personal patrons, not in achieving the objectives of the organization. These loyalties, along with a lack of basic competence, undermined the command's ability to monitor subordinate activities. It created a command structure where self-interest, personal gain, and risk aversion dominated. The 1950s reforms eliminated officers appointed through cronyism and made past performance the criterion for promotion. The result was a military organization that valued organizational ends and self-monitored. It dramatically improved performance as measured by the tactical and operational activities necessary to gain and maintain control of the population, increased selectivity in the application of violence, and the limited but well targeted provision of basic services.

CHAPTER 5

SALVADORAN CIVIL WAR, 1979-1992

The Huk Rebellion provided a case in which significant improvements in military effectiveness correlated with transition to a merit-based promotion system. El Salvador's civil war proves a different type of analytical leverage. The Armed Forces of El Salvador *(Fuerzas Armadas de El Salvador*, FAES) maintained a rigid time-based promotion system and an appointment system based on political maneuvering between *tandas*, or military academy graduating classes. Personal loyalty to one's *tanda* and alliances between *tandas* were central to gaining key staff and command appointments, with merit playing little role. Through US resourced training, individual FAES members made some gains in competence and expertise over the course of the war, but these played little role in selection for key billets. The *tanda* system defined organizational culture.

However, FAES underwent changes that other theories suggest should produce major improvements in effectiveness. It increased four-fold in size. The government underwent a major leadership change with the election of reformist Christian Democrat José Napoleón Duarte in 1984. By some accounts, General Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova's rise to Minister of Defense in 1983 provided a similar change internal to the military. Theories based on force size or leadership should predict significant improvements in effectiveness from 1984 to 1989.

The war also offers the opportunity to observe a single force faced with an enemy that fought along a scale from conventional to guerrilla. The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (*Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional*, FMLN) adopted more conventional strategy and tactics with large scale attacks prior to 1984, then transitioned to a

Vietnamese style protracted "people's war." It also launched two major offensives, in 1981 and 1989. FAES's "formative war" is generally considered to be the conventional 1969 "Soccer War" against Honduras, which drove its subsequent equipping and training. Theories based on formative wars should predict FAES to be a more effective fighting force both in the earlier period and during the two offensives.

By contrast, as my theory suggests, FAES performed ineffectively through the entire war. The US imposed training regime and US funded military expansion did provide some improvements, but only on the margins. An advancement system based on personal and factional relationships provided incentives to eschew merit-based evaluation, monitoring, and mission centric organizational culture, all of which threatened incumbent authority.

This chapter is divided into five parts. Part one provides background to the conflict. Parts two and three examine FAES from 1979 to 1983 and from 1983 to 1989, respectively. For both periods, I identify FAES's appointment and promotion mechanisms, then evaluate command structure based on formal organization, changes in competence and expertise, organizational culture, and monitoring mechanism. Unlike the Philippines case, I provide separate analysis of competence and expertise in this case because of the more extensive US resourced training program. Whereas in the Philippines, improved competence resulted from a change in promotion systems, here, training opened the possibility of changes in competence distinct from the promotion system. Finally, I evaluate PCC effectiveness across three elements for each period: tactics and operations to achieve population control, selectivity of violence, and service provision. Section four briefly discusses the end of the war, disentangling its causes from military effectiveness. Section five assesses competing explanations for effectiveness.

5.1 Background to the Conflict

Opposition to the Salvadoran government in the 1960s and 1970s grew out of a combination of agrarian oppression, worsening agrarian labor conditions, and refusal of the military dominated government to stray from its oligarchic patrons in favor of moderate socio-economic reforms. The suppression of an urban center-left political movement left reformers few legal options, driving them toward a group of revolutionary organizations that would unite as the FMLN. A 1979 coup by reformist military officers presented the possibility of change, but military conservatives politically outmaneuvered the reformists and initiated El Salvador's most violent repression in almost fifty years.

5.1.1. Deep Sources of Contention

The root causes of the Salvadoran civil war lie in increasing impoverishment of agrarian labor, but more importantly, in the repression of that labor – and indeed of all leftist dissent – by what political scientist William Stanley termed "the protection racket state."[1] Under the racket, landed economic elite ceded political control of the state to the military. In return, the military provided labor repression for El Salvador's labor-intensive agrarian economy. The result was an increasingly impoverished and politically excluded peasantry through the middle of the twentieth century, with the military undertaking cycles of partial reform to relieve peasant pressure followed by violent repression to protect oligarchic interests.

The "protection racket" took form in the years after the 1932 *La Matanza* massacre. To facilitate El Salvador's transition to export crops, first coffee in the late 1800s, then cotton in the mid 1900s, peasants were forced off their land and onto small plots or seasonal labor. In response to increasingly unbearable conditions, Augustín Farabundo Martí led a small Marxist inspired

[1] William D. Stanley, *The Protection Racket State: Elite Politics, Military Extortion, and Civil War in El Salvador* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1996).

peasant revolt, which killed under 100 security forces, military, government, and civilian personnel.[2] General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez put down Martí's revolt through a mass killing campaign that indiscriminately killed between 8,000 and 30,000. The high estimates constituted 2 percent of the population.[3] The revolt and subsequent massacre, known as *La Matanza*, took on practical and symbolic significance for peasants, the oligarchy, and the military.

Martínez established a military-oligarch relationship in which landed elites funded the military and ceded it nearly complete state control. Officially, by 1948, the government held regular elections, but these were dominated by the military's National Conciliation Party (*Partido de Conciliación*, PC), and officers selected by the military rotated through the presidency.[4] Military officers benefited from state graft and corruption, which the private sector overlooked, and from payoffs and post retirement jobs from oligarchs.[5] In return, the military served oligarchic interests, repressing the work force necessary for El Salvador's labor intensive export farming.[6]

The military recognized the need for occasional minor socio-economic reforms to pre-empt large scale peasant opposition, but this directly contradicted oligarchic interests. The oligarchs treated any agrarian reform as communistic in nature, or at least argued, based on

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[2] Exact estimates vary by source. Stanley states that the revolt killed about thirty-five civilians and local police, five customs police, ten National Guardsmen, and about twenty to forty soldiers. Binford suggests a low end of twenty to thirty planters, security officials, and government forces with a high end of 100. In either case, 100 is the high end, which pales in comparison to the government response. Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 41-42; Leigh Binford, *The El Mozote Massacre: Human Rights and Global Implications*, Revised ed. (Tucson: University of Arizona, 2016), 40.

[3] Accounting for exact civilian casualties is impossible. Binford suggests 10,000 to 30,000, McClintock suggests 30,000, and Stanley suggests 8,000 to 25,000. Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 50; Cynthia McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America: El Salvador's FMLN and Peru's Shining Path* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1998), 103-04; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 41-42.

[4] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 103-04.

[5] Shirley Christian, "El Salvador's Divided Military," *The Atlantic* 251, no. 6 (June 1983): 53.

[6] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 56-58; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 96.

limited pre-*Matanza* reforms, that reform would open the door for communist rebellion.[7] The result was a cycle of repeated minor partial reforms, followed by violent peasant repression through the middle of the twentieth century.[8]

Demographic pressures continued to expand through the mid-1900s. El Salvador experienced a population boom, with a population of 2 million in 1950 expanding to 3.5 million in 1970 and 4.5 million in 1980.[9] The problem was exacerbated by the return of 100,000 poor Salvadorans from Honduras after the 1969 "Soccer War."[10] These population increases, coupled with continued expansion of export agriculture and mechanization fueled a continued reduction in small plot farms. Landless rates of 12 percent in 1961 increased to 29 percent in 1971 and 41 percent in 1975.[11] These figures do not capture the full extent of the problem. Farms over 1,000 hectares were less than 1 percent of all farms, but constituted 38.7 percent of farmland, and oligarchic families often owned multiple farms. Farms under a hectare constituted 48.9 percent of total farms, but 5 percent of farm land. Thus, even among those with land, a sharp divide existed between a few oligarchs and many peasants who had barely enough to live off. Temporary day workers increased from 27.6 percent of the population in 1961 to 38.1 percent in 1971, while permeant day workers increased from 12.4 percent to 17.1.[12] By 1981, one third of Salvadorans, 1.8 million people, were landless, the highest ratio in Latin America.[13] 76.4 percent

[7] The oligarchs pointed out that the *La Matanza* uprising was preceded by limited reforms to support the claim that that any sort of reform fueled communism. Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 56-58.

[8] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 68-75.

[9] Russell Crandall, *The Salvador Option: The United States in El Salvador, 1977-1992* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 22.

[10] Elisabeth Jean Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 24.

[11] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 94. Byrne offers a different calculation for landlessness, with 19.8% of families without land in 1961 and 41.1% without land in 1971. Whether calculated by individuals or families, the central point is that landlessness increased dramatically. Hugh Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War: A Study of Revolution* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner 1996), 19-21.

[12] Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action*, 23-24.

[13] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 154.

of rural workers lived in poverty and 55.4 percent in extreme poverty, unable to afford basic food needs.[14] It is thus not shocking that peasants in the 1960s and 1970s were receptive to activist Catholic clergy preaching liberation theology, with its focus on human rights and social justice.[15]

While rural landlessness increased, El Salvador's urban middle and working class grew in conjunction with limited and temporary political openings in the 1960s and early 1970s. The Christian Democratic Party (*Partido Demócrata Cristiano*, PDC) grew after 1962 political reforms.[16] While not formally connected to the Catholic Church, the PDC drew heavily on Catholic social doctrine, especially Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, which criticized both Marxism and unrestrained capitalism.[17] The party's leading figure, José Napoleón Duarte, developed a reputation as an effective, responsive mayor of San Salvador and built a mass support base.[18]

By allowing limited openings for political organization while at the same time preserving the military-oligarchy monopoly on the national government, FAES created an explosive situation. In 1972, the National Opposition Union (*Unión Nacional Opositora*, UNO) united PDC presidential candidate Duarte and socialist National Revolutionary Movement (*Movimiento Nacional Revolucionaria*, MNR) vice-presidential candidate Guillermo Ungo in a race against military candidate Colonel Armando Molina. After early counting showed Duarte leading, the military stopped coverage of the vote count, ordered FAES officers to stuff ballots, and declared Molina the winner by 1.3 percent.[19] In the 1977 election, which pitted Colonel Ernesto

[14] Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action*, 24.
[15] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 53-58.
[16] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 78-79.
[17] *Rerum Novarum* acknowledged property as a natural right and rejected violent revolution as embraced by some Marxists. At the same time, it asserted the rights of workers and a requirement for social responsibility in use and administration of property. The PDC also drew from Pius XI's 1931 *Quadragesimo Anno*, which also criticized unregulated capitalism and affirmed the rights of workers to organize. Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 48-50.
[18] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 78-79.
[19] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 25; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 104-05.

Claramount and PDC member Antonio Morales Ehrlich, UNO's presidential and vice presidential candidates, respectively, against General Carlos Humberto Romero, FAES was more careful to ensure victory. They set up voting booths outside of the city in areas inaccessible to poor voters, arrested poll watchers, stuffed ballot boxes, and "created" 150,000 non-existent voters.[20] The 1970s elections conclusively demonstrated to many Salvadorans that they had no viable legal options for reform.[21]

5.1.2 Guerilla Organization and Strategy

As FAES closed legal pathways for resistance, membership in Marxist and revolutionary groups grew dramatically.[22] Resistance to the state grew from three sources: labor unions, Christian communities, and academic institutions, both at the university and high school level.[23] Resistance developed across a range of political and insurgent groups, but these would consolidate under the umbrella of a single organization, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (*Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional*, FMLN).

Of the five groups that constituted the FMLN, three had Marxist origins and outlooks: the Communist Party of El Salvador (*Partido Comunista Salvadoreño*, PCS), the Popular Liberation Forces (*Fuerzas Populares de Liberación*, FPL), and the Central American Revolutionary Workers' Party (*Partido Revolucionario de Trabajadores Centro*, PRTC). Two others, the People's Revolutionary Army (*Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo*, ERP) and the Armed Forces of National Resistance (*Fuerzas Armadas de Resistencia Nacional*, FARN or RN), grew out of Catholic inspired teaching.[24]

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[20] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 105-06.
[21] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 25.
[22] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 88-89.
[23] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 91-92.
[24] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 34.

These groups differed significantly in their preferred strategies, leading to considerable contention and fractionalization in the FMLN.[25] The PCS initially sought to work through legal, electoral means but jointed the FMLN in 1980, after the failure of the reformist coup to produce improvements.[26] The FPL was the largest group. It arose out of disputes within the PCS and maintained its Marxist-Leninist character. It sought an alliance with progressive military officers and with the middle class, which it hoped would seize power after armed uprising. Unlike other groups, it rejected Guevara style *focoism* in favor of a Giap style peasant war of the people.[27] The PRTC broke from the ERP in 1973, was the smallest group, and sought Central American region wide revolution.[28] The ERP drew from younger Salvadorans, the middle class, and church influenced intellectuals. Based out of Morazán, it was the most powerful organization militarily and the least ideological. ERP's Joaquín Villalobos would become among the most important of FMLN leaders and strategists. Finally, FARN split from ERP after Villalobos ordered the murder of Salvadoran poet, Marxist intellectual, and ERP critic Roque Dalton. It had a strong labor movement following and made contacts with FAES officers in the early 1970s, though this outreach largely failed. Next to ERP, it was the largest group and was responsible for many of the kidnappings for ransom that plagued El Salvador in the 1970s and 1980s.[29]

In April 1980, the Democratic Revolutionary Front (*Frente Democrático Revolucionario*, FDR) formed as a political party and an international voice for the rebel movements. FDR most

[25] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 48.
[26] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 52.
[27] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 34-35; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 49-50.
[28] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 51.
[29] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 69; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 48.

closely associated with FARN, though the two distanced from each other later in the 1980s as FDR criticized insurgent human rights abuses and opened to negotiations to end the war.[30]

The five groups unified as the FMLN in October 1980, in part at the insistence of Fidel Castro, who made unification a condition for Cuban assistance.[31] FMLN also drew considerable assistance from the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, the eastern bloc in Europe, and Vietnam.[32] By the end of 1980, FMLN as a unified organization claimed 6,000 to 8,000 fighters, 100,000 militia members, and a million sympathizers.[33]

Despite internal differences, FMLN adopted a three-part strategy. First, it rejected elections and sought to overthrow the regime through armed struggle. Second, it sought to create a mass popular organization. Third, it would focus on peasants and rural workers.[34] By 1981, it generally adopted conventional military tactics.[35] This full embrace of armed struggle marked a significant break from reform approaches of the 1960s and 1970s, which at least left open the possibility of legal methods.

5.1.3 Initial Government Response

Government reaction to both the legal PDC reformers and to the guerillas increased radicalization while at the same time producing a military internal coup. Byrne explains that during the 1970s, government rejection of limited socioeconomic reforms removed the "safety valve" that previous military presidents had used to limit dissent, while closing legal political alternatives cut off non-violent options for reformers, and intense state repression drove

[30] FDR's importance diminished after the formation of Democratic Convergence (*Convergencia Democrática*, CD) in 1987. Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 76-77; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 74-75; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 52-53.
[31] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 70.
[32] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 167-75.
[33] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 70.
[34] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 33.
[35] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 82-83.

otherwise moderate reformers to the guerillas.[36] By 1979, President Carlos Romero was under pressure from all sides and was aware of the possibility of a coup. In fact, several factions were simultaneously plotting coups, though Romero viewed the far right as his greatest threat.[37]

The coup came from an unexpected source. The Military Youth Movement (*Movimiento de la Juventud Militar*, MJM) was a reformist group of military officers organized in 1976 that were part of a longer Salvadoran tradition in which junior officers tended to hold more reformist views, while senior officers tended towards conservativism. The Sandinista overthrow of Anastasio Samoza Debayle in Nicaragua fueled the MJM's imperative to act in hopes of preventing a similar leftist overthrow in El Salvador. In October 1979, they unseated Romero in a bloodless coup and formed the first of a series of military juntas over the next few years.[38]

The initial junta, composed of three civilians and two military officers, simultaneously oversaw largely failed attempts at land reforms and perhaps the most repressive mass killing in El Salvador since *La Matanza*. This seeming contradiction was in part a result of a divided FAES. MJM members, led by junta member and previously obscure Colonel Adolfo Arnoldo Majano, made up only a portion of FAES. To their right were a group of moderate to conservative officers.[39] Leading this group were Colonel Jamie Abdul Gutiérrez, the second

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[36] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 42.

[37] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 133.

[38] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 55; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 122-25; Brian D'Haeseleer, *The Salvadoran Crucible: The Failure of US Counterinsurgency Policy in El Salvador, 1979-1992* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2017), 54; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 99.

[39] The exact breakdown between factions is difficult to judge. Stanley assessed that reformers made up over half the military, but few of the senior officers and even fewer of the prominent ones. By contrast, Bosh estimates that the military was about 65 percent center right, 20 percent progressive, 10 percent ultra conservative, with 5 percent falling into a host of categories from truly uncommitted to far left. In either case, the reformers were disadvantaged by both less rank and seniority, and by less political experience and savvy. The so-called moderate conservatives were willing to share information with extreme right run death squads. US Brigadier General Fred Woerner noted the moderates' reluctance to even admit that the extremists existed, and the lines between the two blurred in practice. Brian J. Bosch, *The Salvadoran Officer Corps and the Final Offensive of 1981* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1999), 43; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 136; Max G. Manwaring and Court Prisk, eds., *El Salvador at War: An Oral History of Confilct from the 1979 Insurrection to the Present* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1998), 55-56.

military member of the junta, Minister of Defense Colonel José Guillermo García, and the hard-right Colonel Nicolás Carranza, Chief of Staff. Generally viewed as moderates before the coup, Gutiérrez and García moved to the right afterwards. Also in this group was Colonel Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova, who would serve as National Guard chief and, along with García, had been considered a likely future President in the late 1970s.[40] Finally, the far right was led by the cashiered Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, who despite being forced from the military and despite his attempt at another coup to overthrow the junta, maintained his close connections with the members of his *tanda*, with intelligence officers in the security forces, and with a small group of junior "extreme right wing zealots."[41] In practice, it was sometimes difficult to draw a bright line between the so called moderate conservatives and the smaller group of extremists, and the former cooperated directly with the later.[42]

The more politically experienced conservatives outmaneuvered and sidelined the progressives by September 1980 and pushed Majano out by December.[43] Gutiérrez elevated members of his and aligned *tandas* of 1956, 1957, and 1958 to key positions and to all major troop commands, including García's elevation to Minister of Defense.[44] The conservatives drew support from close ties between García, Casanova, and the large and influential "*tandona*," or *tanda* of 1966.[45] Majano also created significant backlash when he arrested D'Aubuisson for an attempted second coup without informing the rest of the junta, and in the process arrested members of other influential *tandas*.[46]

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[40] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 29-34.
[41] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 38.
[42] Byrne, for example, notes that the so-called moderates often sided with the extreme right. Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 60; Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 55-56.
[43] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 129.
[44] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 147-48.
[45] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 153.
[46] García called for a military wide vote to determine whether he or Majano had final authority of FAES, ultimately rendering Majano powerless. In addition to sidelining Majano himself, García removed MJM officers

Based on a vote of FAES officers, a new junta formed in December 1980 with four members. As a concession, the junta brought in Duarte, who had previously been arrested, tortured, and exiled after his electoral defeat, as President. Gutiérrez served as Vice President with two additional civilian members. A civilian President and civilian majority of members might have appealed to the PDC, reformist officers, and potential foreign supporters like the United States. However, the civilians were largely powerless. Gutiérrez assumed the title of Commander-in-Chief. García explained to the General Staff that Duarte and the civilians would have no authority over military matters. Instead, Gutiérrez dealt with military matters in consultation with the General Staff.[47] To put matters more bluntly, on December 22, National Guard Director Vides explained to the junta, "Colonel García is the man from whom we take orders, not the junta. We have put you into position where you are, and for the things that are needed here, we don't need you. We have been running the country for fifty years, and we are prepared to keep running it."[48] In short, civilian President or not (and García distinguished to the General Staff that Duarte was the President of the junta, but not the republic), FAES still controlled the state.[49] This would not change until Duarte's election in his own right in 1984, and even then, it was not clear that the President controlled the military.

