Indirect Rule and Embedded Anthropology

Practical, Theoretical, and Ethical Concerns

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Between July 2005 and August 2006, the U.S. Army assembled the Human Terrain System program (HTS), which embeds five-person Human Terrain Teams or HTTs with combat brigades in Iraq and Afghanistan. Teams include uniformed social scientists, some of whom are armed (González 2009). Although HTS is a relatively small (and dramatic) means by which anthropologists are articulating with the military, its rapid growth and high profile have raised many practical, theoretical, and ethical questions.[1]

The commercial media have often portrayed HTS as a lifesaving program thanks to an orchestrated Pentagon public relations campaign led by Laurie Adler, a former employee of the Lincoln Group, a powerful Washington public relations firm (e.g., Rohde 2007; Peterson 2007; White and Graham 2005). Yet the way in which HTS has been packaged—as part of a "gentler" counterinsurgency—is unsupported by evidence. Despite claims that the program has reduced U.S. "kinetic operations" (military attacks) in Afghanistan by 60 percent, Pentagon officials have not provided the data upon which such claims are based, and there has been no independent confirmation of such assertions. Indeed, there is no verifiable evidence that HTTs have saved a single life—American, Afghan, Iraqi, or otherwise. Yet since its creation, three HTS team members have lost their lives, and one HTT has unleashed lethal force in Afghanistan.[2]

According to former HTT member Zenia Helbig, a group that gave a positive assessment of HTS included evaluators with a vested interest in it, and according to a current employee, a forthcoming evaluation of Iraqi teams was also conducted by interested parties (Helbig 2007a). It appears that HTS is designed to rally public support for an unpopular military occupation and simultaneously to collect new intelligence.

As the Pentagon launched HTS, some military personnel described it as "A CORDS for the 21st Century," in reference to Civil Operations Revolutionary Development Support, a Vietnam War–era counterinsurgency effort (Kipp et al. 2006; see also Jacobsen and Hevia, this volume). CORDS generated the infamous Phoenix program, in which South Vietnamese and U.S. agents used intelligence to help target some 26,000 people for assassination, mostly civilians (Valentine 1990). This history provides a critical reference point for understanding the potential uses of HTS.

Others are also calling for a revamped Phoenix program, while ignoring its associated war crimes. Australian political scientist David Kilcullen, former advisor to General David Petraeus, recommends that U.S. forces initiate a "global 'Phoenix Program'" against "Islamist insurgency." He argues that "the unfairly maligned (but highly effective) Vietnam-era Phoenix program . . . was largely a civilian aid and development program, supported by targeted military pacification operations and intelligence activity to disrupt the Viet Cong Infrastructure" (Kilcullen 2004).

With a $190 million budget, HTS is among the largest social science projects in history.[3] It deserves scrutiny, since its supporters have discussed aspects of the program that do not square with military journals, job announcements, and journalists' accounts. For example, some maintain that data is open and unclassified, yet James Greer (HTS's deputy director) has reportedly said, "When a brigade plans and executes its operations, that planning and execution is, from an operational-security standpoint, classified . . . Your ability to talk about it, or write an article about it, is restricted" (Glenn 2007). Doubts about the program's ethical propriety motivated the American Anthropological Association's Executive Board to formally express disapproval of HTS in November 2007.

"Human Terrain": From Concept to System

In an article that has become a definitive statement on HTS, human terrain is defined as "the social, ethnographic, cultural, economic, and political elements of the people among whom a force is operating" (Kipp et al. 2006, 9). It is often contrasted with geophysical terrain—a familiar concept for

officers trained for conventional warfare against Soviets—and implies that "population-centric" wars are the future (Kilcullen 2007).

