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# Hearts and Minds, Psuedo Gangs and Counter Insurgency: Based upon Experiences from Previous Campaigns in Kenya (1952-60), Malaya (1948-60) & Rhodesia (1964-1979)

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# Hearts and Minds, Psuedo Gangs and Counter Insurgency: Based upon Experiences from Previous Campaigns in Kenya (1952-60), Malaya (1948-60) & Rhodesia (1964-1979)

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## Abstract

*Pseudo gangs form the steely side of Hearts and Minds and were used with great effect in counter-insurgency campaigns in Kenya (1952-60) Malaya (1948-60) and Rhodesia (1964-1979). Although the use of pseudo gangs was not new to counter-insurgency tactics, with the British using a similar tactic in the Boer war (1899-1902), the use of such gangs was certainly perfected during these later campaigns producing good results. The Kenya Police Special Branch re-instigated this concept, developing its use during the 'Emergency'.*

*The principal concept was to 'turn' or co-opt insurgents through a series of inducements to change sides and join the counter insurgency as part of the Government forces but not as regular forces. Rather the co-opted kept their actual identities or their 'assumed' identities and return to the conflict areas as part of a 'gang', which would be made to appear as if it is still fighting for the insurgents. This 'pseudo' gang would then rejoin or flush out the opposition and either capture, gain further intelligence or eliminate them. Based on my ongoing PhD research into these three campaigns, this paper will briefly outline an alternative model that could be developed for current conflicts against insurgents.*

## Keywords

Campaigns; counter-insurgency; 'Emergency'; gangs; hearts and minds; insurgents; Kenya; Malaya; pseudo gang; Rhodesia; Special Branch.

## INTRODUCTION

"Hearts and Minds" has become almost synonymous with counter insurgency policy transforming itself from a concept into an actual strategy; however it is certainly not the panacea politicians or the press would like to think it is. This paper will argue that for counter-insurgency campaigns to be successful they require "the iron fist in the velvet glove" to directly influence the insurgents. This means not only the capability, but also the ability, to sway the minds of the insurgents over to the side of the security forces. The famous "Hearts and Minds" phrase used by General Templer, in the Malaya insurgency, is often quoted to convey the necessity of having a political dimension as part of the counter-insurgency tactics that corresponds to the military one. "Essential though it is, the military action is secondary to the political one, its primary purpose being to afford the political power enough freedom to work safely with the population" (Galula, 1964, p. 63). However, as Charles Colson, chief counsel to President Nixon, once said, "if you grab them by the balls, the hearts and minds will follow" the context is the same but moves away from the much vaunted idea of 'hearts and minds' as a soft approach, and the sole tactic in counter-insurgency, and more to one where the control of the situation is more in the hands of the security forces. They must use ruthless determination to achieve desired success and not pander to sentiment. Galula (2006) argues the central aim for a successful counter-insurgency campaign is to gain the support of the population rather than control of territory. Gaining support of the population can be interpreted many ways but rarely do 'kind' acts achieve strategic successes. The need for a more directed approach is one that is reviewed in this paper.

This paper forms part of my current PhD research examining previous counter- insurgency campaigns in an attempt to identify what strategies and tactics were successful (why they worked) and how these proven approaches could be used again in current conflicts. Although the research to date is primarily based on interviews with ex Kenyan Policemen, a thread has emerged from these initial interviews concerning 'pseudo gangs'. I am undertaking further interviews with other former combatants involved with the Kenya, Malayan and Rhodesian counter-insurgency campaigns to analyse how these tactics developed in Kenya and Malaya evolved through the later campaigns. The human sources used for this research are identified by their code to maintain anonymity.