5.2 1979-1984: The Effects of Corrupt Appointments and Promotions

The promotion and appointments system in FAES entirely detached merit from career advancement and even discouraged evaluation of an officer's military effectiveness. The result

from key positions and assigned many overseas to minimize their influence. Majano resisted the moves in a standoff that he eventually lost. Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 39-57.

[47] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 54-55.

[48] Quoted in Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 174.

[49] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 55.

was a culture that privileged *tanda* loyalty over military ends and precluded internal monitoring. Thus, despite US funded military training and significant increases in force size, FAES remained an ineffective force across all components of PCC during the period.

5.2.1 Promotion and Appointment Systems in El Salvador

The "*tanda* system" determined appointment to key positions in FAES. The system eliminated merit and performance evaluation from consideration as criteria for promotion. Instead, it created an officer corps consisting of webs of mini "protective societies" based on military academy graduating classes. The system began at the Salvadoran military academy. The Captain General Gerardo Barrios school (*Escuelar Militar Capitán General Gerardo Barrios*) focused more on marches, beatings, and physical hardship then academic, tactical, or strategic training, attriting about three quarters of each class in the process. It taught cadets that the civilian world was "decadent, immoral and corrupt" and built "unbreakable alliances" among those who graduated. Each graduating class formed a "*tanda*," literally translated as a "round."[50]

Enhancing this comradery was the fact that the academy drew largely from the poor and middle class. Though FAES officers would never achieve the wealth or social status of the oligarchs, admission and graduation served as the poor's best option to better their socio-economic status.[51] Retired officer Armand Interiano explained, "Their goals are largely materialistic. It comes from growing up poor." Graduation was also a pathway to political power, and the school was nicknamed the "School of the Presidents."[52] Honor graduates served as class

[50] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 61; Joel Millman, "El Salvador's Army: A Force Onto Itself," *The New York Times Magazine* (New York), Dec. 10 1989, https://www.nytimes.com/1989/12/10/magazine/el-salvador-s-army-a-force-unto-itself.html.

[51] Christian, "El Salvador's Divided Military," 51; Millman, "El Salvador's Army."

[52] Millman, "El Salvador's Army."

leaders. While class leadership could change over time, *tandas* identified members with presidential potential early.[53]

The academy taught that, "welfare of the Army and the welfare of the fatherland are indistinguishable."[54] However, for the approximately twenty who graduated the grueling program out of the 100 to 150 who entered in each class, loyalty to one's graduating class was most important of all.[55] *Tanda* loyalty took priority over political ideology or branch of service. *Tandas* fiercely protected their members, to include covering for wanton incompetence, murder, rape, kidnapping, and theft. *Tandas* also formed alliances with other *tandas* when it was in their mutual interest to advance the classes.[56] The leading members of each *tanda* went on to serve as brigade commanders, where they used the graft connected with their positions to enrich the other members of the *tanda*.[57]

Promotion through colonel was entirely *tanda* based, on a set timeline, and devoid of any consideration of past performance except minimal military school requirements.

Table 5.1: Salvadoran Officer Promotion Schedule, 1981

Rank	Years in Rank
Sub-Lieutenant to Lieutenant	4
Lieutenant to Captain	5
Captain to Major	4
Major to Lieutenant Colonel	4
Lieutenant Colonel to Colonel	4
Colonel to General	4

SOURCE: Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 7.

Tanda members accepted that their entire class would move together. Bringing attention to ones' self before it was a *tanda's* "time" could produce rebuke. Officers sometimes moved into

[53] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 4-6.
[54] Millman, "El Salvador's Army."
[55] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 3.
[56] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 4-6; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 61-62.
[57] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 61; Millman, "El Salvador's Army."

positions billeted for more senior ranks, but in these cases, the moves were more likely based on *tanda* politics than merit, and rank promotion did not accompany the new position. Thus, a general might report to a colonel serving as Minister of Defense, but the colonel would hold his rank until promotion of his entire *tanda*.[58]

The United States used the Salvadoran army's rapid expansion in the 1980s to attempt to break the *tanda* system but failed. FAES had about 600 officers in the 1970s. As the force expanded, the United States trained over 1,000 junior officers, raised up from the enlisted ranks, in the United States and Panama. It hoped that the influx of new officers would increase professionalism and competence while undermining the *tandas*.[59]

Non-*tanda* officers were never able to break the system. They were sometimes reinserted into the military academy after their American training, distributed between *tandas* to dilute their effects.[60] Young officers trained at Fort Benning, Georgia and the Regional Military Training Center in Panama were labeled "gringo" officers, especially if they advocated American tactics and methods.[61] The United States did have some success in promoting the reputations of particularly aggressive officers among senior Salvadoran leadership, and a group of so called "praetorians" developed. Despite these minor advances, the *tanda* system never broke, and US efforts created internal tension as the praetorians resented what they viewed as lethargic, barracks based senior leadership. [62]

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[58] Ironically, the purpose of the rigid time based promotion system, established in the 1930s, was to prevent political cronyism, but it instead contributed to the corrupt *tanda* system, removing merit as a consideration for promotion. Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 4-7.

[59] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 61-63.

[60] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 5.

[61] Andrew J. Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador* (Washington, D.C Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc., 1988), 26-27.

[62] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 61-63; William M. LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard: The United States in Central America, 1977-1992* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 182.

In sum, merit played no role in promotion in the Salvadoran officer corps. Promotion was guaranteed on a set timeline through colonel. While only some would move into top command or staff billets, jockeying between *tandas* for favorable positions of power, not assessment of particular officers' merits, determined who moved into key positions. The protection networks formed by the *tandas* undermined individual accountability by protecting incompetence and criminal activity while encouraging a culture of personal gain and shared graft.

5.2.2 Command Structure

The *tanda* system undermined military discipline, contributing to a military in which orders were optional and subordinates worked around seniors based on personalistic and *tanda* relationships. It created an organizational culture that privileged personal and factional gain over military objectives. Its "protective society" nature undermined monitoring, evaluation, and accountability.

Formal Organization

FAES managed itself through a convoluted command and control structure and was too small for the war at hand. The formal command structure looked like a standard military organization, but real authority was vested in personal relationships. Each level of command maintained tenuous control of its subordinates. Of these shortcomings, only the military's size would change significantly

Force Size and Structure. FAES began the war well understrength, with approximately 16,600 personnel, to include the military services and security forces. It would more than triple in size by the end of the war. FAES consisted of three traditional military forces, the army, the navy, and the air force, along with security forces consisting of the National Guard, National Police, and Treasury Police.

Between 1980 and 1981, the army numbered 9,000 men. The army's Chief of the General Staff held formal authority over the other forces. The navy was a tiny 140 men with four boats and coastal patrol and search and rescue responsibilities.[63] The Salvadoran Air Force (*Fuerza Aérea Salvadoreña*, FAS) consisted of a small paratrooper battalion, security force, anti-aircraft unit, and four squadrons of 67 aircraft. Pilots, trained to fly multiple aircraft, were proficient at none, and were incapable of providing close air support. In 1982, an insurgent attack on Ilocano Air Base destroyed much of FAS.[64] The Reagan administration pledged $55 million within four days to cover the $25 million in damages and fund Army and Air Force expansion and training.[65]

As the army grew, it expanded from three to six brigades, coincident with national territorial divisions. Each brigade commander served as a zone commander with three nominally subordinate but largely independent departments commanded by lieutenant colonels, and two to three battalions per department.[66]

While the army and FAS were structured for external defense, internal defense was initially the responsibility of the security forces of the National Guard, National Police, and Treasury Police. The National Guard, with approximately 3,000 people divided over five regional commands, was traditionally led by an Army officer. It was initially formed in 1912 to enforce vagabond laws forcing Indians to work for wealthy landholders. The Treasury Police, at about 1,500 with assistance from 530 Customs Police, was officially formed to prevent contraband and ensure collection of taxes. In practice, however, it also enforced labor on

[63] Cynthia Arnson, "The Frente's Opposition: The Security Forces of El Salvador," in *El Salvador: Central America in the New Cold War*, ed. Marvin E. Gettleman et al. (New York: Grove Press, 1981), 136.

[64] Arnson, "El Salvador," 136-38; James S. Corum, "The Air War in El Salvador," *Airpower Journal* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 29, 32.

[65] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 150-51.

[66] Robert D. Ramsey III, *Advising IndigenousForces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, 83-84 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006).

oligarch land. The National Police, at 2,800, also provided a national intelligence unit.[67] By the 1960s and 1970s, the security forces had essentially become state mercenaries for the business and landowning classes.[68] They often lived on oligarch's farms and operated at the direction of the farm owners or managers. The National Guard saying, "Authority that does not abuse loses its prestige," provides a sense of their organizational mentality.[69]

Paramilitary Organizations. By law, the post-1979 juntas banned the most important of the paramilitary elements of the armed forces. In practice, the paramilitaries, often manned by both on and off duty, active and retired military personnel, continued to do much of the assassination related dirty work of the military.

The most important of these organizations were the National Democratic Organization (*Organizacion Democratica Nationalista*, abbreviated as ORDEN, Spanish for order) and the Salvadoran National Special Security Service (ANSESAL). Formed in 1962 by Colonel José "Chele" Medrano with assistance from the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and US Green Beret Colonel Arthur Simmons, ORDEN claimed to "teach the peasants the fundamentals of democracy" and "indoctrinate them against the dangers of communism."[70] Its 50,000 to 100,000 members, including former military officers, peasants, and small landholders, benefited from the right to carry weapons, access to farming supplies, health care, education, jobs, and exemption from National Guard repression. Officially, ORDEN reported to the National Guard, and it often served as a goon squad for the National Guard and the Treasury Police, but like the Guard, ORDEN also frequently worked directly for landlords.[71]

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[67] Arnson, "El Salvador," 136-37; Christian, "El Salvador's Divided Military," 51-52.
[68] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 72.
[69] Christian, "El Salvador's Divided Military," 52.
[70] Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 53; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 21, 44; D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 48; Jacqueline L. Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation in Counterinsurgency Warfare" (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 2011), 249.
[71] Arnson, "El Salvador," 137; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 81-82; Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action*, 95.

ANSESAL evolved from the Salvadoran Security Service, starting with fifteen people, but grew into a large presidential security service under General José Medrano. In addition to its intelligence gathering functions in cooperation with ORDEN, it served as a go between to hire out government security force personnel to companies and farms.[72]

Officially, the junta disbanded ORDEN in Decree 12 on 6 November 1979.[73] ORDEN declared that it would go underground and continue operations clandestinely on 13 November 1979. Members of the high command continued to support D'Aubuisson and ORDEN while transferring some of its spy functions to the C-II (intelligence) and some of its assassination functions to the National Police. Likewise, a new version of ANSESAL continued to work under general staff direction.[74]

Command and Control. On paper, FAES command and control looked like that of a standard military organization. In practice, orders skipped levels of command, orders were optional suggestions with no accountability for disobedience, and personal relationships often carried more weight than the office of command.

At FAES's top was the High Command, which consisted of the President, given the title "*comandante general*," the Minister of Defense and Public Safety, the Vice Minister of Defense and Public Safety, and the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. During juntas, the junta as a whole traditionally held the position of "*comandante general*," though as explained above, once Duarte jointed the junta, the military made clear that civilians would have no role.

Below the high command and general staff sat a convoluted structure of brigade / department commanders, zone commanders, and battalion and company commanders. In

[72] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 99.
[73] Arnson, "El Salvador," 137; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 150.
[74] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 167, 89.

practice, brigade commanders had limited authority, with orders generally transmitted from High Command directly to individual departments. Similarly, company commanders frequently operated independently from their battalions.[75] The general staff and brigade staffs worked off a voting system. When a command received an infeasible or undesirable order, common practice was to ignore it, without necessarily informing the higher command.[76] Nor did department or zone commanders control the security forces working in their areas. Officially, security forces worked for their services. In practice, they often worked as mercenaries for local landlords.[77]

Challenging unexecuted orders was rare. Commanders viewed doing so as a loss of face as it required admitting that their orders had been ignored. When commanders did insist on orders, subordinates used personal relationships to circumvent their higher command. Friendships and alliances between *tandas* led to appeals to the General Staff, Chief of Staff, or Minister of Defense.[78] In short, a complex web of personal, inter-*tanda*, and cross-*tanda* loyalties meant more than formal lines of command, a troubling structure for a military organization.

Competence and Expertise

While FAES officers had at least some exposure to population centric counterinsurgency principals through foreign education, both internal and external assessments during this period suggest that military competence was low from the tactical level of the private or lieutenant all the way up to the operational and strategic level of the general staff. An American advisor in 1979 said of FAES that it was "a military of 11,000 that had no mission," while another characterized the army as "sitting in garrison abusing civilians."[79] Nor did FAES's overall

[75] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 18-20.
[76] Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 257-58.
[77] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 164-65.
[78] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 305.
[79] Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 24.

performance improve over the next few years. US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) Commander-in-Chief (CINC) General Wallace H. Nutting assessed that, "at the end of '82, early '83…[the] whole thing was about to go down the tubes. The leftist guerrillas…were very strong. The armed forces did not have their act together."[80]

These assessments were not uniquely American. Some Salvadoran leaders recognized their own shortcomings. Junta member General Gutiérrez identified "three fundamental, grave deficiencies in the armed forces – (1) a total lack of equipment, (2) lack of training, and (3) mostly, it was not being prepared to confront the type of problems we were facing at the time…we did not have the ability to command a small unit. We did not have anyone prepared to train small unit commanders. This was probably the most serious deficiency."[81] Junta President Duarte also recognized the lack of training and expertise in the army and sought US training assistance. He hoped that a more professional and proficient army could assume greater responsibility from the security forces and would be less likely to commit atrocities.[82]

The most thorough assessment of the Salvadoran military from this period came from the team of US Brigadier General Fred Woerner. In late 1981, Woerner was tasked to conduct an eight-week assessment of the Salvadoran situation and work with FAES to develop a strategy.[83] At all levels, his assessment was damning. FAES lacked any sort of overarching strategy and war

[80] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 89.

[81] Quoted in 18 December 1986 interview reprinted in Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 60.

[82] Stanley points out two issue with Duarte's logic. First, it made unrealistic assumptions about available US support and funding. Second, it assumed that right wing army officers would behave significantly differently from security forces and death squads. The second turned out to be particularly dubious. Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 213.

[83] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 70-71. Woerner initially planned a full political-military assessment, but reluctantly scaled down his effort to focus on the military due to resource and time constraints. Woerner agreed that beginning with the military was sub-optimal. He explained, "There was debate in Washington as to the scope of the mission. It was initially decided that we should assist the Salvadoran government with a comprehensive national strategy; however, on consideration of the scope, the effort was reduced to a national military strategy. The intent was that there would be a national strategy developed later, but I would agree with the argument that the process is the reverse of how it should be done." Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 114.

plan. He described their national strategy as "a couple of pages of political platitudes but nothing substantive that would provide an operative plan in order to establish a pluralistic democratic society. It was more a statement of grand idealistic, philosophic, ideological objectives – ideological objectives, not even political objective."[84] Nor did the Woerner's critique stop at the level inept plans and grand strategy. Despite any lack of evidence, FAES leadership myopically assumed widespread public support for the government and FAES. Its personnel were not particularly competent at any type of warfare, counterinsurgency or otherwise. The D-2 intelligence chief, for example, was described as "incompetent, lazy, and stupid."[85]

Defense Minister García was a skilled political operative but poor soldier and military strategist. Mid-level commanders lacked combat experience and were in no rush to gain it. Provincial or Brigade commanders favored large sweep operations, in part because these provided more opportunity to engage in graft and personal profit. García would not remove incompetent or corrupt officers. They provided his base of support in political struggles with D'Aubuisson and hardliner Colonel Nicolás Carranza.[86]

The situation was worse at the junior officer and enlisted level. Enlisted ranks were underfunded, poorly trained, and poorly equipped, with ragged uniforms and boots and too little ammunition to train with their weapons. Junior officer equipping and training was little better.[87] Particularly problematic was the absence of a non-commissioned officer (NCO) corps. Beyond raising a few literate soldiers to NCO positions to serve in specialized billets such as clerks or radiomen, FAES placed little emphasis on NCOs. When they did raise enlisted to NCO ranks in response to US pressure, longevity of service, not performance, was the criteria for promotion.

[84] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 115.
[85] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 70-71.
[86] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 181.
[87] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 64-65.

Even if FAES commanders had wanted to conduct the small unit operations typical of PCC, they lacked competent small unit leaders at the fire team, squad, and platoon level to do so.[88]

Woerner's assessment and recommendations would guide Salvadoran strategy and US support through the 1980s.[89] The report made two primary sets of recommendations. The first focused on "preparation for the war or the force structure and training required," including "creating ten additional battalions (8 infantry and 2 quick reaction)…the improvement of command control, communications, intelligence system, combat service support system and training base; modernizing the Air Force rotary wing and fixed wing inventory; and increasing the number of Navy patrol boats."[90] The second focused on "the fighting of the war," to include "aggressive, small unit, day and night operations," assignment of eight of the new infantry battalions "in some of the most highly contested areas of the country," and "coordinated efforts of interdiction and protection of electoral processes and the economic infrastructure."[91]

Institutionally, US trainers set the lofty goals of subordinating the military to civil authority, developing institutional respect for human rights, and rationalizing military internal processes to create a system that rewarded success, removed incompetence, and promoted the

[88] US trainers did attempt to create an NCO corps, but largely failed to do so. Bacevich et el. suggests that Salvadoran military culture neither accommodated nor welcomed NCOs. "In retrospect, the American attempt to create an NCO corps appears naïve and presumptuous." This may well be true, but does not change the assessment that FAES lacked the requisite small unit leaders to conduct PCC. Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 14-15; Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 27-28, quote on 28; Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 94.

[89] One potential critique of Woerner and of the US role in general was that it was "too American" in that it provided a foreign imposed solution that FAES did not fully accept, or accepted only as far as necessary as to maintain US material support. This is a potential problem in any foreign attempt to advise or train a military force. However, there is also evidence that FAES's high command at least attempted to adopt Woerner's recommendations. Of note, General Nutting credited Woerner with improving relationships between FAES leadership, the US Military Group in El Salvador, and the larger US military and suggests that he attempted to help FAES leadership work through their own problems as opposed to dictating solutions. Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 113.

[90] Fred E. Woerner, *Report of the El Salvador Military Strategy Assistance Team (Draft)* (San Salvador, El Salvador: US Department of Defense, 1981), iii.

[91] Woerner, *Report of the El Salvador Military Strategy Assistance Team (Draft)*, iii.

most talented.[92] Tactically, they sought to develop basic small unit tactics that were aggressive while preventing civilian abuse.[93] In short, Woerner's recommendations and subsequent approach included many of the components of classic PCC – small unit operations to gain control of contested territory, government legitimacy, reduction in civilian victimization through observance of human rights, and, if not an increase in service provision, at least legitimacy and economic stability through elections and protection of existing infrastructure. (As discussed below, the subsequent National Plan would incorporate service provision as well.)