Human terrain's roots stretch back forty years, when it appeared in a U.S. House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) report about the threat of Black Panthers and other militants (U.S. HUAC 1967). Human terrain was linked to population control at a time when U.S. government agencies were undertaking domestic counterinsurgency:

> Traditional guerrilla warfare . . . [is] carried out by irregular forces, which just about always dispose of inferior weapons and logistical support in general, but which possess the ability to seize and retain the initiative through a superior control of the human terrain. This control may be the result of sheer nationwide support for the guerrillas against a colonial or other occupying power of foreign origin; it may be the result of the ability of the guerrillas to inflict reprisals upon the population; and it can be because the guerrillas promise more. (U.S. HUAC 1967, 62)

Contemporary human terrain studies emerged in 2000, when retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Peters (2000, 4, 12) argued that it is the "human architecture" of a city, its "human terrain . . . the people, armed and dangerous, watching for exploitable opportunities, or begging to be protected, who will determine the success or failure of the intervention . . . the center of gravity in urban operations is never a presidential palace or a television studio or a bridge . . . It is always human." Before long, military personnel, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operatives, think tanks, and neoconservative pundits had adopted human terrain.

It is worth considering "human terrain" in linguistic terms. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (which postulates that language influences the thought—and consequently actions—of its users) suggests that the phrase will have objectifying and dehumanizing effects. Consider the words of Lieutenant Colonel Edward Villacres (2007), who leads an HTT in Iraq: the objective is to "help brigade leadership understand the human dimension of the environment that they are working in, just like a map analyst would try to help them understand the bridges, the rivers, and things like that." This verbal juxtaposition portrays people as geographic space to be conquered. More serious is how the term vividly illustrates Orwell's notion (1961 [1946], 366) of "political language . . . designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable."

How was "human terrain" systematized? By 2006, some military leaders were complaining about mismanagement of the wars as casualties mounted, Iraqi insurgents attacked, and Taliban fighters regrouped. Some began seeking

"gentler" counterinsurgency tactics, according to an uncritical account by U.S. Army War College anthropologist Shiela Miyoshi Jager (2007, v): "the post-Rumsfeld Pentagon has advocated a 'gentler' approach, emphasizing cultural knowledge and ethnographic intelligence . . . This 'cultural turn' within DoD [Department of Defense] highlights efforts to understand adversary societies and to recruit 'practitioners' of culture, notably anthropologists, to help in the war effort in both Iraq and Afghanistan."

Early advocates included Major General Robert Scales (2004, 4–5), who told the House Armed Services Committee that the British "created a habit of 'seconding' bright officers to various corners of the world so as to immerse them in the cultures of the Empire . . . At the heart of a cultural-centric approach to future war would be a cadre of global scouts . . . They should attend graduate schools in disciplines necessary to understand human behavior and cultural anthropology." Alongside Scales's ringing endorsement of imperialist strategy, the political groundwork was set for cultural-centric warfare.

He would not need to wait long. In 2005, Montgomery McFate and Andrea Jackson published a pilot proposal for a Pentagon Office of Operational Cultural Knowledge focused on human terrain and consisting of social scientists with "strong connections to the services and combatant commands" (McFate and Jackson 2005, 20). Soon after, Jacob Kipp (2006, 8) and colleagues from the army's Foreign Military Studies Office outlined the HTS to "understand the people among whom our forces operate as well as the cultural characteristics and propensities of the enemies we now fight."

By early 2007, BAE Systems began posting HTS job announcements. (BAE Systems and other military contract firms were awarded the Pentagon's HTS contract.) Zenia Helbig reported that BAE staff (responsible for training) were inept and more concerned with maximizing profits than meeting program objectives: they hired unqualified instructors, did not discuss ethics, and recruited social scientists ignorant of Middle Eastern languages and societies. Helbig's claims (echoed by current HTS employees) describe a pattern of waste and war profiteering characteristic of a privatized Pentagon.