The ability to gain intelligence and to infiltrate the opponents camps is very much a sought after tactic within conflicts; the use of spies has been much publicised over the centuries to achieve this. However, a method which has been used, predominately by the British, in numerous counter insurgency campaigns over the years, and later by the security forces in both Rhodesia and in South West Africa by the South African Defence Force (SADF), has been the use of 'turning' ex gang members so that they return to their erstwhile colleagues and deceive them in to believing that they are still on their side; when in fact they have changed sides. This tactic has been labelled 'pseudo gangs'; by those who implemented this tactic in Kenya and my recent research indicates this approach was far more successful than many analysts have hitherto understood.

The concept of 'Hearts and Minds' has become central to all discussions concerned with counter insurgency and asymmetrical conflicts. Although this concept is often attributed to General Templer, during the Malayan conflict( 1948-1960. Lyndon B. Johnson, certainly was keen on using the phrase, often inverting it to 'minds and hearts' when discussing the war in Vietnam. Many think he took this from President Jon Adams's letter dated 18th of February 1818:

> The Revolution was affected(sic) before the war commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people; a change in their religious sentiments of their duties and obligations.... This radical change in the principles, opinions, sentiments, and affections of the people, was the real American Revolution. (Adams cited in Dickinson, 2009)

This quote by Adams clearly identified what was at stake, the support of the people. The overall concept has been analysed further by many others such as David Charters in The *British Army and Jewish Insurgency in Palestine, 1945-7* (Charters, 1989), Richard Stubbs *Hearts and Minds in Guerrilla warfare* (Stubbs, 1989) and Thomas Mockaitis "*British Counterinsurgency, 1919-60* (Mockaitis, 1999); as well as in countless military documents. Susan Carruthers analyses the total concept of the hearts and minds strategy, by highlighting British government "attempts to influence opinion about challenges to colonial rule in four counter-insurgency campaigns" as well as how the propaganda war is fought by stigmatising opponents (Carruthers, 1995, p. 2). Clearly the hearts and minds approach to counter-insurgency is not a new concept, nevertheless it is a concept that needs ongoing analytical refinement so that it may be utilised effectively in contemporary and future counter-insurgency operations. By the same token the hearts and minds concept must not be overplayed either as the ultimate panacea. Counter-insurgency operations utilising a hearts and minds component will always need to be combined with security forces that are demonstrably more than capable of winning due to their superior soldiering skills, fire power, logistical support and greater resources to back up their campaign. The ability to convince the population that you will eventually win is an essential part of the overall strategy, "[the] counterinsurgent cannot achieve much if the population is not, and does not feel, protected against the insurgents" (Galula, 2006, p. 64).

The ability to convince insurgents to change sides is central to success if the insurgency is to be overcome. Therefore convincing individual insurgents that changing sides is in their own best interests particularly if they wish to come out of the conflict on the winning side. Evidence suggests that the desire to gain an advantage, or not to lose it, is core to this concept of changing sides according to those that took part in these campaigns. The ability to 'turn' an insurgent was the key and was certainly the hall mark of the Selous Scouts during the Rhodesian campaign, which will be discussed later in this paper:

> . . . [T]he best recruiting method was to send another former insurgent to visit him in hospital . . . and have a long conversation, dwelling in particular upon the hardships the insurgents were experiencing in the bush . . . The process of turning insurgents was eased considerably by the knowledge that they could be hanged as violators of the Law and Ord Maintenance Act. He would then be examined thoroughly by members of the Selous Scouts to ensure his loyalty—not to the government of Rhodesia, but to the members of the unit itself. The insurgent also would be offered a cash lump sum for joining the Selous Scouts (together with receiving the same salary as a soldier, with the funds being paid by Special Branch), and if possible, his family would be moved to the Selous Scouts base, where they received free rations, housing, education, and medical care. (Reid-Daly, 1999, pp. 106-107)

## KENYA

The Mau Mau 'Emergency' in Kenya was declared by the British colonial government in 20 October 1952. The roots of the conflict began much earlier and had been brewing for a number of years between the Kikuyu and the settlers over land issues and rights (Furedi, 1989). However it was not considered to be serious by the Colonial

Government until deaths occurred on several settlers farms in 1952. The police force was then increased threefold with the addition of five British army battalions, as well as one full Kings African Rifles (KAR), plus the backing of the Royal Air Force (Lonsdale, 1990, p. 394). The military were employed as an aid to the civil power; as described by Huw Bennett, in his paper on the Mau Mau Emergency (Bennett, 2007).