FAES institutional progress during this period was limited, though it made some improvements in tactical and operational competence. Through US training assistance, it raised overall tactical and operational skill. In addition to the individual officers and enlisted trained in Panama and the United States, the US funded and trained new units. Most important were the Immediate Reaction Battalions (*Los Batallones (de Infantería) de Reacción Inmediata*, BIRI), relatively highly trained, well equipped units intended to conduct small unit operations anywhere in the country. With US assistance, FAES fielded the first BIRI in 1980 and had five by 1982.[94] FAES also created *cazador* or "Hunter" battalions. About one third the size of the BIRIs at 350 troops each and assigned locally, they conducted small unit operations and long-range reconnaissance. The *cazador* battalions also trained with US assistance in Honduras.[95] As discussed below, as relatively expert organizations created after the war had begun, and trained

[92] Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 24-25; D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 68-70.
[93] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 226-27.
[94] BIRI were approximately 1,300 strong. The first, the Atlacatl Battalion, was trained in El Salvador, but the others were trained outside the country. Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 239, 59; D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 72.
[95] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 73.

separately from the rest of the army, the BIRI serve as a useful case for assessing the role of both expertise and formative history absent a merit based promotions system.[96]

As long as the promotion system did not select on merit, there was no mechanisms to ensure that better trained and more competent officers would rise. Colonel Lyman Duryea, US Defense Attaché in El Salvador from 1983 to 1985, explained,

> *The problem is that the promotion system in El Salvador is not really based on merit. It's based on time in grade and time in service and certain schools and gates*…There's a selection process for Command and General Staff College, but once a guy has made lieutenant colonel, he's going to make colonel right along with his classmates. The narrowing point comes for promotion to general officer…you have some good guys who are getting into those positions of command, you have some mediocre and some *poor guys at the grade of lieutenant colonel and colonel for whom a home in the service must be found somewhere…There's no procedure for booting these guys out of the service or not promoting them. They get promoted, and they've got to be assigned somewhere*.[97]

As the theory advanced in this dissertation predicts, Duryea did not find every FAES officer incompetent, but instead found that without a merit-based system, competence varied greatly across the officer corps, with an overall detrimental effect on institutional competence. Even at the general officer level, the "narrowing point," selection often had more to do with *tanda* politics than with an individual's military excellence.

In sum, based on both external and internal assessments, FAES in the period from 1979 to 1984 made some improvements in individual competence through training. However, there was no mechanism to advance better trained and more skilled officers ahead of peers, and there is little evidence that these individual improvements translated to a more competent force. Senior officers, while politically adept, were poor strategists. Field commanders had no combat

[96] To call the BIRI "relatively expert" or "relatively elite" is to compare them to the rest of FAES. They still had serious shortcomings. Hazelton, for example, notes that they had problems with basic fire discipline. Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 259.

[97] Italics added. Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 301.

experience and no desire to gain it. Even if they had wanted to conduct small unit PCC operations, a weak junior officer corps and nearly non-existent NCO corps denied them the requisite small unit leadership.

Organizational Culture

For Salvadoran officers, FAES was primarily a pathway for political, social, and economic advancement. Officers gained the first two by patiently working through the *tanda* system. Officers gained the third in part through side graft and corruption which the *tanda* system protected. As predicted by the theory, this organizational culture, engendered by a system of personal and factional loyalty that detached performance evaluation from appointments, produced a military in which leaders at all levels were quick to make personal gains but reluctant to engage in high risk combat activities.

In line with Interiano's claim that officers' goals were "largely materialistic," officers within *tandas* supported each other in attempts at personal and group self-enrichment. "Gifts, kickbacks, the contracting out of soldiers and security agents as private security guards, offers to invest with members of the bourgeoisie, and even (during the war) the sale of arms and munitions were but a few of the schemes that enabled the sons of artisans and petty shopkeepers to retire as 'fat cats' thirty years to the day after they entered military service."[98] These illicit benefits, not just the military paycheck, provided officers increased economic status.

Taking risks by engaging with the enemy was not part of the FAES socio-economic improvement pathway. Colonel James Steele, who served as Commander of the US Military Group in El Salvador from 1984 to 1986, assessed the relationship between personal gain and duty in FAES this way, "I am talking about a military force whose role was one of a praetorian

[98] Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 52.

guard, a garrison force. People joined the military with the idea of upward mobility. Certainly, no one joined the military with the idea of having to die in the process."[99] Commentators referred to FAES as a "garrison military" with officers working a "nine to five" job well into the war. Perversely, officers held in highest esteem by their *tanda* peers landed comfortable positions, while those sent to dangerous combat positions "tended to be the total incompetents."[100]

This reluctance to accept hardship and danger among the officer corps had effects down the chain of command. Soldiers and junior officers sarcastically claimed that senior officers "didn't even own fatigues" based on their reluctance to come to the field.[101] When questioned about soldiers' poor performance during execution of the National Plan, the nationwide counterinsurgency campaign plan, one FAES commander explained honestly, "These troops have nothing to fight for, and subsequently, they do not fight."[102]

Again, Colonel Duryea provided insightful analysis linking factors, this time between officer corruption and soldier performance:

> Suffice to say that the system doesn't cleanse itself, that the institutional solidarity is such that *officers who were known to be corrupt were not punished for their corruption,* and this *causes a very serious degradation of discipline* through the structure…These all have the effects of detracting from discipline and detract, I believe, from the confidence that officers have in their own soldiers. They hesitate to demand great things of them in some cases because *they know that their own basis for demanding sacrifice is* a little bit *on the weak side*.[103]

The protective *tanda* system encouraged a culture of personal gain and shirking of danger and hardship among the officer corps. As a result, senior officers were in no position to demand that junior subordinates and enlisted ranks undertake danger either.

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[99] From 5 to 10 October 1986 interview and 5 November 1986 interview reprinted in Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 58.
[100] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 350, 69.
[101] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 349; Mark Danner, *The Massacre at El Mozote* (New York: Vintage, 1993), 38.
[102] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 225.
[103] Italics added. Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 304-05.

Monitoring Mechanisms

If the command structure could not create an organizational culture conducive to sacrifice and personal motivation, it was no better suited to provide performance monitoring and assessment, much less reward for high performance or punishment for poor performance. As discussed, orders were largely optional, and commanders did not inform superiors when they decided to ignore them.[104] Consequences for violations were rare and almost never serious. Woerner's report found,

> The Armed Forces, as an institution, has demonstrated a remarkable capacity for tolerating unprofessional and improper conduct…The tolerance has made the institution reluctant to admonish its own errors of professional judgement, acts of violence, and impropriety. Retirement, reassignment, and at worst, institutional exile, are the means for dealing with those who fail to achieve accepted standards of institutional conduct. Thus, the Armed Forces protects its own, ignoring, suppressing, covering up, or at most imposing minor punishments.[105]

Making matters worse, in sidelining reform-oriented officers by assignment to trivial positions during the power struggle in the first junta, the high command removed the very officers most likely to critically assess performance of the organization and its personnel.

D'Aubuisson's treatment after his failed coup was telling of the lack of repercussions. He was actually put on trial, a rarity even for major offenses, and in front of a judge ideologically associated with the reformists no less. However, Christian and Stanley assert that the judge was also a member of D'Aubuisson's *tanda*, practically guaranteeing that he would go free.[106] As was often the case, personal loyalty to *tanda* members overcame both extreme misconduct and political ideology.

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[104] Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 258.

[105] Woerner, *Report of the El Salvador Military Strategy Assistance Team (Draft)*, 43-44.

[106] Christian, "El Salvador's Divided Military," 50; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 203. Bosh disputes the assertion that the judge was a member of D'Aubuisson's *tanda*. He does not, however, dispute D'Aubuisson's clear guilt in coup plotting. Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 39.

Strategically more consequential for the war effort was FAES's inability to hold its personnel accountable for murder and gross human rights atrocities against the civilian population. On 19 January 1980, the junta officially ordered the military to stop human rights abuses, but the order had no effect as civilian victimization and targeted killing continued and became more indiscriminate.[107] Álvaro Magaña, interim president from 1982 to 1984, explained, "All the death squads are related to the army or paramilitary [security forces]. I have no power, no authority. The extreme right here is incredible.[108]

Two cases point to FAES's strong resistance to monitoring and accountability, both involving the murder of US citizens. On 2 December 1980, Ursuline nun Dorthy Kazel, Maryknoll nuns Ita Ford and Maura Clark, and lay Maryknoll member Jean Donovan were beaten, raped, and shot in the head execution style by the National Guard. Despite tremendous international and US pressure, the Salvadoran government took no significant action for three and a half years. Finally, giving into pressure, in May 1984, five low ranking National Guardsmen were prosecuted. There was no repercussion for those who gave the orders.[109]

On 3 January 1981, Americans Michael Hammer and Mark Perlman of the US sponsored American Institute of Free Labor Development (AIFLD) had dinner with Salvadoran labor official José Rodolfo Viera at the Sheraton hotel restaurant in San Salvador. National Guard Officer Rodolfo López Sibrián, Salvadoran Army Captain Eduardo Ávila, and businessman Hans Christ also happened to be dining in the same restaurant. On his orders,

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[107] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 210.

[108] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 228.

[109] Kazel and Donovan picked up Ford and Clark from an incoming flight at San Salvador's airport on 2 December 1980. The group was stopped on their return at a National Guard checkpoint. The religious women's beaten, raped, and shot bodies were found later and the murder tied back to the Guard. Americas Watch, *El Salvador's Decade of Terror: Human Rights Since the Assassination of Archbishop Romero* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 94-96; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 260-65.

Sibrián's body guards murdered the two Americans and Viera.[110] Under US pressure, Garciá pressed for some level of investigation, while D'Aubuisson and his hard-right allies opposed any actions. Only in February of 1986, after a failed attempt by Senator Edward Kennedy to cut Salvadoran military aid until the matter was resolved, were two National Guard members tried and convicted. Sibrián was detained and placed in a police lineup, but only after being allowed to shave his mustache and dye his red hair black to make him unidentifiable.[111]

The murders of the religious women and the AIFLD advisors were not unique. FAES political murders were commonplace. The significance of these murders, along with that of Archbishop Romero in 1980, for whom no prosecution took place and the investigation into which the military aggressively interfered, was threefold.[112] First, the "church women" and AIFLD were the exceptions to the general rule. They were the only prosecutions of military members in a war where such crimes were common. Second, prosecution took several years and tremendous foreign pressure, including US threats to cut funds. Third, the prosecution was limited to the lowest ranking personnel, with no attempt to work up the chain of command to those who gave the orders.[113]

Nor was lack of monitoring and accountability limited to extreme cases such as political murders or atrocities. It included tactical matters at the lowest levels of the officer corps. Low ranking reformist officers who objected to civilian victimization and supported PCC reforms faced assignment in the most dangerous areas, where they were more likely to face pressure to take part in abuses. If they resisted, they were accused of communist sympathies. In this way,

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[110] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 157-59.

[111] Americas Watch, *El Salvador's Decade of Terror*, 96-98; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 158-59; LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 155-56, 77.

[112] Among other forms of interference, security forces raided Socorro Jurídico's office and seized documents implicating the military in Romero's murder. Americas Watch, *El Salvador's Decade of Terror*, 89.

[113] Americas Watch, *El Salvador's Decade of Terror*, 95-96; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 160-66.

their hands were bloodied so that they could not monitor or enforce against others.[114] According to American military observers, junior officers did not even monitor the most basic tactical tasks of their soldiers to include basic security, weapons fire plans, or fighting positions.[115]

From basic tactical actions to political murders and death squad activities, FAES did not execute basic institutional monitoring and enforcement. In fact, it practiced retribution against those who might monitor and assess impropriety. Even in cases of tremendous international coverage and the threat of lost funding, FAES did not hold their personnel accountable, much less in cases of abuse of Salvadorans or basic tactical incompetence. Personal loyalty to one's patrons, allies, and *tanda*-mates dominated over military discipline, evaluation, and monitoring.

5.2.3 Counterinsurgency Effectiveness

While FAES initially stumbled into the war without a coherent approach, it and its American partners developed a three-part strategy that it attempted to execute between 1981 and 1984. First, it would grow, train, and equip the military. Second, it would wage "an aggressive, mobile, small-unit war to take the conflict to the insurgents, and force them out of the populace."[116] Finally, it would gain popular support through civic action programs and secure gains with civil-defense units. In short, it committed to a classic PCC campaign. In practice, the only component of the strategy it would effectively execute was the expansion of the military.[117]

Tactics and Operations to Gain Control

FAES failed to conduct the tactical and operational activities necessary to gain control of the population. US advisors encouraged PCC practices, to include small unit patrols, night operations, activity behind insurgent lines, close air support for units on the ground, and civic

[114] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 207.
[115] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 303.
[116] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 108.
[117] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 108.

action, but FAES made little progress in these areas.[118] Even when facing a more conventional onslaught during the FMLN's 1981 "Final Offensive," performance was wanting, calling into question explanations of FAES's ineffectiveness based on its conventional war history.

Tactics and Operations. FAES provided a textbook case of poor counterinsurgency practices – over-dedication of forces to fixed sites, large scale sweeps, lack of presence in the population, and civilian abuse. In late 1981, Woerner's team explained that, "the internal defense principle of the offensive through aggressive small unit operations, both day and night has been overshadowed by a defensive mentality" and, "…the Armed Forces High Command has adopted a strategically defensive posture…"[119] Troops stayed close to the barracks in what critics termed a "nine-to-five" army that even as late as 1983 took off weekends and holidays.[120] Nor did the growth of the army improve the situation. From 1982 to the end of 1983, FAES grew from 16,000 to 25,000. This significant growth should have allowed FAES to commit a greater portion of its force to offensive operations and civic actions. However, at the end of the period, FAES deployed 60 percent to 80 percent of all troops in static defense.[121]

When FAES did undertake operations, they consisted of large scale "encircle and annihilate" sweeps. It conducted twenty-eight of these with 1,000 troops each in the first half of 1981 with no success. The tactics continued in 1982 and 1983, though with smaller forces and shorter duration.[122] LeoGrande suggests that commanders preferred these large scale sweeps because "their jobs were sinecures, and they could reap more in graft from large maneuvers than from small patrols."[123] The tactics did little to gain military advantage for FAES.

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[118] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 79.
[119] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 82.
[120] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 79; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 348.
[121] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 357.
[122] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 82.
[123] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 181.

Near the end of the period, El Salvador formalized its three-part counterinsurgency strategy described above. The National Plan, implemented in 1983, was the first Salvadoran attempt at a comprehensive, nationally synchronized PCC strategy. The National Plan was modeled off of the United States' 1960s Civilian Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program in Vietnam.[124] The plan began by clearing San Vicente in June 1983 with about 7,000 troops.[125] This key area would split FMLN strongholds in Chalatenango and Morazán and secure the Pan-American Highway.[126] Led by the *cazador* battalions, FAES was to clear guerillas. It would then overwhelm the area with troops, recruit civilians into a civil defense corps to maintain long-term security, open schools and medical facilities, build and repair roads, and bolster local governments.[127] While FAES conducted military operations, the National Committee for the Restoration of Areas, or *Comité Nacional de Restauración de Áreas* (CONARA) managed civic action.[128]

The National Plan demonstrated early successes. Accomplishments included forcing the FMLN to withdraw, reopening of 41 schools, creation of seven cooperative farms, and vaccination campaigns.[129] However, the operations failed for several reasons. First, it was resource intensive – more resource intensive then El Salvador could likely commit to on a larger scale. Corruption and graft levels were high, wasting even more resources. CONARA gained a notorious reputation as a "black hole" for money.[130]

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[124] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 224.
[125] Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 44-45; Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 82; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 359-61.
[126] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 225.
[127] Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 44-45; Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 82.
[128] Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 44.
[129] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 359.
[130] Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 44-45.

Most important, once the specialized battalions pulled out, regular FAES forces proved unable to hold the terrain and population. FMLN attacks in late 1983 and early 1984 at El Paraíso and Cuscatlán Bridge required a diversion of troops.[131] Further, given ORDEN's history, peasants were reluctant to join civil defense corps. Initially, 500 of a planned 1,500 joined. Given lack of pay, equipment, or modern weapons, even these were hardly reliable and were known for selling their weapons to the FMLN.[132] By December 1983, the military had ceded control of all but the large towns and main roads, and only controlled those in daylight. The FMLN established shadow governments.[133] While overall force size and the need for the specialized battalions to respond to crises in other areas played a role in FAES inability to hold the terrain, so did the barracks bound mentality of the regular forces and distrust of civil defense rooted in past abuses.

One additional major event of the period is worth considering, less because of what it reveals about counterinsurgency effectiveness, but instead because of its implications for alternative explanations of effectiveness. On 19 January 1981, the FMLN launched a major group of attacks it dubbed the "Final Offensive." It hoped that the offensive would spark a mass public uprising against the government.[134] Estimates of the number of fighters vary. Crandall estimates just over 2,500 guerillas and a few hundred Cubans.[135] Bosch suggests approximately 3,700 full time guerillas and 5,000 part time insurgents.[136] The FMLN undertook 516 military actions across all 14 departments, including 81 attacks on military garrisons or posts.[137] FMLN

[131] The El Paraíso attack exemplified the results of FAES's part time mentality and reluctance to leave fixed sites. El Paraíso was the home to 4th Brigade and an impressive new US built headquarters. Knowing FAES took off time for weekends and holidays, FMLN attackers waited until the facility was undermanned. Their attack, one of the most devasting to FAES of the war, was made easier by a lack of external security or patrols. Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 348-60; D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 94.

[132] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 360.

[133] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 360; LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 226.

[134] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 60.

[135] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 176.

[136] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 105.

[137] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 80.

tactics and operations were largely conventional. In fact, during the entire period from 1981 through 1984, as explained by Colonel Steel, "They [the guerillas] were operating in large units almost in a conventional mode at times. They were operating in 100-man columns or more and confronting the Army consistently."[138]

If FAES's primary obstacle to successful counterinsurgency was its conventional war history, it should have been especially effective against the FMLN when the insurgents adopted a conventional approach. The FMLN's force during the offensive was sizable, but still much smaller than FAES. Further, FAES was fighting on the defense, always a significant advantage for force ratios.[139] Finally, the FMLN at the time was plagued by disorganization, disunity, and shortcomings in weapons, ammunition, and training.[140] Due to the death squads of the late 1970s and early 1980s, it also lacked significant leadership in urban areas. As ERP leader Joaquín Villalobos explained, in mid 1980, during the preparation period for the attack, "...we did not have the logistics nor the required armed apparatus…I am saying that we did not have the degree of unity in the revolutionary movement necessary to generate the conditions to rapidly create the armed apparatus."[141] Another FMLN leader explained, "If the enemy had been well prepared, efficient, and coordinated, we would have been annihilated."[142] In short, were FAES a solid

[138] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 145. Byrne and McClintock also note that under the influence of ERP, Nicaragua, and Cuba, the FMLN adopted a largely conventional approach in many of its activities in the early 1980s. It was not until 1984 that it adopted a prolonged "people's war" modeled off Vietnam. Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 83.

[139] The traditional "rule of thumb" is that *ceteris paribus*, the attacker and defender have parity at a 3:1 ratio. The analogy is not perfect to the FMLN offensive since the offensive was country wide and the FMLN had the advantage of being able to mass forces, while the FAES had to defend at all places until it knew the points of attack. However, the FMLN also had serious equipment and organizational limitations, while FAES had advantages in both. On the 3:1 rule of thumb, see John J. Mearsheimer, "Assessing the Conventional Balance: The 3:1 Rule and Its Critics," *International Security* 13, no. 4 (1989), https://doi.org/10.2307/2538780.

[140] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 60.

[141] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 79.

[142] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 61.

fighting force just hampered by a conventional bias, the 1981 offensive should have served as an opportunity to decisively militarily crush the FMLN.

Instead, FAES barely held on. While the FMLN failed in its objective of inspiring a Sandinista style uprising, it took over eighty-two villages or cities, occupied four department capitals, and occupied twenty-one other cities or population centers. The FMLN also gained and were able to maintain control of large parts of the countryside.[143] The FMLN seized the initiative with what should have been an inferior force, fought largely conventionally, and came out of the offensive in a stronger military position than they had entered it.