By February 2007, the first HTT arrived in Afghanistan. Others deployed to Iraq in summer 2007. Proponents insist that HTTs are giving commanders an understanding of local culture—a dubious claim, since none of the Ph.D. anthropologists in HTTs have regional experience (Helbig 2007b). However, HTTs were designed to collect local data on political leadership, kinship groups, economic systems, and agricultural production (see Figure 15.1). According to Kipp and colleagues, this will be sent to a database accessible by other U.S. government agencies, including presumably the CIA. Furthermore, "databases will eventually be turned over to the new governments of Iraq and
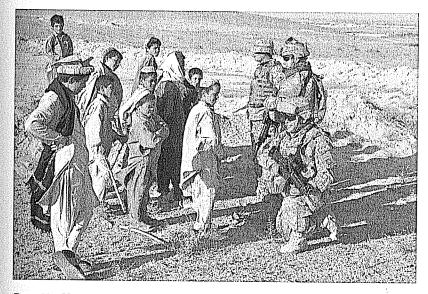

Figure 15.1 Human terrain team members attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, speak with local children near the village of Nani, Afghanistan, May 2007. Photo courtesy of U.S. Department of Defense.

Afghanistan to enable them to more fully exercise sovereignty" (Kipp et al. 2006, 14).

According to the same authors, HTTs will create an "ethnographic and sociocultural database of the area of operations that can provide the commander data maps showing specific ethnographic or cultural features" (Kipp et al. 2006, 13). HTTs use specialized software "to gather, store, manipulate, and provide cultural data from hundreds of categories" (Kipp et al. 2006, 13). According to the Department of Defense's (DOD) budget justification, the goal is "to collect data on human terrain, create, store, and disseminate information from this data, and use the resulting information as an element of combat power" (U.S. Office of the Secretary of Defense 2007, 18).

HTS supporters have equivocated when asked whether a database might be used for targeting. In an interview, one stated, "The intent . . . is not to identify who the bad actors are out there. The military has an entire intelligence apparatus geared and designed to provide that information to them. That is not the information that they need from social scientists." Yet the DOD's 2008 Global War on Terror Amendment includes HTTs in precisely this category (military intelligence), alongside counterintelligence teams (U.S. Department of Defense 2007, 18).

In sum, HTS may perform various functions. Images of a "gentler" counter-

insurgency could serve as propaganda for those opposing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan: propaganda offering the wonderful compromise of a war that makes us feel good about ourselves. From a different perspective, HTTs could feed information into a database accessible to the CIA, Iraqi interior ministry, or Afghan army for designing propaganda, targeting suspects, or applying other forms of hard power. Policy changes, shifting alliances, personal vendettas, or mistaken identity could easily transform innocent Iraqis or Afghans into future targets.

Anthropology and Indirect Rule

What if we take HTS proponents' claims at face value? Let us suppose that HTTs are providing expertise about local societies for commanders—nothing more. The program would still raise thorny ethical, theoretical, and practical problems.

In terms of ethics, HTS gives priority to military requirements: combat and counterinsurgency support, intelligence collection, and tasks euphemistically called "Phase Four" or "stability operations." Aspects of HTS appear to violate anthropological ethics, particularly researchers' "primary ethical obligations . . . to the people with whom they work" and the need "to ensure that their research does not harm the safety, dignity, or privacy of the people with whom they work" (American Anthropological Association 1998). Furthermore, knowledge about local political hierarchies, kinship structures, and social networks could facilitate a kind of indirect rule, as could coopting regional headmen.

The idea that HTTs should promote these processes, as HTS supporters argue, is reminiscent of the attitude of C. K. Meek, a British anthropologist charged with helping colonial administrators fine-tune a system of indirect rule among Nigerian Igbo following the Women's Riots of 1929. He was aware that government officials thought anthropology should serve as "the handmaiden to administration" (Meek 1937, xv). Meek's peers probably considered him a reformer, since he advocated indirect (not direct) rule. Yet his work denied the possibility of Igbo self-determination. Underlying it was the paternalistic notion that Igbo were unable to enter the modern world without British protection.

Aspects of Meek's work bore some resemblance to earlier efforts undertaken in the Middle East. For example, T. E. Lawrence and Gertrude Bell helped establish a de facto system of British colonial rule in Mesopotamia after World War I. Although the roles they played differed in some respects from that of Meek, they were guided by similar assumptions: an enthusiasm for applying

the tools of cultural familiarity for more effective control, the unquestioned assumption that European powers were exceptionally able at managing native peoples, a fundamental belief in the correctness of imperialism, a willingness to accept the limited number of policy options acceptable to the British elite, and a lack of attention to the aspirations of large numbers of native people for genuine self-rule.