The capacity to control the psychological sphere of influence became crucial to fighting the Emergency. John Lonsdale develops a series of interesting themes concerning the 'mind games' involved stating that the Mau Mau insurgents took over the minds of the white settlers, when the intention should have been very much the opposite, but clearly there was a great deal of fear amongst the settler population as they were greatly outnumbered by the indigenous population. The thrust of the "hearts and minds' policy should have been to dominate the local population i.e. the African (Lonsdale, 1990, p. 394). General Erskine's strategy in Kenya involved three key elements. Firstly, secure what were called the 'Reserves' in the tribal areas by securing them from attack and intimidation; this was called 'villagisation' in Malaya. Secondly, round up as many known Mau Mau as they could, which they did as part of "Operation Jock Scott". Thirdly, take the offensive to the terrain in which the insurgents were operating (Melshen, 2007, p. 675). It is this last aspect that is of interest and needs to be assessed and analysed as this became central to the campaign with development of psychological warfare and the use of what would become known as 'Pseudo gangs' as part of this strategy.

It is this issue associated with mind games that opens the way for the development of the concept of co-opting or turning known insurgents to betray their own comrades and become a pseudo gang. The argument over the word Mau Mau is an important one in this debate as it centres on the very nature of the conflict and how this was fought out in the 'minds 'of those involved. The demonising of your enemy is not new and runs throughout history, however in post World War II world order this had now become a key element in the ability to retain the support of the 'colonised' population; who were starting to shun the notion of external control over their lives and their country. Leakey takes the confusion over the word Mau Mau even further by describing the organisation as a pseudo religious one, set up to replace the imposition of Christianity upon the Kikuyu (Leakey, 2004, p. 42); stating their zeal turned the adherents into "fanatical, murdering maniacs" (Leakey, 2004, p. 51), which certainly added fuel to the propaganda war which was being conducted in both the British and Kenyan press. Furthermore, the pseudo links to religion may be borne out by the research that indicates a ready acceptance by the captured insurgents to redeem themselves by accepting de-oathing ceremonies (respondent K-2, 2010, Bailey, 2012).

The other aspect that needs to be assessed was that in both insurgences, Kenya and Malaya, the perpetrators of the insurgency attacked those that they thought supported the Colonialists, an aspect developed very succinctly by Leakey(Leakey, 2004). The divisions within the Kikuyu tribe were ruthlessly exploited allowing the colonial security forces to harness any support against the Mau Mau to their advantage and turn their own people against them. Once again this laid the foundation for the idea of pseudo gangs to take hold as a tactic. This would appear to have been crucial in the ability to gain the upper hand and start to dominate the campaign, after the advantage had been lost following the general surge from the Mau Mau post operation "Jock Scott" 10th of Oct 1952. "The operation to arrest 120 of the known leaders of the Mau Mau had seriously back fired and in fact had caused the insurgency to blow out of control rather than nipping it in the bud as had been envisaged" (respondent K-2, 2010, Bailey, 2012).

The other critical element is the role played by the colonial police force, Deflem, articulates their unique position within the campaign structure, especially under the indirect rule concept adopted by the Colonial office. The Police, together with the Kenya regiment, were crucial to counter insurgency tactics (Deflem, 1994, p. 47; Husain, 2009; Kitson, 1960; Smith, 2005). Beckett develops this theme further, pointing out how important their detailed knowledge was in the overall strategy (Beckett & Pimlott, 1985; Kitson, 1960). Bennett also deals with use of force elements and the criticality of command and control of those forces on the ground (Bennett, 2007). All of these factors indicated the important role the Colonial Police force played in being able to dominate the counter insurgency because of their local knowledge of language and customs.