Spatial and Population Control. The military demonstrated an inability to gain control during the early 1980s. The FMLN seized the initiative between 1982 and late 1983, expanding its reach. They maintained strongholds in Chalatenango (FPL dominated), the area around Guazapa volcano in Cuscatlán north of San Salvador, Morazán (ERP dominated), and the southwest Usulután and La Unión. In June 1982, they launched another series of major offensives, seizing key towns. FAES fared poorly in these offensives, suffering high casualties. In just one two-month campaign in 1983, the FMLN killed 800 FAES and captured another 500. Offensive military successes like this, the seizure of Berlín in February 1983, the siege of San Miguel in September of 1983, the assault on El Paraíso, and the destruction of the country's most important bridge at Cuscatlán placed FAES in a dilemma. To regain the initiative and offensively engage the FMLN, they had to concentrate forces. Yet FMLN's attacks on population centers and key infrastructure encouraged dispersion and reliance on static security.[144]

By the end of 1983, the FMLN controlled 1,000 square miles and 100,000 people in northeast El Salvador. By early 1984, it controlled one-third to one-fifth of the country. Its own

[143] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 80-81.
[144] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 85, 109-10.

reports claimed to control one-fifth of the country, seventy municipalities, and "80 percent of strategic military territory," though its definition of such territory is not clear.[145] The FMLN conducted operations in nine of fourteen provinces, suggesting a high level of contestation in the other two-thirds to four fifths of the country.[146]

Selective Violence

PCC, both in its persuasive and coercive forms, require that the state applies violence selectively, targeting insurgents and protecting civilians, or at the least, avoiding wanton civilian abuse. FAES death squads were notorious, especially early in the war. Further, army operations made little effort to avoid killing civilians, often doing so intentionally. The Woerner report identified the role of indiscriminate violence and civilian victimization in FAES, explaining,

> Unabated terror from the right and continued tolerance of institutional violence could dangerously erode popular support to the point wherein the Armed Forces would not be viewed as the protector of society, but as an army of occupation. Failure to address the problem will subject the legitimacy of the Government of El Salvador and the Armed Forces to international questioning.[147]

[145] D'Haeseleer suggest insurgents controlled between one-third and one-fifth of the country. Wood suggests one-third in 1983 based on areas that rebels could operate in the open during day and night. McClintock estimates the insurgents controlled 25 percent of the country based on government ability to operate and conduct elections. D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 95; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 80-81; Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action*, 131.

[146] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 85.

[147] Woerner, *Report of the El Salvador Military Strategy Assistance Team (Draft)*, 48.

Woerner's fears were realized. By every accounting, FAES inflicted a high price on non-combatants, both deliberately and unintentionally.[148] The indiscriminate violence drove civilians into the hands of the FMLN.[149]

Death Squads and Political Murder. El Salvador's death squads were the most prominent form of civilian victimization early in the war. Death squads such as D'Aubuisson's White Warrior Nights were active in El Salvador in the 1970s, but death squad activity increased dramatically after coup.[150] Hazelton estimated 1,736 civilians, activists, and journalists killed by military or paramilitary organizations between October 1979 and March 1982.[151] Using Tutela Legal figures and clarifying interviews with Tutela Legal staff, McClintock estimated 2,517 murders from May 1982 to the end of 1983.[152] Both of these numbers may be underestimates. Crandall suggests that killing peaked at 1,000 per month and may have grown as high as 12,000 in 1981 alone.[153] In late January 1982, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and

[148] Before considering the magnitude of indiscriminate violence and civilian victimization, it should be noted that tabulating reliable figures is challenging for several reasons. Total estimates of civilian casualties for the war vary widely by source, ranging from 30,000 to 82,000. Violence frequently occurred in rural areas that were inaccessible to media coverage, suggesting that most sources undercount these cases. Often, the difference between collateral damage and intentional targeting of civilians was not clear. Finally, period sources varied significantly in their casualty counts, suggesting bias in collection. The US Department of State tended to draw from right wing influenced Salvadoran media sources. After 1982, the standard in most scholarly literature has been the figures of the Salvadoran Catholic Church's Tutela Legal, which suggest far higher numbers than State Department sources. Before 1982, the most reliable source was the church run Socorro Jurídico. Post-war figures from the United Nations Truth Commissions support those of Tutela Legal. Though sources varied, trends are generally consistent between sources. On the challenges of accounting for civilian victims, see Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 251-52; Amelia Hoover Green, *The Commander's Dilemma: Violence and Restraint in Wartime* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018), 132-50; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 321-23.

[149] Wood finds clear evidence that state violence drove peasants to support FMLN. Whereas Kalyvas might predict that self-protection was the primary motive for victimized civilians to support the opposition, Wood finds the trend even in areas where the FMLN was too weak to provide protection, and instead argues that the illegitimacy of "a profoundly unjust authority" was the cause. In either case, the civilian victimization proved counterproductive to winning allegiances. Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action*, 120.

[150] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 189; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 135.

[151] Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 269.

[152] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 116.

[153] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 190-91.

America's Watch estimated "some 200 politically motivated murders a week" and "widespread use of torture by all branches of the nation's security forces."[154]

FAES, right wing political parties, and right wing oligarchs were tightly entangled in death squad activities. D'Aubuisson, who took government files to establish targets with him after his dismissal and the disbandment of ORDEN and ANSESAL, was a major organizer.[155] After his arrest in May 1980, seven major death squads united as the Salvadoran Anti-communist Army (*Ejército Salvadoreño Anticomunista*, ESA) and issued a call for death squads and the military to unite, leading to the highest rates of murder during the war, at over 1,000 per month. With funding support from expatriate wealthy oligarchs living in Guatemala and the United States, D'Aubuisson went on to lead the National Republican Alliance (*Alianza Republicana Nacionalista*, ARENA), a political party that consolidated various paramilitary organizations. He openly spoke of a need to kill 200,000 to 300,000 to restore order.[156]

While D'Aubuisson and civilian right-wing oligarchs participated in and funded the death squads, FAES's role was central. The paramilitary and semi-private death squads drew from retired and right leaning junior officers. They also drew from active duty conscripts with offers of life insurance and $40 per month payment.[157] At the highest levels, FAES provided personnel to the death squads. A CIA report quoted a source stating, "[Minister of Defense] García and [Deputy Minister of Defense] Carranza gave him [D'Aubuisson] their most suitable men in each

[154] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 257.
[155] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 57.
[156] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 184, 90-91, 93. D'Aubuisson also received considerable political if not financial support from American conservatives. During a visit to Washington, DC, the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) organized a press conference for him. On another visit, he was honored at a dinner sponsored by the YAF, the Moral Majority, the Viguerie Company, the Washington Times, and the National Pro-Life Committee. US Senator Jesse Helms declared that ARENA's principles "are the principles of the Republican Party." This support complicated efforts by the Carter administration and moderates in the Reagan administration to press El Salvador on human rights issues. LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 251-52; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 190-93.
[157] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 183-87; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 228.

part of the country for squads" and that all three had personally selected victims. The National Guard, Treasury Police, National Police, and intelligence organizations within the military services ran their own squads.[158] In 1983, the CIA assessed that most squads were part of the security forces, operating off intelligence and orders passed through the chain of command.[159]

Nor were the death squads selective in choosing their victims. US Ambassador Robert White explained that FAES "have been responsible for the deaths of thousands and thousands of young people, and they have executed them on mere suspicion that they are leftists or sympathize with leftists."[160] PDC members were common targets, as were government officials, including the Salvadoran Attorney general.[161] Church officials were a favorite target. In addition to the "church women" and Romero, at least seventeen priests and nuns were killed during the war.[162] Death squads killed or wounded dozens of mourners in the streets outside Romero's funeral.[163] A lack of intelligence to clearly identify targets combined with an ideological view that equated any sort of reformer with a communist guerrilla led to wide scale indiscriminate murders, with factors including age, sex, attire, location, and occupation serving as sufficient criteria for killing.[164]

Collateral Damage and Collective Punishment. It was sometimes difficult to distinguish when the killing of civilians constituted a knowable but unintended consequence of military operations, and when non-combatants were intentionally targeted. While officially adopting the PCC strategy entailed in the Woerner report and the National Plan, in practice, parts of FAES

[158] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 57-58.
[159] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 233.
[160] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 256-57.
[161] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 184-91.
[162] Even before the war, in the late 1970s, D'Aubuisson's White Warriors Union death squad circulated fliers stating "Be Patriotic – Kill a Priest." Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 57.
[163] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 145.
[164] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 131, 210-11.

simultaneously pursued a "drain the sea" approach.[165] Through murder, crop burning, house burning, rape, mortaring, and destruction of entire communities, FAES practiced "the cleansing" or "*La Limpieza*."[166] The logic of the approach was to defeat the insurgents by destroying the popular base upon which they relied for support, sanctuary, and supplies.

By the end of 1983, they created an estimated 400,000 displaced persons within El Salvador, 200,000 refugees who fled to other parts of Central America and Mexico, and 500,000 who fled to the United States.[167] Even those who fled were not safe from state violence. In May 1980, civilians from Chalatenango attempted to flee across the Sumpul River to Honduras. The Salvadoran Army and ORDEN attacked the civilians, leaving 600 bodies. "Women tortured before the finishing shot, infants thrown into the air for target practice, were some of the scenes of this criminal slaughter."[168] It undertook a similar massacre of fleeing refugees at the Lempa River in March 1981.[169] FAES left many civilians in contested areas few options, and FMLN membership increased.[170]

Chapter 3 argued that effective PCC requires expertise, but that expertise alone is insufficient absent an appropriate organizational culture and monitoring mechanisms. The El Mozote massacre, a notorious and particularly egregious case of collective punishment against civilians, illustrates this point. The Atlacatl Battalion was the first of the BIRI battalions. Its commander, Lieutenant Colonel Domingo Monterrosa Barrios, was US trained at the School of

[165] Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 18; Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 271.
[166] Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 271.
[167] Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 272.
[168] Americas Watch, *El Salvador's Decade of Terror*, 48; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 229.
[169] Americas Watch, *El Salvador's Decade of Terror*, 48.
[170] Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 273. Also see Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action*, 200, 33-34, 37. Even Domingo Monterrosa, the commander of the notorious Atlacatl battalion, later admitted that "I know that I am part of the reason why there are guerrillas in this province," though it is difficult to know if Monterrosa's conversion was genuine or at attempt to placate American benefactors. Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 231.

the Americans in 1966 and was generally considered the best commander in FAES.[171] Colonel John Cash, the US Defense Attaché from 1981 to 1983, referred to Monterrosa as "a hot shot strategist" that Cash would "put up against any American hot shot."[172] Nine of his eleven officers at El Mozote were also trained at the School of the Americas. The battalion itself was considered the best trained and equipped in FAES.[173] Despite this training, the battalion had a reputation for extreme violence.[174]

From 10 to 13 December, the Atlacatl Battalion would undertake a series of massacres, the most publicized being the one at El Mozote. They questioned, tortured, and executed the men and machine gunned the women and children, including children they locked inside a church building. They went on to commit mass civilian killings in at least five other towns over the next few days, with a total civilian casualty estimate between 819 and over 1000. Over 400 victims were under eighteen years old.[175]

El Mozote was not a unique event for FAES or for the Atlacatl Battalion. The National Guard, Treasury Police, and death squads were active in the same region since 1976.[176] The key takeaway is that increasing expertise and proficiency alone is insufficient for improving PCC effectiveness. Without monitoring and an organizational culture that embraces accountability, increasing expertise may only make a military force more effective at civilian abuse.

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[171] Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 55-56; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 223-24.
[172] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 212.
[173] Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 55-56.
[174] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 223.
[175] In 1991, Tetula Legal estimated 393 casualties at El Mozote, but later revised that estimate to 406 in 2008, with a total of 819 across the 10 to 13 December period. Binford argues the number may have exceeded 1,000. Other massacre sites during the period included La Joya (138 killed), La Ranchería (54 killed), Los Toriles (63 killed), Jocote Amarillo (17 killed), Cerro Pando (113 killed), and a cave near Ortiz Hill into which civilians fled for safety (15 killed). Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 15-33, especially 27-28; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 223-25; D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 80-81.
[176] Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 117-21.

Predation. Specific examples of predation for profit by FAES are overshadowed by the extreme cases of mass killing in the literature on the war. However, the security forces were, for practical purposes, predatory agents of the oligarchs, repressing labor for elite material support. Even the oligarchs, however, were not beyond the reach of FAES predation through kidnapping for ransom, sometimes referred to as a "war tax." In individual cases, it was often unclear "if the kidnappers were guerillas, common criminals, or moonlighting military officers." Perversely, even though the military took part in the practice, it hardened oligarch sentiments in support of the death squads.[177] Senior officers also ran graft rackets related to their own units, profiting off of pay for non-existent ghost soldiers or skimming off the top of the unit's food budget.[178]

Services

Understood broadly, service provision during this period took two forms – implementation of land reform and provision of services through the National Plan. Both were largely failures.

As described above, the National Plan demonstrated some short-lived progress. However, it was plagued by graft and was not adequately resourced. In addition, while it did provide some basic services, it is not clear that they were closely tied to local needs. FMLN leader Leonel González explained that civic action failed, "…because it did not really seek to resolve the problems, and that is the main factor. And that is what allowed us to link up with the people and push them into struggle, because the people want land, they want drinkable water, and they are offered much and given nothing."[179] In one description of the implementation of the National Plan, "Clowns, a mariachi band and skimpily clad dancers perform between speeches by

[177] Millman, "El Salvador's Army." FAES related kidnapping for profit continued through both periods of study in this chapter. See also Americas Watch, *El Salvador's Decade of Terror*, 98-100.
[178] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 79; Christian, "El Salvador's Divided Military," 53.
[179] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 109.

Salvadoran army officers and social workers calling on peasants to reject the guerillas. Meanwhile, army barbers cut hair, and soldiers pass out rice, dresses and medicine."[180] While FAES and CONARA also reopened schools and established a few communal farms, skimpily clad dancers and political speeches were far from land and drinkable water. In short, the National Plan failed in each key requirement of service provision. Services were not linked to local needs. Provision of services was rife with CONARA corruption. Most importantly, FAES did not secure the gains in services and control that it made.

Land reform – what González stated that the people truly wanted – was a greater failure. FAES and policy makers shared responsibility. In March 1980, the junta announced the "Basic Agrarian Reform Law, Decree 153." The decree and subsequent adjustments laid out a three-phase land reform plan. Phase one, affecting approximately 30,000 families, would appropriate landholdings greater than 500 hectares for redistribution to cooperative farming, compensating the original landholders. Phase two, targeting landholdings of 100 to 150 hectares, including 23 percent of the best farmland in the country and 75 percent of export crop land, was never executed. Phase three, added later at the insistence of the United States, was to transfer leased, rented, and sharecropper land to the tillers. The new owners would pay for the land over thirty years.[181] The program would last until the 1982 elections, when D'Aubuisson took control of the Constituent Assembly and the body ended it.[182]

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[180] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 359-60.

[181] Based on Land-to-the-Tiller programs in Vietnam, phase three was problematic in practice. Many renters and sharecroppers worked plots less than 3 acres, the rewarding of which would be far too small to survive off alone. Also, given poor soil and crop rotation requirements, they rarely worked the same plots two years in a row. D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 84-87; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 150-51; LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 167-68.

[182] The Assembly ended unfinished phase one and phase three transfers immediately and indefinitely postponed phase two. Rightest would go on to lead a campaign from 1982 to 1984 to roll back already executed land reform. Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 156; D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 87.

Between 1980 and 1982, FAES effectively sabotaged the program. At best, troops implementing the law could not explain it.[183] One peasant explained, "They just said to the people: sign up here! And gave us a form. Some did not want to join because of fear."[184] The fear was justified. The security forces defended land owning oligarchic interests and resisted implementation. The reforms provided a way to identify possible left leaning leaders and to justify killing on the pretense that any activist after reforms must truly be a communist. In one case, the National Guard told peasants to elect leaders of their new cooperative farm, then returned the next day to kill the elected leaders. During reform implementation, the National Guard and ORDEN wiped out an entire hamlet in Cuscatlán.[185] In short, despite official adoption of PCC oriented policies, FAES remained loyal to its oligarch patrons.

5.3 1984-1989: Increased Competence and Resources…Without Promotion Reforms

1984 marks an important slice point for four reasons. First, according to one historiography, Vides Casanova's rise to Minister of Defense in April 1983 combined with Duarte's ascension back to the Presidency, this time through a nationwide election, marked a change in leadership at the top of the state and military that rippled down through FAES. I will challenge parts of this historiography below, but it is central to the case offered for leadership-based theories.[186] Second, the election, while corrupt, was generally considered an important step

[183] Six months into the program, AFIELD found that 93.4 percent of supposed beneficiaries still thought they were renters and 86.9 percent did not think that the decree altered their status. 80 percent of land agreements were verbal. As of January 1982, landlords had evicted 25,000 possible beneficiaries so that the peasants could not make claims against them as renters. LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 186.

[184] Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action*, 106.

[185] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 152; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 194-95.

[186] Mark Moyar, *A Question of Command: Counterinsurgency from the Civil War to Iraq* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 169-89.

towards state legitimization.[187] Third, the period provides the opportunity to examine FAES after significant growth, US equipping and training, and wartime experience. Finally, both FAES and the FMLN made significant strategic changes at the beginning of this period. Unfortunately for FAES, the *tanda* system continued to dominate and its performance improved only marginally.

From 1981 to 1984, FAES formally professed a PCC strategy, but it was still largely occupied with basic survival and building its force. The FMLN also focused on building and consolidation in the country side and applied largely conventional tactics. From 1984 on, both sides focused on winning over the population, with the FMLN adopting a prolonged popular war of attrition modeled off of Vietnam.[188] Salvadoran political strategy during this period focused on justice system reform, human rights improvement and subordination of the military to civil authority, continued elections, and socioeconomic reforms, all of which would prove difficult to realize.[189] Military strategy, at least as planned and articulated, included separating the insurgents from the population, creation of civil defense patrols to secure the population, civic action programs to expand government presence and popular support, and coordination of the counterinsurgency program at the national level. It also included psychological operations with the twin goals of portraying the FMLN as terrorists and convincing FMLN members that they had already lost the war.[190]

5.3.1 Promotion and Appointment Systems

Vides' 1983 rise to Minister of Defense, combined with PDC reformist Duarte's 1984 election, provided El Salvador's best opportunity to reform FAES and implement more effective

[187] On the institutionalization of elections as the major accomplishment of this period, see Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 140. On why these elections, while significant steps forward, were far from "free and fair," see McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 110-12, 20-29.
[188] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 132-36; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 83.
[189] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 127.
[190] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 130-31.

PCC.[191] According to one historical narrative, popular among Vides backers and American supporters of the war, this is exactly what happened. Vides implemented a major transformation of the Salvadoran military. In reality, Vides at most tinkered around the edges. To the degree that Vides did have a significant effect, it was in his responsiveness to significantly increased US pressure on select human rights issues. The *tanda* system, however, remained strong.

Vides rose from the head of the National Guard to Minister of Defense after a FAES internal power struggle unseated García. As a member of García's *tanda* with ties to the D'Aubuisson faction through his National Guard leadership, he was a compromise candidate. Though viewed as a hardliner at the time, the US embassy mounted a public relations campaign to sell him as a reformer, and he was generally popular among American military officers who praised his relative competence.[192]

The campaign worked. *The New York Times* referred to him as "an excellent administrator who enjoys the role of mediator," quoting a "political source" claiming, "he was called on to clean up the guard."[193] Echoing this view twenty-seven years later, historian Mark Moyar claimed that,

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[191] Duarte was still generally viewed as a reformer, with added credibility from his torture and exile in the 1970s. The election, though hardly "far and free," helped legitimize him as opposed to his earlier position as President of the junta. Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 121-22.

[192] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 182-84; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 151.