Lawrence—immortalized as "Lawrence of Arabia" by the U.S. media—is best known for helping to coordinate the so-called Arab revolt against the Ottoman Turks beginning in 1916. When World War I erupted, Lawrence (who had previously done archaeology work in Syria) was eager to lend his geographic and cultural expertise to the war effort. He was assigned to the British army in Cairo and began providing weapons and money to Arab fighters led by Prince Feisal. Using guerrilla tactics such as dynamiting the vital Hejaz Railway, Lawrence's Arab allies disrupted Turkish supply lines throughout the Middle East. They eventually helped British troops take Jerusalem and Damascus, and by 1918, the British occupied all of modern-day Iraq.

Feisal's fighters cooperated with the British after many assurances that they would be rewarded with political autonomy (see Figure 15.2). For years, Lawrence had been seeking to convince British government officials that a peculiar form of Arab "independence" would be beneficial. In a 1916 intelligence report, he noted that the Arab revolt against the Turks was
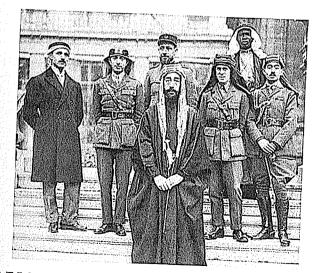

Figure 15.2 T. E. Lawrence (*middle row, second from right*) and Prince Feisal (*center*) at a 1921 conference in Cairo. Photograph courtesy of the U.S. Library of Congress.

beneficial to us, because it marches with our immediate aims, the break up of the Islamic "bloc" and the defeat and disruption of the Ottoman Empire, and because *the states [Sharif Hussein] would set up to succeed the Turks would be ... harmless to ourselves ...* The Arabs are even less stable than the Turks. *If properly handled they would remain in a state of political mosaic, a tissue of small jealous principalities incapable of cohesion.* (quoted in Dreyfuss 2005, 41)

Lawrence was not alone in advocating for Arab-led states. Writer and archaeologist Gertrude Bell, who had gained respect among British commanders for her analyses of intelligence about Arab groups, also supported Iraqi independence—of an odd sort. Bell attempted to persuade British officials to create a system of indirect rule by employing Iraqi administrators.

Even so, she doubted that Shia clergy were up to the task, since they were "sitting in an atmosphere which reeks of antiquity and is so thick with the dust of ages that you can't see through it—nor can they" (quoted in Buchan 2003). She feared the prospect of Shia leaders in a majority Shi'ite region. In 1920 she wrote, "The object of every government here has always been to keep the Shia divines from taking charge of public affairs" (quoted in Howell 2006). Perhaps it is for this reason that she once wrote, "Mesopotamia is not a civilized state" (quoted in Buchan 2003).

The proposals offered by Lawrence and Bell did not convince British government officials to grant Arabs even nominal autonomy after the League of Nations awarded Britain a mandate over Mesopotamia in 1920. Many Sunni and Shia understandably viewed the mandate as a form of colonialism since the British immediately imposed direct rule under the leadership of High Commissioner Sir Percy Cox. They eventually rose up against their British masters, killing hundreds of occupying troops in the insurgency. The government resorted to aerial bombing and killed nearly 10,000 Iraqis.

By 1921, Winston Churchill (then secretary of state for the colonies) consulted with Lawrence and Bell. They were finally vindicated: to save costs, the British established a combination of direct and indirect rule based on the model of colonial India. The British installed Feisal as the colony's ruling monarch, effectively creating a puppet regime.

After Feisal was installed as king, Bell and Cox administered divide-and-rule policies that survived beyond the twentieth century. After 1932, when Iraq gained nominal independence, British commanders were still allowed to maintain military bases there. (The country was already important to the British because of its vast oil resources.) The Iraqi monarchy lasted as a British client regime with little change until 1958.