In Kenya a certain Captain Kitson, an intelligence officer who was attached to Kenya Police Special Branch developed an idea together with Ian Henderson and a few others (including a respondent in this current research) about trying to infiltrate the Mau Mau . There is considerable dispute as to how the idea morphed into the full use of 'Pseudo gangs', however Captain Kitson played a central role and details the gradual evolution of the strategy in his book (Kitson, 1960; 1990).

## THE PSEUDO GANGS

What is of particular interest to the research is what tactics used by the Colonial forces were decisive in winning their campaigns. Turning captured Mau Mau into instruments that could be used to counter the enemy was certainly

significant in this campaign, destabilising the enemy. Once they were captured a series of inducements were used to get them to lead a 'party' back to where their former colleagues were operating and infiltrate them. By using this tactic, Police Special Branch (SB) infiltrated the gangs, sometimes for quite some time, gleaning valuable intelligence (Franklin, 1996; Kitson, 1960). The ability to capture additional potential collaborators was very appealing too as it would diminish the opposition and dishearten them once they found out that there erstwhile comrades had joined the ranks of their foes. This destabilisation tactic became a valuable tool as it dejected the Mau Mau gangs creating distrust amongst them which caused many to change sides "self preservation...he thought that the white man was going to win eventually and it was better to be on the winning side than the Kikuyu"(respondent K-2, 2010, Bailey, 2012)

There were a substantial number of Kikuyu, who were on the side of the Colonial forces and in fact made up what was called the Kikuyu Guard, who were opposed to the demands of the rest of their tribe who had joined the Mau Mau. The ability of the some members of the Colonial forces to speak the language, in this case Kikuyu, was core to being able to achieve this aim of infiltrating the Mau Mau. Although the white members were not usually part of pseudo gang, at times they took a gamble and did join the fray. Amazingly enough this seems to have worked with little adverse reaction from the Mau Mau gangs. This could be because it was so unexpected and therefore did not raise suspicions or perhaps, as has been pointed out, the gangs were often high on Khat or alcohol and did not really know who was who in the gloom of the forests (respondent K-1, 2010, Bailey, 2012). Nonetheless it was the use of ex-members of the Mau Mau that made the difference and allowed the Security forces to gain a substantial upper hand.

"There is only one way we are going to beat the Mau Mau, and that's to have gangs disguised as Mau Mau to go into the forests and live as Mau Mau and destroy them in their lairs" (respondent K-2, 2010, Bailey, 2012). Working closely with Ian Henderson of the Kenya Police, the respondent was involved with establishing 'pseudo-gangs' within a specialised unit formed in Special Branch called the Special Bureau." (respondent K-2, 2010, Bailey, 2012). There were only six of them in the unit at the start: four Europeans and two Africans, only one of which was a Kikuyu the other was Wa-Kamba. This was the start of a very valuable tool in the arsenal of tactics against the insurgents because they were able to gather valuable intelligence pin-pointing the active Mau Mau gangs which was vital to the campaign. The idea blossomed once it was found that it was not that difficult to turn captured Kikuyu and send them back in with Kenya Police handlers or Kenya Regiment, as they spoke Kikuyu; to ensure they did not vanish back into the forests and developed as a tactical strategy (respondent K-2, 2010, Bailey, 2012).