[193] "New Choice in Salvador: A Negotiator," *The New York Times* (New York), 19 Apr. 1983, National, https://www.nytimes.com/1983/04/19/world/new-choice-in-salvador-a-negotiator.html. Perhaps as part of the effort to enhance his stature, Vides was awarded a US Legion of Merit by President Ronald Reagan. Years later, the US judicial and immigration systems and the UN Truth Commission did not concur with the judgement of Vides as a reformer in the National Guard. In 2002, after Vides settled in the United States, a Florida jury Found Vides and García liable for $54.6 million to three torture victims. A US immigration judge in 2012 ruled that he "assisted or otherwise participated in" and "knew or should have known that his subordinates" killed the church women and that he failed to take "reasonable measures to prevent or stop such acts or investigate in a genuine effort to punish the perpetrators." The Truth Commission published similar findings related to his role in the church women coverup. He was deported from the US by the Board of Immigration Appeals for his role in torture and killing based on his "command responsibility" in 2015. Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 363; Julia Preston, "Salvadoran in Florida Faces Deportation for Torture," *The New York Times* (New York), 17 April 2011, New York, https://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/18/us/18deport.html; Julia Preston and Randal C. Archibold, "U.S. Justice Dept. Releases Judge's Rulling on Ex-Salvadoran General," *The New York Times* (New York), 11 April 2013, New York, https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/12/world/us-justice-dept-releases-judges-ruling-on-salvadoran-general.html;

> Credit for improving the quality of the Salvadoran commanders in the mid-1980s belongs chiefly to changes at the top of the Salvadoran government. Most important was the appointment of a new defense minister, Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova, whose selfless commitment to improving the armed forces made it possible to substitute merit for *tanda* and personal loyalty…[194]

He supposedly "overhauled the command structure and conducted a wholesale relief of commanders," while giving the six brigade commanders a significant role in the chain of command between the Ministry of Defense and the twenty-six separate commands that previously reported to it.[195]

US advisors hoped this was the case. Colonel Joseph Stringham, Commander of the US Military Group in El Salvador from 1983 to 1984, explained, "Vides cleaned house…He just kicked over the tanda system in effect, not completely, but he did some dramatic things, and it strengthened him." Defense Attaché Colonel John Cash claimed, "They started to get rid of the dead wood we'd been telling them about for months.[196]

While Vides's changes might have looked promising at the time, with more historical distance, they appear less substantial. What appeared to be "cleaning house" was more likely part of a normal FAES transition of power in which the incoming senior leader realigns personnel to reward his and allied *tandas*. As McClintock explains, "Under Vides Casanova, the tanda system endured. In general, the first member of a class to be promoted sought the promotion of his

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Julia Preston, "U.S. Deports Salvadoran General Accused in '80s Killings," *The New York Times* (New York) 2015, New York, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/09/us/us-deports-salvadoran-general-accused-in-80s-killings.html.

[194] Moyar, *A Question of Command*, 188. US Southern Command Commander in Chief General Wallace Nutting developed "an extremely positive relationship" with Vides and found him "very observant" and quick to learn and adjust. From 29 January 1987 interview in Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 102. Crandall also accepts Moyar's evaluation of Vides as a reformer, but acknowledges the key role that fear of loss of US support played in motivating Vides' actions. Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 363.

[195] Moyar, *A Question of Command*, 180. See also H. Joachim Maitre, "The Subsiding War in El Salvador," *Strategic Review* XIII, no. 1 (Winter 1985): 26-27.

[196] Stringham quoted from a 29 May 1985 interview reprinted in Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 213-14. Cash quoted from a 20 March 1987 interview reprinted in Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 212.

classmates as soon as possible – whatever the merits or demerits. Changes in top ministerial positions reflected the passage of power to a new tanda rather than to a new president."[197] Similarly, four American lieutenant colonels published a critical report of US and FAES performance, assessing in 1988,

> The "tanda" system, a sort of West Point Protective Association gone berserk, *remains* the chief barrier to a competent officer corps... Whatever an officer's personal failings – stupidity, cowardice in battle, or moral profligacy – his career is secure through the rank of colonel, after which he may depart, with his tanda, into honorable retirement.[198]

Vides and his successor made personnel changes, but did so in part to manage an internal struggle between the *tandas* of 1963 and 1964, who had aligned themselves together, and the exceptionally large and hardline "*tandona*" class of 1966, that sought its opportunity to rise to senior positions.[199] The class of 1966 eventually won out. It occupied most key positions by the late 1980s, with *tanda* leader René Emilio Ponce becoming Chief of Staff in 1988 and Minister of Defense in 1990, "despite perceptions that *tandona* members were not particularly distinguished officers."[200] In summary, *tanda* loyalty and power struggles remained the major determinates of advancement to key military positions during the period, not some new merit based standard initiated by Vides.

As to Vides himself, FDR leader Rubén Zamora probably captured him well, explaining, "What is Vides? A reactionary, or a progressive? He is a soldier who has to preserve his institution. He'll do what he has to. So you can't classify him politically very well."[201] As discussed below, Vides worked to curtail death squads. He did so only under US threats to cut

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[197] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 138.

[198] Italics added. The lieutenant colonels produced the report while serving as National Security Fellows at the Harvard Kennedy School. The report is sometimes referred to as "the four colonel's report" in other literature on the topic, a convention I will use here. Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 26.

[199] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 116-20.

[200] Bosch, *Salvadoran Officer Corps*, 116-20; LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 227; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 138.

[201] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 152.

military funding vital to FAES survival, and while overseeing other forms of civilian victimization and resisting consequences for past offenses.

5.3.2 Command Structure

FAES grew significantly by 1984 and a significant portion of the expanded force received more extensive training, both at a training center in El Salvador and at US funded training centers in Central America and in the United States. However, little changed in FAES's organizational culture, which continued to privilege personal gain and *tanda* loyalty over effectiveness. Nor did FAES demonstrate increased monitoring and evaluation. It could not or would not hold perpetrators of major crimes accountable, or even monitor and enforce basic tactical standards.

Formal Organization

The major organizational change to the military in this period was a general expansion in personnel and total number of units, including specialized units such as the BIRI and *cazador* battalions. From 1979 to 1987 FAES more than tripled, growing to about 40,000 by 1984 and to 56,000 by 1987.[202] With US funding and equipment, FAS also grew significantly through the early 1980s with an emphasis on helicopter mobility for ground troops.[203] As noted above, Vides did accomplish some streamlining of formal chains of command by empowering brigade commanders. Fundamentally, however, FAES's structure did not change significantly.

Competence and Expertise

The military entered the second half of the 1980s having made noticeable improvements in individual soldier's and officer's training and basic skills. By the end of 1983, half of

[202] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 72.
[203] Corum, "The Air War in El Salvador," 31.

Salvadoran officers were US trained.[204] Improvements extended to the individual soldier's level. Soldiers trained at a national training center near La Unión, and both soldiers and officers trained at Fort Bragg, Fort Benning, and the US sponsored training center in Honduras. In 1986, Colonel Duryea assessed, "…today the level of training of the soldiers – the young recruits who come in for a two-year period of service has improved immensely…The training is now very good, very professional."[205]

At least based on the accounts of American trainers, the training included basic soldier skills, but also counterinsurgency skills. Included was the importance of protecting, not abusing, the civilian population. Colonel Steel explained that, "When we say professionalize, I'm talking about developing, within the military, the respect for the human rights of its citizens, to help protect the democratic process, and so on."[206] Waghelstein took a more instrumental approach, focusing not just on normative arguments, but on military utility.

> …we talked about how you treat people and why it's important to get good intelligence from the *campesinos*. And that the best kind of intelligence is the kind they volunteer…how does a *campesino* in the village deal with you when your patrol goes through his village? Does he tell you, don't go down that trail because there are some bad guys down there, or does he hide his daughters and his chickens? That's human rights, and that's the perception of the population on what the military stands for. Are they part of the problem, or are they part of the solution?[207]

Steel believed that FAES had made "pretty significant progress" on such issues.[208] By some measures, such as death squad killings, he was right. By others, such as indiscriminate bombing,

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[204] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 353.
[205] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 302-03.
[206] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 291.
[207] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 279.
[208] Steel also expressed his own doubts about the longevity of the changes he claimed to observe. "If you look at this military and say, 'OK, have we really changed their attitude towards democracy, their role in the society, or have we just levered them into behavioral change?' The answer is, at this point [interviewed in 1986], it's too early to tell." Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 291.

the evidence is less supportive. Nor was it clear that training, as opposed to threats to cut funding, was the primary cause of the limited improvements.

A general increase in expertise and competence of individual officers and soldiers had limited effects in a system where *tanda* and personal relationships determined leadership ascension. Duryea found "weakness" and lack of proficiency continued among "The guys who are coming in and getting ready to take over the command of your immediate reaction battalions or are not battalion commanders…The breakdown is at the mid-leadership level and senior leadership level."[209]

Organizational Culture

The key measure of culture is the degree to which officers offered loyalty to abstract institutions and organizational missions versus to personal gain and the patron and peer networks of the *tanda* system. Outside observers noted little change in Salvadoran loyalty. As of 1988, the four colonels' report assessed that,

> The aspect of professionalism where ESAF [FAES] has made the least progress is in changing the *ethos of the officer corps*...This lofty [social] status [of Salvadoran officers] has *not bred among officers either a commitment to technical mastery nor a sense of responsibility for performance of their units*…the Salvadoran style of leadership undervalues training, betrays a dangerously cavalier attitude toward combat operations, and does little to ameliorate the soldier's lot, the austerity of which often borders on negligent.[210]

FAES officers were committed neither to professional personal performance nor the success of their organizations.

[209] Duryea attributed the weakness to two factors. The first was a promotion system that was not merit based and that offered no mechanism for eliminating the incompetent. The second was that US training for mid-level officers – captains and majors - was too theoretical for the level that FAES officers were operating. Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 302-03.

[210] Italics added. Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 26.

A *New York Times Magazine* article noted that as of 1988, "The patronage system remains intact; indeed, the Tammany Hall-style rituals have become even more refined."[211] A larger force, US funds, and additional equipment provided more opportunity for phantom soldiers, predation of enlisted ranks, and graft.[212] Officers lower down the chain could now benefit from illicit activities earlier in their careers.

The failure to alter organizational culture was an outcome of the self-perpetuating *tanda* system. From the start, each class was part of the web of illicit behavior. The system required mutual protection, even across competing *tandas*. Leonel Gomez explained that a rising *tanda* must both ensure protection for those below and for those it replaced. "To reach power in the army you have to reassure those waiting for power that you aren't ruining the system…You have to link up with the tandas leaving power and cover their killings and gross corruption."[213] Change in culture that privileged evaluation of military effectiveness would have endangered this balance of reciprocal protection.

Monitoring Mechanisms

FAES made only superficial gains in civil authority monitoring of the military and in within organization evaluation and monitoring. Duarte and his successor Cristiani were able to make limited inroads on civilian control. Under tremendous pressure, FAES made a show of accountability in a few internationally high-profile death squad murders, but with no repercussions for the officers responsible. Operational and tactical monitoring also remained weak or non-existent.

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[211] Shirley Christian, "Salvadorans Face a 'Crisis of Peace'," *The New York Times* (New York), 5 May 1991, National, https://www.nytimes.com/1991/05/05/world/salvadorans-face-a-crisis-of-peace.html.

[212] On personal gain and corruption lower in the chain of command, retired Salvadoran Army Captain Joaquin Ventura noted, "You're seeing lieutenants with BMWs. Once you had to be a colonel to get rich, now even the lower ranks steal." Millman, "El Salvador's Army."

[213] Christian, "Salvadorans Face a 'Crisis of Peace'."

Civil authority made limited headway in asserting greater control over the military. The military's relationship with Duarte was tense. According to the previous interim President, Álvaro Magaña, it was, "…like a married couple. They [Duarte and the FAES] don't love each other, and they rarely talked. Sometimes they would sit and watch the same television show, but they mainly went separate ways. I'm afraid that the army learned it likes the relationship and doesn't want to change."[214] Duarte made some headway in exerting control. He disbanded the S-2 unit, notorious for human rights violations. He transferred hardline Vice Minister of Defense and former Treasury Police commander Colonel Carranza overseas. Similarly, Duarte's successor, President Alfredo Cristiani, transferred hardline FAS commander General Juan Rafael Bustillo to a position in Israel, preventing him from becoming Minster of Defense.[215] Yet even these shuffles were in part determined by the inter-FAES competition between *tandas*.

Perhaps the strongest indicator of the status of internal monitoring was the Salvadoran government's complete inability, even under significant US funding pressure, to hold any officers responsible for death squads or mass killing. Under pressure from the US ambassador, President Magaña pushed Vides to remove a small group of officers associated with death squads. Vides absurdly replied, "I am absolutely confident that the death squad members do not exist in the armed forces."[216]

Duarte had no more success in gaining accountability for past violations. He was able to gain superficial legal action in a few cases with the highest international profile, but the high command ensured that those few prosecutions were limited to the lowest ranking soldiers,

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[214] Millman, "El Salvador's Army."

[215] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 138.

[216] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 228. This was of course false. Vides later admitted in a US court that he knew of torture cells and political murder within his own National Guard when he commanded it, but claimed he did not have the power to stop it. David Gonzalez, "Salvadoran General Admits He Knew of Abuses," *The New York Times* (New York), 20 Oct. 2000, National, https://www.nytimes.com/2000/10/20/world/salvadoran-general-admits-he-knew-of-abuses.html.

protecting the officers who ordered the murders.[217] In May 1984, four National Guardsmen were sentenced to a maximum of thirty years in prison in the church women murders. While monumental as the first conviction of military members for murder, no officers were held accountable.[218] Avila was arrested but released in March 1984 for the AIFLD murders. Charges were dropped against Sibrián. Two National Guardsmen were convicted in February 1986 and later released under an amnesty act. The soldiers directly implicated two Army officers, but the Salvadoran government brought no charges.[219] No one was ever charged in Romero's assassination.[220]

A US Congressional Task Force on El Salvador captured the relationship between the *tanda* system, FAES's organizational culture, and FAES's lack of evaluation and monitoring of its own members. The Committee investigated the 1989 Atlacatl Battalion murder of six Jesuits, their housekeeper, and her daughter at the Central American University. Writing for the committee in 1990, Congressman Joseph Moakley explained,

> We are convinced that the military's contribution to the problems of human rights and a paralyzed judicial system are not caused by a few renegade officers; they reside at the heart of the Armed Forces as an institution. Decades of power, tempered only by the need to maintain a working alliance with wealthy landowners and businessmen, have created an upper echelon within the armed forces that too often find deference to civilian authority neither necessary nor desirable. *The tanda system has insulated many senior military officers from responsibility for their own actions, harming discipline, undermining morals and eroding professionalism.* As a result, the armed forces remain *unwilling to police themselves*, and only accept the right of others to do so when enormous pressure is applied.[221]

[217] Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 134; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 152.
[218] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 257.
[219] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 257; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 157-59.
[220] Anne-Marie O'Connor, "Participant in 1980 Assassination of Romero in El Salvador Provides New Details," *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), 6 April 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/05/AR2010040503234.html?wpisrc=nl_cuzhead.
[221] Moakley quoted in Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 186.

Even when the United States applied pressure, FAES worked to obstruct investigations and guarantee protection of its officers. No officer during the war faced prosecution for political murders or human rights violations until the start of peace talks, and even then, very few.[222]

Even at the operational and tactical levels, FAES continued to lack monitoring and accountability mechanisms. US trainers still failed in pressuring FAES to remove poor performing field commanders.[223] Duryea noted that junior officers did not make the basic checks and verifications on their subordinates common to a military organization. Officers did not enforce basic requirements such as security, nighttime noise and light discipline, fires plans, or fighting position standards. "We're making a lot of assumptions. We assume that he [the FAES officer] has certain basic leadership skills, that he's going to check on his guys, that he's going to go out himself and make sure that things are being done right, when that's probably not the case…The fact is that these officers don't operate that way."[224] From the highest level of political and legal accountability down to the soldiers in a platoon, FAES simply did not monitor and enforce behavior standards.

5.3.3 Counterinsurgency Effectiveness

FAES effectiveness during the period was mixed. As the theory predicts, better training and increased expertise led to minor performance improvements, but the maintenance of the *tanda* system as the basis for advancement limited the effects of those increases in expertise. Tactics, especially among elite units, improved marginally, but FAES never fully adopted and

[222] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 235. Americas Watch noted that as of September 1990, after the peace process has already begun, six officers were charged with involvement in a 1988 massacre at San Francisco and widely reported on November 1989 murder of six Jesuits, their cook, and her daughter at the Jesuit Central American University, though the trial had not moved forward. The Americas Watch report, surveying eight cases, clearly identifies successful military efforts to impede investigations and prevent prosecution of its members. Americas Watch, *El Salvador: Impunity Prevails in Human Rights Cases*, (Washington, DC: 1990), 1-2, 4-6, 11-14.

[223] Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 280.

[224] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 303.

executed a PCC approach. It applied violence more selectively in areas in which it faced significant US scrutiny, but civilian targeting and victimization remained high in areas that the United States could not observe or on issues it did not link to funding. FAES demonstrated some improvements in service provision, but "civic action" generally remained poorly planned and implemented. In short, by improving training without changing the *tanda* system, FAES at best grew from a highly ineffective force to a mediocre force that still failed to master PCC basics.

Tactics and Operations to Gain Control

FAES made some headway in expanding and improving the performance of its elite units and the FAS, but these improvements centered on its ability to hunt and kill insurgents. The army as a whole remained undisciplined, bound to fixed sites, and showed limited aptitude to provide population control or security. Nor did the military perform well when faced with a second major FMLN conventional attack. By the end of the period, FAES had made some reductions in FMLN controlled zones, but the FMLN had simultaneously increased contestation levels in others.

Tactics and Operations. FAES made significant improvements in its tactics and operations within its specialized forces such as the BIRI battalions. By 1989, BIRIs demonstrated the ability to maneuver independently against guerrillas. They conducted complex air/land penetration patrols in which a force of 500 would infiltrate deep into enemy territory at night, followed by a ground penetration of 1,000 during the day. They also conducted successful "saturation patrols," in which they gradually overwhelmed guerrilla occupied areas and kept insurgents in constant movement.[225]

Long range reconnaissance patrols, *Los Patrullas de Reconocimiento de Alcance Largo* (PRAL), trained by the CIA and 7th US Special Forces Group, also demonstrated significant

[225] Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 295-96.

success using “hunger-killer” tactics on multi-week patrols against insurgents. According to a US report, the PRAL, “accounted for hundreds of guerrilla casualties and has been instrumental in disrupting guerrilla combat operations, logistic nets, and base camps. The unit has proven that El Salvadoran troops, with the proper training and leadership, can operate effectively in small groups, and they have set the standard for valor for the rest of ESAF (FAES).”[226]

The PRAL may have set the standards for leadership, valor, and performance, but there is little indication that the rest of the military approached that standard. The BIRIs and PRALs made up a handful of relatively elite units. While their improved ability to hunt insurgents was a necessary component of PCC strategy, PCC also requires a larger force that can seize and hold control of population. Among the rest of the army, trainers still classified regular operations as “search and avoid patrols” and noted a continued focus on fixed site security. Discipline remained poor. Night positions, for example, were described as, “like a boy scout jamboree – campfires and transistor radios.”[227]

FAS also made significant improvements, though given continued severe maintenance and training shortcomings, these were due as much to an influx of new equipment as to increased proficiency. FAS’s improved ability to attack large insurgent formations both by air and with air mobile ground troops drove FMLN changes in tactics and operations. No longer able to safely move in large groups, the FMLN began maneuvering in groups of ten to twenty, massing immediately before attacks – a less efficient and more difficult to coordinate tactic. FAS’s targeting improvements were a contributor to the FMLN’s decision to shift from conventional style operations toward a war of attrition and to increase reliance on economic sabotage.[228] As

[226] D’Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 105-06.
[227] Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 37-38.
[228] Americas Watch, *El Salvador’s Decade of Terror*, 58; Corum, "The Air War in El Salvador," 33-34; LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 268.

discussed below, however, FAS's role in targeting civilians likely offset these important improvements.