A lesson to be learned from the work of Lawrence and Bell is that in the end, it is unlikely that a social scientist will influence decision makers pursuing imperial imperatives. Lawrence gained the trust of thousands of Arabs, lived among them for more than five years, spoke their language, and led them in battle. He (and others) promised them autonomy after the war, but in the end the Arabs were betrayed: British politicians extended direct (and later indirect) rule.

Another lesson to take is that the social scientists' perspective is not necessarily opposed to that of colonial officials. Although Meek, Lawrence, and Bell might have been considered "liberal" in the 1920s—since they advocated indirect rather than direct rule—many would argue that the end result was not substantively different. Even after King Feisal assumed power, British advisers still made key decisions, thousands of British troops were based in the region for decades, and the British-owned Iraqi Petroleum Company was granted concessions over Iraqi oil. Like Meek, both Lawrence and Bell maintained a paternalistic view that took for granted the necessity of European intervention in the affairs of people deemed less civilized than the West.

There are differences between these early-twentieth-century anthropologists and those assisting U.S.-led occupations today: some colonial anthropologists were "reluctant imperialists" (James 1973) attempting to extricate themselves from colonial funding sources—not peddle their services to them. By contrast today, some are unfazed by anthropology's colonial roots. For example, an HTT anthropologist recently blogged, "Is the use of the anthropological perspective by the military promoting imperialism? Who can really say? Is anthropology antithetical to imperialism? Not if you look at the discipline's origins in colonialism in the late 1800s." In other words: HTS may promote neocolonialism ("Who can really say?"), but since the discipline is rooted in colonialism, that's OK (Griffin 2007).

Beyond Neocolonial Anthropology: Social Responsibility and Social Science

It is revealing that an HTS architect cowrote a key chapter of the army's new counterinsurgency manual *FM 3-24* (U.S. Army 2006). It provides a starting point for understanding the intellectual underpinnings of HTS.

FM 3-24 resembles a handbook for colonial rule—although "imperialism" and "empire" are taboo words. The authors approvingly draw historical examples from British, French, and Japanese colonial counterinsurgency campaigns in Malaya, Vietnam, Algeria, and China. Theoretically speaking, it is

vintage structural-functionalism. Absent is the notion of culture as a product of historical processes—never mind that for a half-century anthropologists have stressed that global forces have profoundly shaped societies. Instead, the authors reify culture and treat it as internally coherent, bounded, one-dimensional. In Orientalist fashion, their work reproduces a colonial "us" representing a colonized "them," ignoring the practical conditions of embedded anthropology.

Apart from *FM 3-24,* an HTS architect contributed to a four-hundred-page report commissioned by the Pentagon. The report, *Iraq Tribal Study: Al Anbar Governorate* (Todd et al. 2006) outlines a strategy for "influencing the three target tribes" through (essentially) bribes: "Iraq's tribal values are ripe for exploitation. According to an old Iraqi saying, 'You cannot buy a tribe, but you can certainly rent one' ... Shaikhs have responded well to financial incentives," note the authors (Todd et al. 2006, 7A-12).

Iraq Tribal Study reportedly influenced discussions at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College while Petraeus was director, before his current Iraq assignment (Pincus 2007). It frankly discusses the benefits of renting tribes. For example, the authors review Ottoman rule and the British Mandate for clues on adapting imperial techniques to the twenty-first century. One section, "Engaging the Shaikhs: British Successes, Failures, and Lessons," states:

> Convincing the shaikhs that the British were the dominant force ... had a powerful effect ... Subsidies and land grants bought loyalty ... Controlling water (irrigation canals), the economic lifelines of the shaikhs' constituencies, was a powerful lever as well. It may be useful to examine the tribal landscape for modern parallels to the irrigation canals of the Mandate period. Development funds immediately come to mind, but there are certainly others. The key lies in putting into the shaikh's hands the ability to improve their peoples' livelihoods, and thereby the shaikh's own status. (Todd et al. 2006, 5–23)

In the next paragraph, the authors describe how the British handled recalcitrant sheiks:

> the British were successful in their use of force against the tribes ... Punitive assaults, both by infantry column and with air strikes, on the villages of shaikhs judged uncooperative brought about short-term cooperation and long-term enmity. Enabled largely by airpower, the British were able to stay in Iraq—with minimal resources—through its independence in 1932 and beyond. (Todd et al. 2006, 5–23)

Such passages appear designed to incorporate British tactics to U.S.-occupied Iraq. The authors of *FM 3-24* and *Iraqi Tribal Study* imply that a culturally informed occupation—with native leaders coopted by coalition forces, policing carried out by a culturally sensitive occupying army, copious funds doled out to tribesmen, and so on—will result in a lighter neocolonial touch, with less "collateral damage" and a lower price tag. The question of whether military occupation is appropriate is not addressed, nor is the legitimacy of insurgents' grievances explored.

This is not just an academic question. The *Iraqi Tribal Study* appears to have informed Petraeus's Iraq strategy, specifically support for the Anbar Awakening, which has paid out $767 million (and another $450 million soon to follow) to mostly Sunni groups as a reward for resisting al-Qaeda (Dehghanpisheh and Thomas 2008). But "balancing competing interest groups" (to use David Kilcullen's 2007 euphemistic phrase) will likely aggravate the civil war between and among Sunni and Shia groups (Rosen 2008). Seen from this perspective, it seems less like global counterinsurgency and more like a high-stakes divide-and-conquer strategy (see Figure 15.3). In the meantime,

Figure 15.3 Tribal engagement or indirect rule? A member of the Albu Issa "tribe" with U.S. Marine Corps Major General John Allen in Fallujah, Iraq, January 2008. During the meeting, U.S. officials gave a Mameluke Sword to al-Anbar's sheiks to thank them for their partnership. The sheiks have received generous payouts from the U.S. military since 2006. Photograph courtesy of U.S. Department of Defense.

Newsweek reports that "Petraeus says he instructs his young officers, 'Go watch "The Sopranos" in order to understand the power dynamics at work in Iraq'" (Dehghanpisheh and Thomas 2008).

Discussions about HTS might benefit from reframing the issue. In addition to debating the ethics of embedded anthropology, or the theoretical and practical concerns of global counterinsurgency, we might ask, To what extent is our discipline is being compromised, as anthropologists are recruited in support of an invasion and occupation that has led to one million Iraqi deaths? We might also ask, What is the social responsibility of social scientists?

It may also be useful to look to the past for enlightenment. As the British colonial anthropologists were hard at work in the 1920s and 1930s, Jomo Kenyatta, a Kikuyu man from British East Africa, arrived in London and began attending seminars conducted by Bronislaw Malinowski. Kenyatta (1938) was profoundly influenced by anthropology, and wrote a moving ethnography of Kikuyu life in which he developed a sharp critique of colonialism:

> In the present work I have . . . kept under very considerable restraint the sense of political grievances which no progressive African can fail to experience . . . I know that there are many scientists and general readers who will be disinterestedly glad of the opportunity of hearing the Africans' point of view, and to all such I am glad to be of service. At the same time, I am well aware that I could not do justice to the subject without offending those "professional friends of the African" who are prepared to maintain their friendship for eternity as a sacred duty, provided only that the African will continue to play the part of an ignorant savage so that they can monopolise the office of interpreting his mind and speaking for him. To such people, an African who writes a study of this kind is encroaching on their preserves. He is a rabbit turned poacher. (1938, xii–xiii)

Kenyatta then did something that neither Meek, nor Lawrence, nor Bell were able to do—to envision a future beyond colonialism:

> But the African is not blind. He can recognize these pretenders to philanthropy, and in various parts of the continent he is waking up to the realisation that a running river cannot be dammed for ever without breaking its bounds. His power of expression has been hampered, but it is breaking through, and will very soon sweep away the patronage and repression which surround him. (Kenyatta 1938, xii–xiii)

Kenyatta became an ardent activist, nationalist leader, and revolutionary and was imprisoned for the better part of a decade for his political activities.