It was essential that the right people were turned and that meant selecting them carefully, according the Kitson there was also a distinct methodology to be followed to achieve success

> Briefly it is that three separate factors have to be brought into play in order to make a man change his allegiance. First, he must be given an incentive that is strong enough to make him want to do so. This is the carrot. Then he must be made to realize that failure will result in something very unpleasant happening to him. This is the stick. Third, he must be given a reasonable opportunity of proving both to himself and to his friends that there is nothing fundamentally dishonorable about his action.(Kitson, 1960, pp. 171-172)

The lessons learnt from Kenya and transferred to the Rhodesia campaign remained the domain of the Special Branch (SB), which seems to be behind this in Malaya, Kenya and Rhodesia, even though pseudo gangs were run from within the army unit of the Selous Scouts, SB were the puppet masters maintaining control over the intelligence gathered and used.

Although Kitson points out in his book that all the men who were used from the Kenyan Regiment spoke Swahili, this in fact was not the language required(Kitson, 1960, pp. 120-121). My informants have indicated that in fact there were very few white officers in the Kenya Police that spoke Kikuyu , Swahili yes, but not Kikuyu, and that is why Ian Henderson was so important to the success of the 'pseudo gangs' as he did speak Kikuyu; as did others and that drove the operation who were drawn from predominately the Kenya Regiment (respondent K-2, 2010, Bailey, 2012). The Kenyan Regiment was drawn from the settler population, hence their ability to speak local dialects such as Kikuyu, Meru, Kamba, Luo and Kalenjin

## MALAYA

The "Emergency' in Malaya started in 1948 and was serious from the start unlike in Kenya with ruthless attacks on rubber plantations, core to the war in Korea, which were well planned and executed by the Communist insurgents. Furthermore the idea that this was a further push by International Communism against the West was taken as a very grave threat. The Communist insurgents were well trained and had been at the back bone of defeating the Japanese.

Now they were keen to take power reaping their reward and transform Malaya into a communist state. Initial reports sent to London stated "there were five thousand active fighters and 250,000 Min Yuen[1] supporters in towns and villages" (Barber, 1972, p. 25). There is no doubt the conflict here was far more severe than in Kenya and could easily be described as a 'civil war' from the start even though Kenya received far more press (Carruthers, 1995, p. 72).

The strategies that were developed in Malaya, separating the insurgents from their support base in the villages, and to a large extent copied in Kenya, are continually cited by Joes as successful for counter insurgency campaigns (Joes, 2004, p. 232; Thompson, 1974). Joes and Beckett agree with this interpretation. Beckett develops the discussion further stating that General Templer (often cited as the architect of 'hearts and minds' (Beckett, 2001, p. 102) was able to develop this strategy and to build up the critical elements that are necessary to prosecute this type of approach: allowing the police to set up a Special Branch(SB) operation to concentrate solely on the insurgents. The evidence analysed thus far indicates the importance of SB to the setting up of strategies to defeat the insurgents. According to Roy Fellows the Malay Police accounted for more of the enemy, Communist Terrorists and Insurgents, than any other force. (Follows & Popham, 1990)

Templer created a combined intelligence unit together with a staff intelligence training school; establishing a new psychological warfare section in addition to the creation of 'safe villages' which was the back bone of the strategy to deny the rebels succour from the local population, "the shooting side of the business is only 25% of the trouble and the other 75% lies in getting the people of this country behind us" (Beckett, 2001, p. 102). But the development of pseudo type gangs seems to have been very much determined by Special Branch who used every opportunity to manipulate any captured 'communist terrorists' (CT's), as they were known, to turn them against their erstwhile comrades using them in a similar way to Kenya. At this stage it has not been possible to positively identify cross fertilisation between Kenya and Malaya with the use of pseudo gangs as such, although similarities indicate this might have occurred.

The full quote by General Templer is worth noting when he says "the answer lies not in pouring more troops into the jungle, but rests in the hearts and minds of the people. Winning 'hearts and minds' requires understanding the local culture." (Charters & Tugwell, 1989, p. 195). It is very much this ability that comes to the fore when the running of the pseudo type gangs is considered; the ability to understand the culture. Furthermore the ability to speak the local language was key to the success of this type of operation in all counties, as it allowed direct conversation rather than one that is carried out through an interpreter where there is always the chance of misinterpretation or bias creeping in.