As with the 1981 "Final Offensive," the FMLN's November 1989 "Al Tope y Punto" (all at once to the maximum) or "Hasta el Tope" (to the breaking point) offensive tests alternative explanations for FAES performance based on historically formative wars. The FMLN's maximalist goal was to inspire a popular uprising to unseat the government. This time, it also set a minimal goal of demonstrating its strength to gain a better bargaining position in future negotiations. FAES again averted catastrophic defeat, but its poor performance demonstrated how little progress it had made towards transitioning to an effective force. It also demonstrated lack of significant institutional change regarding the treatment of civilians. Initially showing some caution in urban areas, FAS quickly transitioned to mass bombing, killing over 1,000 civilians, leaving thousands more homeless, and undermining US hopes that it had become more discriminate. The FMLN ended the offensive with an orderly pullout of San Salvador back to their traditional strongholds.[229]

Despite FAES being a much larger force and more technologically capable than in 1981, FAES performance was generally poor – poor enough to shock its own high command. It demonstrated the incompetence of many officers promoted through the *tanda* system.[230] A few weeks after the attack, when asked by the US Senate Armed Services Committee whether the Salvadoran government could defeat the FMLN, USSOUTHCOM Commander General Maxwell Thurman responded, "I think they will not be able to do that."[231] Like the Tet Offensive in

[229] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 432-39; D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 146-47; William M. LeoGrande, "After the Battle of San Salvador," *World Policy Journal* 7, no. 2 (Spring 1990): 332, 41-42.

[230] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 246.

[231] Michael Gordon, "General Says Salvador Can't Defeat Guerrillas," *The New York Times* (New York), 8 February 1990, National, 135, https://www.nytimes.com/1990/02/09/world/general-says-salvador-can-t-defeat-guerrillas.html; Walter C. Ladwig, III, "Influencing Clients in Counterinsurgency: U.S. Involvement in El Salvador's Civil War, 1979-92," *International Security* 41, no. 1 (Summer 2016): 135.

Vietnam, the offensive was a tactical win for FAES but demonstrated that it was nowhere near achieving strategic victory. It undermined perceptions of progress among American backers.

Spatial and Population Control. Again, FAES made some improvements in establishing and maintaining control, but found itself locked in stalemate with the FMLN, with neither side able to make decisive gains in the second half of the decade. Based on the combined criteria of ability to hold elections and to maintain municipal governing structures, McClintock estimates that the FMLN controlled 15 percent of municipalities in 1989, a significant decrease from the 25 to 33 percent she estimated for the early 1980s.[232] However, the inclusion of elections as an indicator may lead to an overestimate. When considering municipal government alone, the figures are stark. In 1985, the FMLN ran an intimidation campaign of local governments, killing two mayors, kidnapping another eight, and burning thirty-two mayors' offices. It forced a quarter of El Salvador's 262 mayors from office. By early 1986, the FMLN operated in all fourteen provinces for the first time since the 1981 Final Offensive, indicating that even if they lost total control in some areas, they had turned previously government controlled areas into contested areas.[233] In 1988, municipal governments did not operate at all in 55 of 300 towns, and by 1989, almost half of the country's mayors had resigned.[234] FAES inability to secure local governments undermined the state's ability to provide basic municipal services for much of the country.[235]

Selective Violence

The 1984 to 1989 period saw a general reduction in the most publicized forms of violence against civilians, especially death squad murders. However, FAES continued violence against civilians that escaped media coverage and international attention. The patterns of

[232] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 80-81.
[233] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 156.
[234] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 394; Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 149.
[235] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 149; LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 227.

violence during this period suggest that FAES responded to US threats to cut economic and military assistance, especially after Vice President George H.W. Bush's visit, but that it did not fundamentally change as an organization.

Death Squads and Political Murder. US emphasis on reducing death squad activity varied between the Carter and Reagan administrations, and even within administrations, especially as moderates or "pragmatists" fought with hard liners and neo-conservatives for influence with Reagan.[236] The culmination of the victory for the pragmatists was Vice President George H.W. Bush's December 1983 visit to El Salvador. Bush provided tough language and threatened to cut American aide. In his formal toast during a dinner with President Magaña, he unsubtly stated,

> I am not talking about a cowardly group of common criminals and murders – the death squads. These cowards…are the best friends the Soviets, the Cubans, and the comandantes and the Salvadoran guerrillas have. Like the communist terrorists, the members of the death squads are impotent when it comes to the many acts of defending and building. They can only kill and destroy. I wish to convey to all Salvadorans what all of us have already discussed in private. That is, the grave risk the death squads pose to our continued cooperation in the defense of El Salvador from outside aggression.[237]

Bush conducted two meetings with senior military commanders, the first with Vides, Deputy Defense Minister General Raphael Flores Lima, and Chief of Staff Adolfo Blandón, and the second with the entire high command. He told them, "The main point is the death squad issue. The President has asked me to come to express that point to all here. This is no smoke screen. This is reality."[238] Bush demanded officers on a list for death squad participation be removed

[236] While positions were not entirely fixed, the hardliner and neo-conservative faction, dubbed the "war party" by the State Department, included Secretary of State Al Haig, Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger, U.N. ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, CIA Director William Casey, and Attorney General Ed Meese. The "pragmatists" included Chief of Staff James Baker and Secretary of State George Shultz. Kirkpatrick's and Haig's ousters marked a win for the pragmatists. For overviews of the internal struggles in the Reagan administration, see Chapters 8 and 9 in LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*.

[237] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 294.

[238] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 230-31.

from command and expelled from the armed forces and that a list of civilians be exiled for three years. He also demanded formal condemnation of death squad activity, arrest of Ávila for the AIFLD murder, and trials for the church women murderers.[239] In return, he promised increased assistance including fielding thirty-nine "counter-subversion battalions," two immediate reaction battalions, an engineer battalion, aircraft, naval boats, and medical evacuation equipment.[240]

The administration backed up Bush's language. The State Department added D'Aubuisson to a watch list. US Ambassador Thomas Pickering, instructed by Secretary of State Shultz to "raise hell" over human rights with or without administration support, issued threats of his own.[241] At the military to military level, when a FAES counterpart told US Military Group Commander Colonel Waghelstein that El Salvador's "fight was the United States' fight," implying that US anti-communist interests were too great to cut support, Waghelstein responded back, "unlike Vietnam, where we'd committed 450,000 troops, it would not take me long to put the 55 trainers on an airplane."[242]

Duarte attempted to meet some of Bush's demands, pressuring some officers to resign and assigning some to duty overseas, abolishing the Treasury Police's intelligence service, and the security forces of the power and telephone companies, all responsible for death squads.[243] The High Command removed three officers from the list and civilians were forced from government jobs, though not into exile.[244] Vides issued official orders requiring security force members to remain in uniform at nearly all times and to formally identity themselves and notify the International Red Cross when making arrests.[245]

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[239] Ladwig, "Influencing Clients in Counterinsurgency," 128; LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 230-31.
[240] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 299.
[241] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 229; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 229.
[242] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 123.
[243] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 231, 61.
[244] Ladwig, "Influencing Clients in Counterinsurgency," 129.
[245] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 294.

Death squad activity lowered. Estimates of murder rates vary by source, with Stanley suggesting rates in the low thirties monthly in 1985 and 1986 and McClintock suggesting as low as 34 for the entire year in 1986. All estimates show significant drops from the early 1980s. Yet these rates were still higher than the final five months of the Romero regime before the coup, which had to that point been considered a relatively violent period of Salvadoran history.[246]

Table 5.2: El Salvador Political Violence, 1982-1990

	1982 [a]	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Total Deaths	3,371	6,639	4,274	3,036	1,709	1,434	1,387	2,875	1,525
Deaths Attributed to Military / Paramilitary in Military Clashes [b]	1,839	3,856	3,027	1,999	1,120	851	829	2,074	863
Assassinations [c]	1,231	1,286	225	146	59	34	66	43	46
Forced Disappearances	363	535	53	60	96	118	123	218	91

SOURCE: From tables in McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America*, 117, 118. McClintock draws from Tutela Legal's annual reports and clarifying discussions with Tutela Legal's staff.
NOTES: [a] 1982 figures only include May to December and exclude guerilla deaths; [b] Military clash deaths include both combatants and civilians as these could not be distinguished; [c] Assassinations are attributed to targeted killing by death squads and other security forces, assumed to be civilians. Per discussion with Tutela Legal staff, McClintock assesses these as underestimates as they exclude other pro-government armed group targeted assassinations; [d] 1982 and 1983 figures are precise "disappeared" in Tutela Legal reports. 1984-1990 figures include "disappeared" and "captured-disappeared." Figures excluded those exclusively listed as "captured."

The United States was less successful in obtaining other demands. While it did obtain formal condemnations of violence to go along with Vides new rules, these perfunctory statements and rules carried little weight given that they were made by the very officers who ordered many of the assassinations. The exile demands were not met, and overseas assignments served as a substitute for retirement or relief.[247] Nor, as discussed above, were the demands for judicial accountability for offending military officers.

The significant drops in political murder raise questions of causation. Was my assessment about the lack of change in FAES after Vides' appointment incorrect? Did Vides truly change the promotion system, and with it the organizational culture and internal monitoring

[246] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 116; Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 230.
[247] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 231.

mechanisms? Conversely, and more problematic for my theory, do the improvements demonstrate that a military with a corrupt promotion system can still make the necessary improvements to conduct effective PCC? In short, what is the explanation for the change?

The most compelling explanation for the decrease in death squad killings is that FAES had become dependent on US aid and, in the interest of self-preservation, was willing to meet the minimum necessary requirements to maintain that assistance. This analysis is supported by the statements of FAES leaders focused on the relations between external perceptions and aid. Many of them spoke eloquently about the need to respect human rights, refrain from harming civilians, and win "hearts and minds." Colonel René Ponce explained that, "We must face the fact that we were, at one time, responsible for the brutalities and ill-treatment imposed on the citizens of this country. I repeat, the support and impetus given to the democratic process and the socio-economic reforms were essential."[248] In short, FAES leaders could tell American supporters what they wanted to hear.

However, they occasionally betrayed their real motivations for acting in less guarded comments. Chief of Staff Adolfo Blandón acknowledge the importance of Bush's visit in changing FAES behavior, explaining, "

> We knew that public opinion in the United States and the view of many senators and congressmen opposed to military aid for El Salvador was largely due to our bad image because of the death squads…Knowing that the aid was absolutely vital for us, we concluded that we had to take a strong decision to get rid of them.[249]

Likewise, Vides explained, "We know that improving our image is worth millions of dollars of aid for the country."[250] In short, senior FAES leaders understood that they must adjust the things that American political leaders both cared about and monitored.

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[248] 1987 interview quoted in Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 215.
[249] Quoted in McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 151.
[250] Quoted in McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 151.

That Vides' aid-based explanation for change offers a better insight into FAES intentions and culture finds support in the fact Ponce would go on to order one of the most notorious assassinations of the war while serving as Chief of Staff. In November 1989, the Atlacatl Battalion carried out orders to kill Central American University President and government critic Father Ignacio Ellacuría. Ordered to leave no witnesses, they killed four other priests, their cook Julia Ramos, and Ramos' fifteen-year-old daughter, then painted FMLN propaganda on the walls in an attempt to blame the insurgents.

The case demonstrated the hollowness of the High Command's pro-democracy, pro-reform language and shattered perceptions of FAES change. It turned otherwise supportive members of the US Congress against Salvadoran aid. It did lead to a trial and twenty-year jail sentence for Colonel Alfredo Benavides and Lieutenant Yusshy Mendoza, the first two Salvadoran officers ever convicted of human rights violations. However, the trials required tremendous US Embassy pressure and a temporary 50 percent cut in US aid. They did not occur until September 1991, well into the negotiation process that greatly weakened the military and ended the war. Nor did legal consequences ever extend up to Ponce.[251]

Collective Punishment and Collateral Damage. The Jesuit killings drew public attention to the shallowness of FAES reforms, but the more important evidence that FAES had not transitioned to effective PCC in its treatment of civilians lie in rural tactics. The post-war U.N. Truth Commission assessed that FAES conducted, "…a deliberate strategy of eliminating or terrifying the peasant population where the guerrillas were active…The deliberate, systematic,

[251] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 451. In October 1990, Congress reduced aid by 50 percent and threatened a complete reduction unless the Jesuits' murders were prosecuted. Bush restored aid levels in 1991 after the FMLN shot down a helicopter, killing three US military members. While the fluctuation sent mixed messages, it also indicated that Congress was more serious about defunding aid than it had been in the past. Terry Lynn Karl, "El Salvador's Negotiated Revolution," *Foreign Affairs* 71, no. 2 (1992): 156.

and indiscriminate violence against the peasant population in areas of military operation went on for years."[252] Much of this consisted of air bombardment in rural areas. These abuses were often less visible as they occurred in war zones less immediately accessible to reporters. Further, American trainers were prohibited from accompanying FAES on combat operations.[253]

Again under international pressure in 1984 and 1985, Duarte issues more restrictive rules of engagement for air bombardment, including clear identification of targets, a prohibition on attacking civilians, and more restrictive approval authority for air attacks. He claimed, "We have tightened the tactical situation as much as possible so that there is no possibility of action in any area that could cause a danger to the civilian population," even though reports of civilian targeting continued.[254]

FAES found a simple solution – define civilians in FMLN controlled areas as combatants. An Army spokesman explained, "The people who move in the zones of persistence are identified as guerillas. Good people – the people who are not with the guerillas – are not there."[255] In addition to bombing, FAS attacked civilians with white phosphorous and napalm.

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[252] Quoted in Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 481.

[253] While the Reagan administration observed a fifty-five-person cap on assigned trainers, it worked around the rule with short-term deployments that did not count against the cap. Bacevich et el. estimates actual trainer numbers rose as high as one-hundred-fifty. Trainers could not provide comprehensive accountability of Salvadoran units. The prohibition on accompanying FAES grew out of a political desire to preclude American casualties, but was a point of contention among trainers who believed that they were held responsible for human rights violations but unable to provide monitoring or oversight on missions where the violations occurred. Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 5; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 253; LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 208-11.

[254] James Lemoyne, "Durate Issues Rules for Air Attacks," *The New York Times* (New York), 13 Sept. 1984, National, https://www.nytimes.com/1984/09/13/world/duarte-issues-rules-for-air-attacks.html. See also Americas Watch, *El Salvador's Decade of Terror*, 54; Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 377-81. The air war was a subject of considerable contention in the United States. Corum argues that proponents on both sides made claims so extreme as to be absurd. In 1986, the mayor of Berkeley, California testified to Congress that aerial bombardment killed 60,000 Salvadorans. This would constitute the majority of casualties for the entire war. By contrast, Assistant Secretary of State Elliot Abrams claimed, in direct contradiction of Salvadoran officers' statements, no indiscriminate bombing at all had occurred. Others in the Abrams camp went so far as to claim that the US provided AC-47 gunships *never* fired a short round or accidently hit a civilian, which would make the Salvadoran air war the most discriminate and precise major air campaign in history – hardly plausible given the state of the FAS. Corum, "The Air War in El Salvador," 40.

[255] LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*, 226. Similarly, in 1985, Colonel Sigfredo Ochoa Perez, who had a reputation for depopulation of large areas, explained, "I can massively bomb the red zones because only subversives

Against official policy and strategy, FAS sought to "drain the sea" the guerrillas swam in by killing civilians or forcing migration. By 1987, 500,000 Salvadorans (10 percent of the population) were internally displaced and 1.5 million left the country. The US Salvadoran population increased from 100,000 to 500,000.[256]

FAES did make some improvements in overall indiscriminate deaths, and Hazelton estimates they fell from 1,709 in 1985 to 1,434 in 1989 and 1,387 in 1988, a 19 percent drop over three years. Some officers resisted firing on civilians and the air restrictions may have prevented some attacks. She also attributes the change in part to more discriminate weapons systems.[257] However, Binford suggests that as FAES successfully killed civilians or forced them to migrate, there were simply fewer left to target and that civilians learned to take better defensive measures against air attack.[258] In any case, casualties remained high enough to undermine claims of increased PCC effectiveness and ticked back up as peace talks began.[259]

Predation. Again, in this period, killing overwhelms predation for profit in accounts of civilian-military interaction, but the increase in troops and resources increased opportunities for within force predation. Military officers took advantage of these opportunities, to the detriment of their soldiers and their organizational effectiveness. Commanders discouraged re-enlistment, denying FAES experienced soldiers and non-commissioned officers. Instead, because re-enlistee pay was higher, officers would send soldiers off after their initial mandatory service, but keep

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live in them." Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 290. On defining all civilians as combatants, see also Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 172. Of course, contested and FMLN controlled areas included significant numbers of non-participant civilians, as Wood shows in *Insurgent Collective Action*, 208-12. Also see Americas Watch, *El Salvador's Decade of Terror*, 57. For a slightly more charitable view of FAS's treatment of civilians, see Corum, "The Air War in El Salvador," 40-43; James S. Corum, *Airpower in Small Wars : Fighting Insurgents and Terrorists*, ed. Wray R. Johnson, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003), 343-44.

[256] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 100-01.

[257] Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 288. Also Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 147-50; McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 117.

[258] Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 167, 74.

[259] Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 288.

their names on the books as ghost soldiers, drawing the higher pay. One estimate found that each brigade had at least a fifty-man company worth of ghost soldiers. Soldiers themselves were particularly vulnerable to predation. Commanders profited from graft on the sale of clothing, equipment, food, and in at least one case, deducted pay from soldiers to pay for fortifications around their base.

As the military expanded, the military's protection racket also grew. Commanders continued to rent out soldiers to businesses and landowners at $200 to $300 per month. In some cases, however, FAES or regional units conducted wholesale takeovers of businesses or industries. For instance, the navy had traditionally "taxed" shrimp fisherman along the Pacific coast for protection. By 1989, the navy took over much of the industry. Officers took controlling shares in major export firms, and naval chief Colonel Villalta owned several boats of his own. FAES also bought resorts, established its own bank, established housing developments, farms, and even a military run funeral home.[260]

Services

FAES again attempted a "clear, hold, build" strategy, with the last phase focusing on expansion of government and provision of services. As with the National Plan, it fell short. United to Reconstruct (*Unido Para Reconstruir*, UPR), launched in 1986, was the largest civic action program of the war. In a change from the National Plan, the military directly handled all reconstruction efforts in hopes to cut out CONARA's waste and corruption.[261] It also undertook "Combined Civic Action" (CCA) to provide food, medical care, and entertainment.[262]

[260] Millman, "El Salvador's Army."
[261] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 126-27.
[262] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 148.

Like the National Plan, UPR execution suffered from several shortcomings. The military takeover of CONARA functions created tension with the PDC, which viewed it as military intrusion into civil authority. The programs also struggled from limited funding, made worse by a diversion of troops and resources to deal with a devasting earthquake in 1986.[263] The services provided still did not address local needs. A US government assessment found that CCA projects were applied haphazardly and did too little to improve local governance or infrastructure to have effects.[264] Another assessment explained, "The army's current hearts and minds campaign is designed more to manipulate people's behavior than to fundamentally change the miserable social conditions that perpetuate the war."[265]

From a military perspective, UPR's execution was too disperse to be effective. Instead of massing operations in a concentrated area and building outward, UPR selected one district in each military department to begin operations.[266] The US government evaluation cited above found that CCA's projects were too dispersed, with resources wasted on districts already under full government control, and that they were not linked to political-military strategy. Spreading operations might have placated each of the brigade commanders, but distributed already limited resources more thinly. It also provided the FMLN the ability to more easily escape.

Nor did FAES's civil defense efforts fare better. In addition to reminding people of the terror campaigns of ORDEN, Civil Defense units were a top FMLN target, but had little support. FAES provided no uniform, no pay beyond a $1,000 death benefit, did not provide adequate military support if a Civil Defense unit made enemy contact, and even forced members to share

[263] D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 126-27. The earthquake killed 1,000 Salvadorans and left 300,000 homeless. LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard*.
[264] Quoted in Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 148.
[265] Quoted in Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 148.
[266] Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 45.

weapons. By 1987, only 100 of 240 Civil Defense units were "certified" to carry their US supplied M14 rifle or M2 carbine and radios. Not surprisingly, the four colonels' report found that Civil Defense members tended to be the "aged, the lame, or the otherwise unfit," while Hazelton notes that members tended to include the town drunk looking for money for alcohol and those who wanted the authority to extort money from their neighbors.[267] The continued failure to build a Civil Defense corps undermined FAES's ability to secure and maintain gains.