His ethnography examined the painful consequences of British colonialism from the perspective of the Kikuyu and inspired thousands of Africans, Europeans, and others to oppose the imperial imperative. He founded the Pan-African Federation with Kwame Nkrumah in 1946, an organization dedicated to promoting independence for African nations. He would become the first prime minister and president of an independent Kenya in the 1960s.

His work demonstrates how the anthropologist need not play the role of a servant to the most powerful in society. There are other options, other choices. Social science can just as effectively lead the way to a more democratic future. It is capable of challenging power just as easily as serving it.

It is worth remembering Senator William Fulbright, who in 1967 delivered these words on the Senate floor:

> Among the most baneful effects of the government-university contract system the most damaging and corrupting are the neglect of the university's most important purpose . . . [T]hose in the social sciences ought to be acting as responsible and independent critics of their government's policies . . . When the university turns away from its central purpose and makes itself and appendage to the government, concerning itself with techniques rather than purposes, with expedients rather than ideals . . . it betrays a public trust.

Perhaps the time has come to reorient our work more directly toward the general public, toward the "responsible and independent" critique suggested by Senator Fulbright at a moment with many parallels to the present. While it may be appealing to imagine that our ethnographies will influence policy makers, politicians, and Pentagon brass, there are other means of creating alternatives to human terrain and the "clash of civilizations," and there are other audiences anxious to read, hear, and see what we have to say.

Anthropology holds great promise for those seeking a more just world, but it is most likely to succeed when we maintain an independent role (outside of the military and its contract firms) and when we communicate widely, publicly, and persistently. Marshall Sahlins's (1966) idea of the "destruction of conscience" in Vietnam was first published not in an academic peer-reviewed journal, nor much less in a book-length ethnography, but in the pages of *Dissent* magazine. The teach-in was effective not because it brought policy makers and think tanks onto America's college campuses but because it brought ordinary people concerned about their country and its role in the world. In the end it is by sharing what we have learned with the general public that we might spark lasting progressive change in democratic societies.

: : NOTES : :

1. The number of anthropologists working for the DOD or its contract firms far exceeds those working in HTS or other counterinsurgency programs. Anthropologists are employed in a wide range of military tasks including officer education, organizational studies, and program evaluation, to name a few.

2. In May 2008, political science Ph.D. student Michael Bhatia was killed in a roadside bomb attack in Afghanistan. Approximately one month later, political science Ph.D. student Nicole Suveges was killed in a bomb attack in Iraq. In November 2008, HTT social scientist Paula Loyd reportedly suffered second- and third-degree burns over 60 percent of her body after she was doused with a flammable substance and set on fire by Abdul Salam, an Afghan man whom she was interviewing. Another member of her team, Dan Ayala, allegedly executed the man minutes after the incident occurred and now faces murder charges (Schogol 2008). In early 2009, Paula Loyd died from her injuries.

3. Between fiscal years 2006 and 2008, HTS had a budget of $190 million.

Soft Power, Hard Power, and the Anthropological "Leveraging" of Cultural "Assets"

Distilling the Politics and Ethics of Anthropological Counterinsurgency[1]

: : DAVID H. PRICE : :

The Pentagon occupation of the academic mind may last much longer than its occupation of Iraq, and may require an intellectual insurgency in response.

Tom Hayden, *Nation*, July 14, 2007

Introduction

In the fall of 2007, after some publicity following the Network of Concerned Anthropologists' circulation of our "Pledge of Non-participation in Counterinsurgency," I heard from several acquaintances working for military and intelligence organizations. Among the reactions to my participation in drafting and supporting this pledge were views ranging from disappointment to expressions of desires to sign that were complicated by anticipated negative workplace repercussions. The most illuminating response came from one military-employed anthropologist who simply asked, given the wide range of activities that comprise counterinsurgency, how could anyone sign on to such a blanket condemnation?

I found this response to be insightful because, while there are no doubt many anthropologists who express blanket opposition to counterinsurgency because they envision it necessarily entails the sort of starkly ethically problematic, even armed, counterinsurgency work associated with the Vietnam War's Phoenix program,