An important characteristic based upon the evidence indicates that there is a need for the turned 'insurgent or terrorist' to identify with the his new found allies to the point of almost becoming more anti than those they have joined, "they could only justify their escape from Communism by being personally involved in the struggle against it-which is why time after time they begged to lead patrols back into the jungle to attack their former comrades"(Barber, 1972, p. 196).

Cline discusses the challenge of using 'turned' insurgents, highlighting how using pseudo gangs creates a dilemma when it comes to winning the psychological battle and that is the treatment of those that have changed sides. It is paramount that all those who change sides are treated well, so that this becomes common knowledge; so that changing sides has very positive benefits for those that chose this route. However, there was a need to keep their identities secret or else they risk retribution from their former comrades, which did take place in many cases(Cline, 2005). This obviously presented a tactical quandary, which was only addressed with limited success. Within tribal societies news travels fast, which will always make using pseudos a moral dilemma. "Intelligence has to come from the population, but the population will not talk unless it feels safe, and it does not feel safe until the insurgent's power has been broken"(Galula, 1964, p. 96). The ability to create safe havens is central to gaining the trust of the population.

## RHODESIA

It is clear that the concept of pseudo gangs was one that was built up from previous campaigns and finding the direct link with Kenya or Malaya has been difficult but as many of those that had been in these early campaigns; either

[1] Min Yuen was the name used for the Communists. The.Min Yuen were more than just supporters. The Min Yuen collected "Taxes" from the villagers and carried out assassinations. They were the ones who instilled fear into the local population. The MRLA were the uniformed armed wing and the Min Yuen were the plain clothed and far more sinister wing

returned or immigrated to Rhodesia, the transfer of such successful tactics can be traced to 1966. This was certainly the case in Rhodesia where those who had fought in both Kenya and Malaya returned to take part in the 'bush war'. In fact Ron Reid Daly was in Malaya with 'C" squadron of the Rhodesian SAS, and later returned home to head the formation of the Selous Scouts, who used the pseudo gangs as a central part of their strategy with some well documented successes. The concept of using pseudo gangs was however put forward first by Oppie Oppenheim of the British South African Police (BSAP) in 1966 at a joint exercise run by the Special Branch, with army observers using troops from various units. Some of the instructors were formerly in Kenya (Stiff, 1984, p. 48),thus establishing a link between Kenya and Malaya.

The exercise did not meet with universal approval and it was to take several more years before the concept of using pseudo gangs was to gain wider the acceptance of the Joint Operations Command (JOC) for the Rhodesian Security Forces. Once again it was through Special Branch of the BSAP, that the merits of this type of activity were put into operational use, this was 26th of January 1973. A small team of six; four former insurgents and two African Police Constables were dressed to appear as insurgents and were sent into the field to gather intelligence(Reid Daly, 1982, pp. 24-26).

This tactic soon started to have positive results with the army now using this idea and developing it, but with the use of Europeans leading the groups, who were made of both former insurgents and black soldiers that formed the bulk of Selous Scouts; headed now by Major Ron Reid Daly. It was considered essential to have this level of control to ensure discipline and channel intelligence succinctly. This unit was to go on to make this type of activity its hall mark throughout the 'Bush war" (Reid Daly, 1982). Special Branch continued to supply intelligence and the army the men for the operations. The core to success of these pseudo operations was the ability to morph into becoming an insurgent; knowing the language, customs and the terrain. The difficulty was to find such people however recruits were sourced from those who had spent a life time in the bush, such as administrators, famers and park rangers(Stiff, 1984, p. 45).