Stated government strategy also included the incorporation of psychological operations, but progress here was minimal. In 1986, the government did create Radio Venceremos, an alternative and competitor to the FMLN's Radio Cuscatlán. However, the four colonels' report found no formal strategy to meet psychological operations objectives and little support among brigade commanders.[268]

One civic action bright spot in this period was the Municipalities in Action (MEA) program. MEA worked with local mayors to carry out development projects focused on providing "five components": schools, a government building, electricity, telephones, and improved roads. In line with current research on successful service provision, MEA worked with local civilians, who weighed in on their preferred projects in community meetings. Local involvement meant projects better tailored to local needs and reduced incentive for sabotage. By working directly with mayors, the program also reduced opportunities for graft. While I found no direct measure of its effects on local sentiment, and Byrne points out that FMLN supporters could still welcome new government funded schools or telephones, analysts regard the program as successful, and it spread to 243 of 262 municipalities by the end of the war.[269]

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[267] Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 40-41; Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 292; Hazelton, "Compellence and Accommodation," 130-32.

[268] Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 39-41.

[269] Byrne, *El Salvador's Civil War*, 148-49; D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 128-29.

In summary, MEA provided the one bright spot in an otherwise ineffective civic action campaign. In its decision to spread the largess of civic action among commanders, FAES ensured it could neither effectively concentrate limited resources nor maintain the gains it did make. FAES's unwillingness to support civil defense undermined its ability to control population and terrain. Even given the small but real success of MEA, a February 1989 CIA intelligence estimate assessed, "the armed forces efforts are still too piecemeal and not yet effectively tied to civic action." The best the CIA could offer after a decade of war, a near quadrupling of the military in size, and extensive foreign equipment and aid, was that FAES *might* be able to wear down the FMLN in another three to five years.[270]

5.4 1990-1992: Resolution

Despite contemporary references to El Salvador as a model of success, it was hardly a victory for FAES or the Salvadoran government. Instead, it was a negotiated settlement, best classified as a draw. The Salvadoran government gave up its objective of decisively defeating the FMLN, while the FMLN accepted integration into the electoral process. Nor were battlefield outcomes decisive in achieving this goal, beyond ensuring that neither group could gain the outcome it sought. Instead, a series of changes in domestic and international conditions led the stalemated parties to the table and to a compromise. A full analysis of the political causes and consequences of the settlement are beyond the scope of this project. Highlighting a few key points illustrates why the resolution of the war should not be conflated with FAES effectiveness.

The military resisted negotiations and preferred to continue to pursue a decisive defeat of the FMLN, but it lost ground domestically and lost the support of its US partner. Domestically,

[270] Quoted in Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 170.

Stanley identifies three major factors that undermined the military's position with the Salvadoran elite and opened space for peace negotiations. The first was the stalemate itself. Over a decade of fighting demonstrated the inability of both sides to reach a decisive victory or to attrite the other anytime in the near future. The 1989 offensive highlighted FAES's failure. The military no longer demonstrated itself competent in filling its end of the military-oligarch protection racket bargain. The second was the growth of ARENA from a death squad and terror organization to a viable political party. Through this transformation, including transfer of leadership from D'Aubuisson to the more moderate Alfredo Cristiani, who went on to win the 1989 Presidential elections, ARENA provided economic elites with a political alternative to reliance on the military. It also made itself more internationally palatable.[271] Third, changes within the Salvadoran economy reduced elite reliance on the protection racket. Because of the war, Salvadoran economic elite gradually shifted interests from labor intensive agriculture (cotton, coffee, sugar, and beets) to financial capital and export processing. They no longer required military repression of labor.[272] Worse, the military's repressive tactics, by making El Salvador an "international pariah," along with its corrupt incursions into the Salvadoran economy, threatened the new elite economic interests.[273]

Internationally, the wind down of the Cold War meant a reduction in support for both sides. The Soviet Union's curtailment of arms shipments to the Sandinistas in Nicaragua provided an indicator to FMLN leaders, who became more amendable to negotiations. In the United States, the 1989 offensive was El Salvador's Tet. FAES held off FMLN victory, but demonstrated that there was no light at the end of the tunnel. The Jesuit murders further

[271] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 220.
[272] Stanley, *Protection Racket State*, 220; Mark Peceny and William D. Stanley, "Counterinsurgency in El Salvador," *Politics & Society* 38, no. 1 (2010).
[273] Karl, "El Salvador's Negotiated Revolution," 152.

convinced members of Congress that FAES had not reformed.[274] These factors, along with the end of the Soviet threat and a more pragmatic Bush administration, led to US and Soviet pressure for a U.N. brokered negotiated solution. Despite FAES reluctance to negotiate, it had become dependent on US support.

A set of agreements negotiated over 1990 and 1991 facilitated the FMLN's entry into electoral politics in return for practical and structural reforms and the establishment of the U.N. Truth Commission. The most contentious and relevant for this study were changes to FAES, including a significant reduction in size, a purge of the worst human rights violators from the officer corps, reduction in the scope of military duties to external security, subordination to civil authority, and the creation of a new police force that would incorporate former FMLN fighters.[275] The *tanda* system and military power in El Salvador were broken not during the war, in an effort to create a more effective force, but during the settlement, after FAES failed to achieve more than a stalemate

5.5 Assessing Explanations

The primary alternate explanations do not adequately explain FAES's poor effectiveness. Explanations based on individual leadership struggle to account for FAES failure to improve after significant leadership changeover in 1983 and 1984, including the democratic election of a previously effective political leader. Formative war theories cannot explain why FAES effectiveness did not vary significantly as its opponent varied between more conventional and more guerrilla tactic and strategy.

[274] LeoGrande, "After the Battle of San Salvador," 341-43.
[275] Crandall, *Salvador Option*, 473-373; Karl, "El Salvador's Negotiated Revolution," 151-60.

5.5.1 Individual Leadership

The Salvadoran case highlights the structural constraints leaders face in war. As an individual, Duarte should have been an ideal candidate to implement reform. He had a long history as a reformer, had shown himself to be an effective mayor of San Salvador, and had increased legitimacy from the 1984 election, flawed as it was. Vides Casanova was more ambiguous. At the very least, US military leaders at the time thought highly of his military capability and desire to affect change. Yet the two could not overcome the deeply entrenched *tanda* system. They had some effect in reducing death squads and indiscriminate violence, but only the specific types of violence that their US partners tied to funding. Regarding the other components of PCC – service provision, appropriate tactics to gain control of the population, and even non-US monitored forms of civilian violence – they made far less headway.

A charitable interpretation might hold that Vides used US funding threats as leverage to limit death squad activity. A less charitable reading is that he was only interested in the minimum reforms necessary to maintain that funding. These are not mutually exclusive propositions, but they, along with the limited extent of change, point to the limits of individual leaders. The "What was Vides?" question also suggests the difficulty of developing and applying leader-based theories without relying on post-hoc analysis.

5.5.2 Formative Wars

Based on the assessment of both Salvadoran and American officers at the time, an explanation of Salvadoran effectiveness based on past formative wars seems to hold more promise. However, this falls short of a full explanation given FAES's performance against more conventional threats.

The last major war FAES fought was the "Soccer War" with Honduras in 1969. General Gutiérrez suggested this left FAES ill prepared for an insurgency when he claimed, "We were prepared for an international war against Honduras or against another neighboring country, but we did not have any kind of preparation to deal with a revolutionary war."[276] Waghelstein supported this suggestion, explaining,

> The last war that they fought was the one they won, and the tactics that won for them were the conventional tactics against a conventional enemy. The difficulties they were having in dealing with the insurgency were no different from those that any other conventional force – designed, organized, equipped, and trained to fight another conventional force would have in a similar situation.[277]

To the degree that it is accurate, it supports formative war theories that argue for cultural lock-in based on past history.

On its own, the explanation is inadequate for at least three reasons. First, D'Haeseleer and Binford show that FAES had significant exposure to PCC doctrine through military training with the US between 1950 and 1979, when the senior officers of the civil war were cadets and rising through the ranks. The four colonels report reasonably questions the overall balance of conventional versus unconventional training.[278] However, the US led training specifically grew out of President John Kennedy's initiatives to counter Marxist inspired guerillas globally.[279] Subjects included urban counter-insurgency, basic combat and counter-insurgency, and intelligence.[280] The experience of an actual war – even one as small as the Soccer War – is likely

[276] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 60.
[277] Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 278.
[278] Bacevich et al., *American Military Policy*, 15.
[279] D'Haeseleer assesses that "by the outbreak of the Salvadoran Civil War, many of El Salvador's military commanders had been exposed to the fundamental tenets of US counterinsurgency doctrine," a claim supported by one US advisor who explained that the problem was not a lack of training, but "getting them to actually use it." He notes that the reformist officers tended to be amenable to the doctrine, while the hardliners rejected it. D'Haeseleer, *Salvadoran Crucible*, 41-47, 72.
[280] Binford, *El Mozote Massacre*, 47.

more powerful in forming organizational biases than training, but thirty years of exposure to PCC ideas should not be dismissed.

More important, if FAES's effectiveness problems were rooted in a conventional cultural bias, they should have performed more effectively when the FMLN adopted conventional tactics, generally during the 1981 to 1984 period, and specifically during the 1981 and 1989 offensives. By contrast, my theory, coupled with complimentary theories using similar logic but focused on conventional war, would suggest consistently poor effectiveness in both periods and during the offensives. FAES performance during these parts of the conflict, despite facing conventional but inferior forces, was not effective.

Finally, Long has shown how different organizations within the same military can have divergent archetypes. For instance, the US Special Forces and Marines, based on their histories and evolution, developed into more effective counterinsurgency forces than the US Army.[281] Applied to El Salvador, the BIRI battalions, formed after the war began, organized specifically for the type of war at hand, and largely trained overseas, should have been more effective than the rest of the Salvadoran army. They did perform better at the types of tasks such as the basic maneuvers common to both conventional war and counterinsurgency. However, with their wanton abuse of civilians, including their role in massacres and assassinations, they were in many ways even worse at PCC.

5.5.3 Force Size

Because FAES never met the rule of thumb 20:1 ratio, it is more difficult to draw decisive conclusions about force ratios in this case. McClintock estimates a 1 to 1.5 insurgent to FAES ratio in 1980. With the expansion of FAES and reduction in the FMLN, she estimates a 1

[281] Austin Long, *The Soul of Armies: Counterinsurgency Doctrine and Military Culture in the US and UK* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016).

to 8 ratio by the late 1980s, a dramatic increase.[282] More important for addressing dominant force ratio theories, El Salvador never met the supposedly crucial threshold of twenty military to one civilian, which would have required a military of over 100,000. It did, however, more than triple its force ratio, from 3.4 security forces to 1,000 civilians to 11.1 to 1,000.[283]

Table 5.3: Salvadoran Troop to Civilian Force Ratios

	1981	1984	1987
Population [a]	4,655,364	4,858,532	5,053,714
FAES Size	16,600 [b]	40,000 [c]	56,000 [c]
Force Ratio (Troops to Civilians)	3.4:1,000	8.2:1,000	11.1:1,000

SOURCES: [a] United Nations Population Division, "World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision (El Salvador)"; [b] Arnson, "The Frente's Opposition," 136-138; [c] D'Haeseleer, The Salvadoran Crucible, 72.

In addition to the dramatic increase in size, the force also ended the war far better materially equipped than its opponent.

Despite the dramatic increase in size and improvement in force ratio, FAES effectiveness increased only marginally. Even if 20:1,000 is an ideal ratio, we should expect to see significant improvement in FAES performance after a tripling in size. It proved little more effective at controlling population after expansion than before. Force expansion within the structure of the corrupt promotion system, lack of monitoring, and a culture of personal gain led to greater abuse and predation, both of civilians and of soldiers. As to the idea that a larger force might lead to a greater wealth of high quality officers from which to select for senior positions, US trainers believed that force expansion outpaced expansion in effective leadership.[284]

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[282] McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements*, 229.

[283] "World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision (El Salvador)," updated 7 Dec 17, 2017, accessed 13 May 18, 2019, http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?q=population&d=PopDiv&f=variableID%3a12%3bcrID%3a222%3btimeID%3a39%2c42%2c46%3bvarID%3a2%2c3%2c4&c=2,4,6,7&s=_crEngNameOrderBy:asc,_timeEngNameOrderBy:desc,_varEngNameOrderBy:asc&v=1.

[284] "Anybody who gets caught up in this business of a 10:1 force ratio to beat an insurgency is naïve. I'd like to get my hands around that guy's throat! It's so simplistic! Every country has its own force ratio. It's a product of how good the troops are, how bad the guerrillas are, how many leaders you have to begin with, and a whole host of considerations. As you expand your force in a crisis you have to keep in mind what it takes to continue to lead that

5.5.4 Conclusion

El Salvador's Civil War demonstrated the limits of typical explanations for PCC effectiveness. FAES fought the second half of the war with a reformist President, made more legitimate by his election, and a Minister of Defense who, at least by accounts at the time, was more competent and reform minded than his predecessors. FAES created specialized new units with no conventional history, trained specifically for the war at hand. Training and equipping improved significantly for both its officer corps and enlisted ranks. It underwent a major expansion, achieving a favorable military to insurgent balance if not a one to fifty military to civilian ratio. Each of these changes should have produced significant improvements in effectiveness. Of the explanations for effectiveness, the one FAES did not address was its promotion system, which remained mired in the *tanda* system, divorced from merit.

Improvements were slight and at the margins. The BIRI, *cazador*, and PRAL units did show some tactical improvements against the enemy, but remained among the worst at victimizing civilians. The rest of the army continued its pattern of "search and avoid" patrols and struggled to maintain control of population and terrain. Civic action and service provision programs were consistently run poorly through the war. FAES reduced death squads and some forms of civilian victimization, but only in those areas in which the US could provide direct oversight, and only after the United States made credible threats to cut funding. Nor did FAES perform well when the enemy fought conventionally, undermining explanations based on past conventional war history.

It is impossible to examine the counterfactual of a FAES with a merit-based promotion system. It is possible to examine each step in the logic of the theory. FAES never adopted a

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force effectively. We've probably expanded here too quickly for the leadership." Steele quoted from interviews reprinted in Manwaring and Prisk, *El Salvador at War: An Oral History*, 409.

merit-based system. Instead, *tanda* loyalty dominated and protected incompetence, poor performance, and corruption. FAES leadership resisted any attempt from inside or outside to monitor itself and evaluate its officers' military merit. To do so would have endangered both those already in senior leadership positions and those who hoped to rise. It maintained an organizational culture based on personal material gain and *tanda* achievement of political power. Throughout, it remained an ineffective counterinsurgency force.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

After detailed studies of the Philippine and Salvadoran cases, it is now appropriate to draw final conclusions. This chapter reviews the key findings of the two cases and places this study and my theory in dialogue with existing theories. It then addresses pathways for future research and policy implications of the findings.

6.1 Review of Key Findings

Too often, theorists and practitioners have treated counterinsurgency as a technocratic, social engineering problem. If a military can just accomplish key items on the counterinsurgency checklist, it will necessarily achieve success.[1] This approach ignores the political components of enacting a strategy. Perhaps even more than in conventional war, the politics and structure of the counterinsurgent state and its military matter a great deal in its ability to implement PCC. This dissertation supports three basic arguments that taken together address how politics and military structure determine PCC effectiveness.

First, PCC inherently entails significant principal-agent problems for a military organization. It requires tactical and operational military organizations and individuals to engage in high risk activity, which they could easily shirk for lower risk options such as remaining on bases, avoiding dangerous areas, or conducting more secure large-scale patrols. It presents military units and individuals with plentiful opportunities to subvert the PCC strategy through

[1] Colin Jackson, "Government in a Box? Counter-insurgency, State Building, and the Tecnocratic Conceit," in *The New Counter-Insurgency Era in Critical Perspective*, ed. Celeste Ward Gventer, David Martin Jones, and M.L.R. Smith (Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

indiscriminate violence. It also presents opportunities to subvert through predation of civilians and subordinates and graft of service provision efforts.

Second, PCC requires a Weberian command structure, including clear and respected lines of hierarchy, privileging of expertise and merit, and prioritization of abstract loyalty to the organization and its purpose over loyalty to individuals. A Weberian command structure facilitates two solutions to the principal-agent problem – an organizational culture focused on achieving mission ends and internal monitoring mechanisms to identify those who deviate from the culture. Command structures that lack this hierarchy cannot conduct internal monitoring. Those that lack abstract loyalty to the organizational mission will not conduct evaluation and monitoring. Nor will individual members self-police or monitor their peers.

Third, a merit-based appointment and promotion system is necessary to achieve this Weberian command structure. Appointments through cronyism, nepotism, and patronage do more than deny the military organization expertise in senior ranks. They create cultures that incentivize service to patron and personal gain over organizational ends and encourage shirking and subversion. They weaken chains of command, denying the organization the ability to conduct internal monitoring. They also disincentivize monitoring and evaluation, even where the ability exists, as doing so would undermine the authority and position of the incumbents who rose through patronage and crony system and challenge patrons interests.

The initial periods of study in both cases – 1946 to 1950 in the Philippines and 1979 to 1984 in El Salvador – demonstrate the negative effects of non-merit-based promotion and appointment systems. In the Philippines, local military and police leaders fell into crony relationships with local political leaders, while national level political leaders appointed officers to senior ranks based on patronage and personal loyalty. These political leaders represented the

interests of the dominant party and the landed elite. In El Salvador, the web of patrons was more complicated. The military as a whole maintained an external "protection racket" relationship with the landed oligarchs in which it delivered labor repression in return for political power and economic gain. As long as it delivered on these promises, the oligarchs allowed it to maintain its own promotion and appointment systems. The system was not, however, based on merit. Instead, officers were promoted on a set schedule through colonel, regardless of merit, and appointments to key positions were determined by the inner-military political struggles and compromises of competing *tandas*.

In both cases, military organizational culture revolved around meeting patron interests and on self-enrichment, while avoiding personal and unit risk. As predicted in the concluding hypotheses in chapter 2, both forces showed an aversion to risk as exemplified in "barracks bound" mentality, focus on fixed site security, avoidance of small patrols, and preference for large but ineffective sweep operations. Thus, they were unable to establish and maintain population control.

Both militaries were highly indiscriminate in their targeting, imposing a high cost on civilians. Sometimes this cost was intentional, as with the PAF's burning of homes and villages or FAES's death squads and massacres. Sometimes, civilians were "collateral damage" through the indiscriminate use of force in practices such as "recon by fire" in populated areas. Predation and theft against civilians was common in both, and the Salvadoran officer corps practiced predation against its own soldiers.

To the limited degree that either force undertook public service provision during the early periods, provision was incompetently administered and rife with corruption and graft. It was

rarely tied directly to local needs. Even if they had overcome these problems, both militaries proved ineffective in securing the limited gains in service provision they did make.

Nor did either military prove capable of internal monitoring and evaluation. Inspections and accountability were rare before 1950 in the Philippines. In El Salvador, accountability for atrocities and death squad murders was non-existent, especially among the officer corps, even after significant external pressure including US threats to cut funding vital to FAES's survival. This lack of accountability is not shocking. To have held personnel accountable would have endangered the interests of patrons and incumbents. In both cases, these interests included labor repression. In the Philippines, they also included election meddling, while in El Salvador they included maintenance of the *tanda* system.

The Philippines promotion and appointment system underwent a dramatic change beginning in 1950. The new Secretary of National Defense removed crony officers and refused to promote officers without combat experience. He stated clear criteria for promotion – effects against the enemy and treatment of civilians. Building on these changes, he instituted a regime of inspections to monitor and evaluate. As an indicator of the shift from a culture focused on patrons to one focused on impersonal institutional ends, the PAF played a significant role in securing the 1951 and 1953 elections, as opposed to security forces' previous role of using violence to guarantee incumbent patron victory. Even Huk leaders noted a change in the organizational culture of the PAF. They also noted a difference in treatment of civilians, more discriminate use of violence, and better, though still limited, provision of services. To be clear, the reformed PAF was far from perfect, but the improvement was dramatic. The PAF began conducting independent, small unit, long duration operations, both to hunt Huk and to secure the population. They became an effective PCC force.

Comparing competing explanations in the Philippines case, there can be little doubt that Magsaysay as an individual mattered. However, Magsaysay could not personally lead the BCTs conducting the war on the ground. Instead, he affected his changes through a change in promotions and appointments. The PAF was, by training, a conventional force, though an advocate of formative war theory might suggest that many of the Philippine officers, along with Magsaysay, had significant experience as insurgents, making them more capable of adjusting to different types of warfare. Further research examining promotion and performance of specific officers based on their World War II experience could address this ambiguity, but the ability of the PAF to reform so dramatically calls into question formative war theories' assumptions about military rigidity. Philippine forces did expand considerably, and while their force to population ratio remained low when compared to the entire country, when compared to the four provinces with the most Huk activity, it was favorable in both periods. Force size and ratios cannot explain changes to include the more discriminate use of force or reduction in predation against civilians.

The 1984 to 1989 period in El Salvador provides additional leverage on the competing theories. At least three indicators suggest that FAES should have become an effective PCC force. First, both civilian and military senior leadership changes initially showed some promise for reform in late 1983 and 1984. Duarte was El Salvador's first democratically elected, non-military president and had shown political and governance acumen in the past as mayor of San Salvador. Unlike his earlier, short period at the head of the junta, he had the added legitimacy of the election. Vides's background as the former head of the National Guard was a bit more ambiguous, though some hoped at the time that he might serve as a reformer. Second, the military grew dramatically in size. While it never reached the supposed ideal of twenty soldiers for every thousand civilians, it more than tripled its numbers over the course of the war, along

with making significant US funded improvements in equipment. Third, again through US assistance, its training level improved significantly, both among the enlisted and especially in the officer corps. It also created new units, specially trained outside of the country for counterinsurgency, that did not share the army's recent conventional Soccer War history. At least these units should have demonstrated increased PCC effectiveness.

Despite these changes, FAES never broke the *tanda* system's hold on promotions and appointments in favor of one based on merit. Some American observers at the time believed that Vides' personnel changes might indicate the move to a merit-based system. In retrospect, they were part of the common tanda rotation in which a new leader moved his tanda and those jockeying for power below his up in the chain of command, in this case clearing the way for the ascent of the especially large and powerful *tandona*.

FAES made some improvements in effectiveness on the margins, which might be expected given improvements in size and training, but they remained a largely ineffective counterinsurgency force. The most visible improvements included the curtailing of death squads and reduction in overt targeting of civilians. However, efforts to use force more discriminately against civilians only occurred in the areas in which Vice President Bush and the US Congress made credible threats to end the funding upon which FAES had grown dependent. In other areas which the United States did not or could not easily monitor, such as rural civilian aerial bombardment, indiscriminate violence continued. Nor did FAES ever meet US demands for accountability for past death squads and atrocities, despite tremendous pressure. To do so would have threatened the *tanda* system and the officer corps itself. This suggests instrumental changes to meet the minimum requirements for US funding as opposed to fundamental changes in FAES. FAES officers walked a tight line – they were dependent on US material support, but to make the

reforms the United States demanded would have been an existential threat to the patronage and crony based *tanda* system.

Alternate theories cannot fully explain FAES's lack of significant improvement. The specially trained units showed more tactical proficiency than the regular army and security forces, but were also responsible for some of the most significant atrocities in both periods. This suggests that a break with past formative military history was not enough to produce an effective PCC force. The fact that FAES performed poorly against both guerrilla and conventional FMLN strategies also calls into question explanations based on early formative history. Far from guaranteeing effectiveness, increased troop numbers, funding, and equipment gave the officer corps more opportunities for predation and self-enrichment, of which they took advantage. In terms of population control, FAES was able to make limited reduction in the areas that the FMLN controlled, but areas of contestation formerly under FAES control simultaneously increased in what became a stalemate in the last years of the war. Finally, with the exception of the limited Municipalities in Action Program, service provision was a failure in both periods.

In summary, none of the existing theories can provide a full accounting of military effectiveness in both the Philippines and El Salvador. This is not to suggest that their insights should be entirely dismissed. Controlling contested populations that are large or spatially spread requires a sizable military force. Competent military leaders are better than incompetent ones, and charismatic strategic visionaries would be ideal. None of these claims should be controversial. Yet none of these can explain all four phases of the two cases considered here. However, a focus on promotion and appointment systems and their effects on a command structure's ability to monitor and establish a favorable, mission based organizational culture for PCC offers a coherent explanation.

6.2 Future Research

This dissertation serves as both a theory building exercise and a "plausibility probe" which offers strong support for the theory and suggests that "more intensive and laborious testing is warranted."[2] Beyond further testing of the theory with additional cases and methods, the dissertation opens up four areas for further research.

First, we need a better understanding of when, how, and why non-merit-based militaries make transitions to merit-based appointment and promotion systems. This study treated causes of promotion and appointment reform as exogenous, offering no structured explanation for them. One might hypothesize the transition relates to the magnitude of the threat. This accords with the basic logic in both Posen's neo-realist explanation of doctrinal innovation in conventional war and Talmadge's findings on coup-proofed militaries.[3] Yet the FMLN was arguably a more significant threat to the state and its military than the Huk, yet it was the PAF that made significant reforms. Another variable for consideration might be the nature of patronage network ties, and specifically whether they are contained within the military or extend outside of it. One might hypothesize that it was easier for Magsaysay as an external political actor to break PAF officer ties to other external political patrons than for Duarte and Vides to break the internally self-protecting *tanda* system. This line of research could raise interesting implications for reform based on systems with civilian control of the military versus those with military control of the state. Future research might also consider command structure within the larger context of state building and state development. North, Wallis, and Weingast argue that patronage and

[2] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 75.

[3] Barry Posen, *The Sources of Miltiary Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984); Caitlin Talmadge, *The Dictator's Army: Battlefield Effectiveness in Authoritarian Regimes* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

personalistic relationships are inherent components of the "natural state" or "closed access orders." In their account of state development, the impersonal loyalty to institutional ends that the Weberian military requires might only be possible in states that have already met specific doorstep conditions and transitioned, or have at least begun the transition, to "open access orders" with "perpetually lived" impersonal organizations.[4] This line of reasoning suggests that states and militaries in closed access orders are highly constrained in their ability to make reforms necessary for PCC.[5]

A second and related question for future study is whether external powers can affect or influence a non-merit-based military to make the transition to a merit-based system. The cases considered here cannot provide a definitive answer, but suggest that leveraging reform from outside is difficult. In the Philippine case, the United States played some role in Magsaysay's rise, but he was already a respected, ascendant politician that may have become Secretary of National Defense without support from JUSMAG, Lansdale, or the US State Department. The United States also provided Magsaysay with some leverage over both the President and the military by tying funding to his proposed reforms – but without Magsaysay himself or someone like him, it is not clear that they would have found a Secretary of National Defense willing to make the reforms in the first place. In short, the great accomplishment of the United State as an outside intervener may have been the wisdom to recognize and exploit good luck that was itself outside of US control.

In El Salvador, the United States went to great lengths to try to influence the Salvadoran military and break the corrupt personnel system. It trained over half of FAES's officers. Given

[4] Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallis, and Barry R. Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[5] For one version of this argument, see Scott Paul Handler, "Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: Understanding Modern State-Building (and Counterinsurgency)" (PhD diss., Stanford, 2010).

the Salvadoran dependence on US assistance, one might expect that US threats to cut funding, especially when made credible by Congressional action, would have given the United States significant leverage. Yet the United States could only affect limited and minimal change, and never to the appointments and promotion system. Was this, as Biddle et el. suggest, simply because the interests of the US and Salvadoran military and elite were misaligned, creating another principal-agent problem?[6] Did the United States lack leverage to force promotion system reforms, or did it misapply the leverage it did have?[7] Or is the type of social and institutional engineering required to transform a foreign command structure outside of the reach of even a great power?

At the very least, these difficulties, along with the possibility that reforms hinge on larger questions of basic state building and state formation, suggest external powers should be cautious in estimating their ability to force command structure reforms. Given the internal political incentives to develop and maintain non-merit-based systems, such well-intentioned reform might destabilize allied states, especially if they are "closed access" states.[8] This in-turn means interveners should be cautious about the feasibility of pushing non-merit-based allies to implement PCC strategies.

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[6] Stephen Biddle, Julia Macdonald, and Ryan Baker, "Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 41 (2018): 107-12, https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2017.1307745.

[7] A good initial study on the forms of leverage the United States applied to El Salvador and why some were more effective than others is Walter C. Ladwig, III, "Influencing Clients in Counterinsurgency: U.S. Involvement in El Salvador's Civil War, 1979-92," *International Security* 41, no. 1 (Summer 2016).On external leverage in a home state's counterinsurgency operations, see Jacqueline L. Hazelton, "The Client Gets a Vote: Counterinsurgency Warfare and the U.S. Military Advisory Mission in South Vietnam, 1954-1965," *Journal of Strategic Studies* (2018).

[8] Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, "Small Footprint, Small Payoff," 100; Jahara Matisek and William Reno, "Getting American Security Force Assistance Right: Political Context Matters," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 92, 1st Quarter (2019): 68, https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/jfq/jfq-92/jfq-92_65-73_Matisek-Reno.pdf.

Third, lest this dissertation be accused of suggesting that "a grab bag of 'doctrinally sound' military actions would somehow add up to a strategic win," I make no judgments about the conditions under which effectively executed PCC achieves a states' wartime political objectives.[9] Effective PCC is no guarantee of war outcomes, nor does the fact that a state can execute PCC well necessarily suggest that PCC is its optimal political and strategic option. Moving beyond the coercion versus persuasion debates, future research should focus on the conditions under which varying counterinsurgency strategies are most likely to produce desired military and political outcomes.

Finally, within the larger set of questions about the relationship between effective execution of strategy and the outcomes it produces, the Philippine case suggests the need to re-examine the assumptions and mechanisms behind service provision. On one hand, programs like EDCOR and the provision of military lawyers to represent peasants in landlord disputes directly addressed the land issue. On the other, they were so small in magnitude that it would be impossible to claim that they had measurable effects on the landlord-tenant system. In the Philippines, some projects' propaganda value seemed to outweigh their substance. As discussed in chapter 2, we have micro-level studies about good and bad tactical practices related to service provision and aid. Many of these studies rely on local results such as changes in local violence levels, civilian provision of intelligence, or survey data. There is still room for a better tested, comprehensive macro or mid-level theory of service provision, aid, and their role on outcomes.

[9] Karl W. Eikenberry, "The Limits of Counterinsurgency Doctrine in Afghanistan: The Other Slide of the COIN," *Foreign Affairs* 59 (Sept./Oct. 2013): 66.

6.3 Policy Implications

Shortly before the completion of this dissertation, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Dunford, assessed of the war in Afghanistan that, "We used the term stalemate a year ago, and, relatively speaking, it has not changed," and that the Taliban is "not losing right now, I think that's fair to say."[10] Dunford's assessment of stalemate may have been over optimistic. Between August 2016 and October 2018, US and NATO forces assessed that the Afghan population under the control or influence of the Kabul government fell slightly from 69 percent to 64 percent. However, districts under government control from November 2015 to October 2018 dropped from 72 percent to 54 percent.[11] Outside evaluations were worse, with a January 2018 British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) estimate that only 30 percent of districts were under government control.[12]

Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) failed, after seventeen years, to implement a merit-based promotion system. As of late 2018 and early 2019, the Afghan Ministry of Defense made "insufficient progress" on "merit-based promotions and appointments" and "continues to grant promotions without using the required promotion boards…"[13] Just as the FAES and pre-1950 PAF, the ANDSF proved unable to maintain, much less expand, population

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[10] "In Afghanistan, a 17-Year Stalemate: America's Top General Admits the War is at an Impasse," Foreign Policy, updated 1:29 PM, 20 Nov, 2018, accessed 14 May, 2019, https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/11/20/in-afghanistan-a-17-year-stalemate-us-war-pentagon/.

[11] August 2016 was the first release of population control data. November 2015 was the first release of district control data. The US Department of Defense announced that it would no longer collect either metric after October 2018. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress: 30 Jan 19* (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, 30 Jan, 2019), 69-70. https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2019-01-30qr.pdf; Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress: 30 Oct 18* (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, 2018), 73, 203-04. https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2018-10-30qr.pdf.

[12] "Taliban threaten 70% of Afghanistan, BBC finds," BBC News Asia, updated 21 Jan., 2018, accessed 16 May, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-42863116.

[13] Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress: 30 Jan 19*, 121; Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress: 30 Oct 18*, 117.

control. ANDSF is rife with graft and predation "associated with fuel, food, 'ghost' or non-existent soldiers, extortion, narcotics, illicit mining, bribery, and the misuse, theft, or illegal sale of Afghan government property."[14] To be clear, Afghan corruption extends far beyond its promotion system, as documented in the reports of the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR). Promotion and appointment systems alone cannot provide a mono-causal explanation for ANDSF problems, and a full evaluation of ANDSF is beyond the scope of this project. However, the situation in Afghanistan, taken together with the Philippines and El Salvador, suggests important policy implications for both home state counterinsurgents and interveners.

If seventeen years of stalemate and failure has not provided compelling evidence in itself, the inability of ANDSF to develop a merit-based command structure should further the case for abandoning any ambition to create an effective PCC force in Afghanistan. The Afghan command structure is simply not equipped to carry out such a strategy. Current talks with the Taliban may suggest a gradual recognition of this fact by American policy makers, but the added evidence from this dissertation makes it even more imperative to find another option. This might include abandoning PCC in favor of a combination of counter-terrorism operations and agreements with the Taliban, an organization with national but not global ambitions, to keep truly global terrorist organizations from using ungoverned Afghan space as a training and staging area.[15] The dissertation also suggests more generalizable policy implications.

[14] Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress: 30 Oct 18*, 66.

[15] See, for instance, Robert Anthony Pape, "A New Strategy for Afghanistan," Opinion, *The Boston Globe* (Boston), 30 Jan. 2019, Opinion, https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2019/01/30/opinoni-robert-pape-new-strategy-for-afghanistan/BC9ItcpnqNzMZk09hKvWmN/story.html.

Counterinsurgent states that lack Weberian militaries should be weary of allies that push PCC strategies on them. PCC has great appeal for liberal democracies. Its prescriptions for selective violence, service provision, civilian protection, and most importantly, the winning of popular allegiance fit with the liberal conception of the good state. In short, it promises that even in war, the incumbent state can do well by doing good. Further, some political scientists suggest that a focus on universal rights makes political liberalism (in the broadest sense of the term) inherently imperialist, compelling liberal democracies to seek expansion of their ideology and governing system.[16] It is thus natural that when partnering with client states fighting insurgencies, liberal democratic powers like the United States should turn to PCC as a preferred strategy, and even that they should aggressively look for opportunities to do so around the world.

Whatever the liberal merits of PCC, they mean little if the state cannot effectively execute the strategy. Yet even client states that recognize their own limitations to execute PCC may find it difficult to resist the pressure of their great power sponsors. For example, Karl Eikenberry, the former Ambassador to Afghanistan, and before that, the Commanding General of the Combined Forces – Afghanistan, suggests that Hamid Karzai fundamentally disagreed with American strategy. Though it is far from clear that Karzai had a better alternative, or indeed any structured alternative, the United States might have done well to have given more consideration to some of his objections.[17]

Likewise, external powers considering support for counterinsurgent clients should carefully consider whether their clients can effectively implement PCC. Material support,

[16] Michael C. Desch, "America's Liberal Illiberalism: The Ideological Origins of Overreaction in U.S. Foreign Policy," *International Security* 32, no. 3 (Winter 2007/2008); John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), especially 120-30; John J. Mearsheimer, "Imperial by Design," *National Interest*, no. 111 (Jan./Feb. 2011).

[17] Eikenberry, "The Limits of Counterinsurgency Doctrine," 68-72.

military expansion, and training are insufficient alone to create an effective PCC force. Nor are they sufficient to turn personalistic command structures Weberian. The United States provided all three in El Salvador at a cost of $5 billion, with $1 billion devoted exclusively to military training and equipping.[18] Dwarfing those figures, it spent $133 billion on Afghan reconstruction between 2002 and the start of 2019, with $63 billion funding "salaries, infrastructure, equipment, and training for the approximately 309,000 members" of the ANDSF. Nor does this include sizable non-US NATO state funds or the funds for US and NATO soldiers who partnered with and supposedly mentored Afghan forces.[19] Yet neither became an effective PCC force.

Short-term appetites for US or NATO led counterinsurgency missions have diminished in the United States and Europe, but this has not reduced a desire to exert influence among partner states, including those facing domestic insurgencies, through "small footprint" options. "Security Force Assistance" (SFA), essentially an advisory mission, is replacing large scale US led counterinsurgency, at least in the short term. The United States is or has recently conducted SFA missions in a host of states to include Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Libya, Niger, Mali, Mauritania, and Pakistan.[20] The US Army is in the process of fielding six Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs). The United Kingdom is fielding two similar battalions.[21] According to new doctrine, "The SFAB deploys to develop foreign security force capabilities to prevent conflicts, as a deterrent to shape the environment, and when necessary, to bolster foreign

[18] Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, "Small Footprint, Small Payoff," 108.

[19] Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress: 30 Apr 19* (Arlington, VA: SIGAR, 2019), 4-6, 56-59. https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2019-04-30qr.pdf.

[20] Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker, "Small Footprint, Small Payoff," 90.

[21] The Associated Press, "Army Training Brigade Prepares for New Worldwide Deployment," *The New York Times* (New York) 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2019/05/08/us/politics/ap-us-military-trainers.html; Matisek and Reno, "Getting American Security Force Assistance Right," 67.

security forces (FSF) to a level that it can win and establish a secure environment."[22] It will "improve the capability and capacity of partner nations' or regional security organizations' security forces."[23]

Foreign military assistance and advising is not a new or uniquely American or British concept. Biddle et el. identify numerous states that have contributed to US SFA missions including Australia, Turkey, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Croatia, Finland, and Portugal. Iran, Saudi Arabia, Russia, and Rwanda have all conducted their own SFA missions with partner countries. Nor must SFA necessarily involve assisting partners to conduct PCC. For instance, SFA units may assist with conventional war or counterterrorism operations.

However, the temptation to tie SFA missions to PCC will be high. John Nagl, one of the early promoters of the SFAB concept, argued that SFABs were required for "the counterinsurgency campaigns that are likely to continue to be the face of battle in the 21st century…" and tied the requirement directly to the counterinsurgency field manual that he helped author.[24] As long as PCC is official US and British doctrine, there is good reason to expect that their advisory units will attempt to export it to client states facing insurgency. In cases in which the client lacks a Weberian command structure, this would be a mistake. Instead, either military leaders need to develop other operational and strategic alternatives to achieve political objectives, or political leaders need to rethink the feasibility of achieving the objectives themselves.

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[22] *Army Techniques Publication (ATP) No. 3-96.1: Security Force Assistance Brigade*, (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 2 May, 2018), 1-1.

[23] *Security Force Assistance Brigade*, 1-3.

[24] John A. Nagl, *Institutionalizing Adaptation: It's Time for a Permanent Army Advisor Corp*, The Future of the U.S. Military Series, (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Century, June, 2007), 3.

In conclusion, this dissertation identifies the conditions under which a military can successfully implement PCC strategies: merit-based promotions and appointments that lead to Weberian command structures. It also identifies conditions under which militaries cannot effectively implement PCC. Yet it is the very states that are least capable of PCC that are likely most susceptible to rebellions and insurgencies. PCC advocates should be humble about the strategy's potential to achieve their military and political objectives. The cases in which it is appropriate may be narrower than they would like to think.

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