Essentially the success of these units was underpinned by their ability to roam the bush gathering intelligence and feeding this back to their handlers in the Special Branch. Rather than the pseudo gangs taking offensive action themselves, which could lead to them being compromised, the Rhodesians would use what was called 'Fire Force' This unit was predominately the Rhodesian Light Infantry (RLI), which employed the limited helicopter capability they possessed (due to sanctions) to drop small sticks of soldiers and engage the enemy based on the sound intelligence they had gleaned from the 'pseudo gangs'. The role of the pseudos , according to Reid Daly, was " to infiltrate the tribal population and terrorist networks, pinpoint the terrorist camps and bases and then direct conventional forces in to carry out the actual attacks"(Stiff, 1984, p. 76)

The 'pseudos' also had another important role other than intelligence gathering and offensive operations, and that was destabilisation. As the opposing forces in the Rhodesian war were made up of competing groups, based upon tribal loyalties, there was intense rivalry between these groups namely, Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) and Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA). The more it could be made to appear that one group was cheating on the other, particularly as they also represented differing revolutionary ideologies, the more this caused resentment and retaliation. The Selous Scouts were very successful in achieving this in their operations often posing as one group and attacking the other. This form of psychological warfare was very effective and created paranoia amongst the insurgents. Stiff posits that as much as 68% of the insurgents killed during the 'Bush War' in Rhodesia can be attributed either directly or indirectly to the Selous Scouts(Stiff, 1984, p. 330). "It is in men's minds that wars of subversion have to be fought"(Mockaitis, 1999, p. 186).

The ability to play these mind games is an essential component of asymmetrical warfare; the Rhodesians followed by the South Africans became masters of this tactic.

## CONCLUSION

'Hearts and Minds' is therefore far more than just a political dimension of counter-insurgency Pseudo gangs clearly represent part of what is a suite of operational tactics designed to convince, insurgents that their path is doomed to failure and they would be better served joining the Government forces and affecting change from the inside rather than being killed, maimed or imprisoned.

The use of 'pseudo gangs' in Kenya, Malaya and Rhodesia proved to be a very successful tactic despite recent controversy over the use of such methods in contemporary insurgencies. These tactics have a proven track record which should be taken into consideration for modern day conflicts.

However the success of this tactic does attest to the requirement to have a political agenda as well as a military one. As Robert Thompson states "the 'First Principle' of counterinsurgency warfare was that the government must have a clear political aim"(Thompson, 1974, p. 51). This statement can be tempered with a further remark: not only must there be a clear political aim, it must be a shared political aim with those that form the back bone of the country, as ultimately if they do not share this aim then any military victory will prove pyrrhic; as was ultimately the case in Rhodesia.

My ethnographic data shows that language too plays a crucial role in the ability to harness the obvious advantages that pseudo gangs can bring to combating the insurgents. However this clearly only works if you are able to converse directly in the local language; as a local and not as an intruder. The lessons of Kenya and Malaya were put to very good use in Rhodesia, with most of the Security Forces utilising their local skills and linguistic prowess to the full; speaking both Shona of ZIPRA forces and Ndebele of the ZANLA forces. The ability to conduct an interrogation directly in the same language as the captured person allows for a greater understanding of the intelligence being gathered. The use of an interpreter greatly disadvantages the process, as one is never sure whether what has been interpreted is correct or whether a further slant or nuance has been placed upon the words that were not in the original tongue. Clearly the greater the number of the counter insurgents forces that speak the local language, the greater the advantage to the security forces.

In the final analysis, as with all counter insurgencies there is never one single tactic but a series of multiple tactics that operate at several levels as in multiple dimensional chess. The rules of the game continually change as the world adopts new and altered moral restraints upon what it considers to be legitimate in its efforts to win. This does not make the situation any easier for those charged with prosecuting the insurgency, but what is obvious is that the past will always have lessons for the future and adapting these lessons is the difference between success and failure, countering insurgency is no different in that regard. The success of pseudo gangs has been greatly underestimated with a need for more research to portray the value of this tactic and allow modern day strategists the option of re-evaluating whether or not they are still a potent tool in their arsenal for fighting counter-insurgencies.

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