SMALL WARS JOURNAL

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Journal Article | *Nov 11 2013 - 5:47am*

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Editor's Note: *SWJ would like to thank the* ***Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board's Executive Institute*** *for allowing us to republish this article. It was originally published in* ***Law Enforcement Executive Forum*** *13(3).*

Introduction

In preparation for military operations against the insurgencies in both Afghanistan and Iraq, the military recognized the need to adapt law enforcement practices and techniques, work-ing directly with law enforcement agencies to develop their patrol tactics and investigative capabilities (Calese, 2005; Musa, Morgan, & Keegan, 2011; Watson, 2010). Both the military and law enforcement recognize that a key factor in successfully defeating an entrenched criminal problem is establishing government legitimacy in the eyes of the local community (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler & Huo, 2002; U.S. Army, 2006). In *FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency* (U.S. Army, 2006), the military codified the lessons adapted from law enforcement's community policing efforts and the need for establishing government legit-imacy by working with and through the local population. At least one significant evaluation of that doctrine describing guiding principles has been written (Kilcullen, 2010). In return for that favor, studies have been conducted examining the use of the population-centric counterinsur-gency (COIN) strategy in combating criminal networks and describing guiding principles for designing law enforcement strategies adapted from COIN strategy (Bertetto, 2012; Burgoyne, 2011; Calese, 2005). What remains is to describe the actual strategy based on those principles. This document describes that comprehensive "counter-gang" strategy.

Community Policing and Street Gangs

The U.S. Department of Justice (2012) defines community policing as "a philosophy that pro-motes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime." Community policing is com-prised of three primary components: (1) *Com-munity Partnerships*, described as "collabora-tive partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police"; (2) *Organizational Trans-formation*, described as "the alignment of orga-nizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems to support commu-nity partnerships and proactive problem solv-ing"; and (3) *Problem Solving*, described as "the process of engaging in the proactive and sys-tematic

examination of identified problems to develop and evaluate effective responses" (U.S. Department of Justice, 2012). Problem Solving offers the operational model SARA: Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment. *Response* describes "developing solutions to bring about lasting reductions in the number and extent of problems" (U.S. Department of Justice, 2012).

Relative to criminal street gangs and the vio-lence associated with them, the word *problem* is wholly inadequate. Law enforcement is left to determine whether this word choice is deliberate because of the wide array of issues it might cover or because the proponents of community policing do not mean to include criminal street gangs as something that is "solvable" through community policing. Cer-tainly, community policing makes no direct reference to combating criminal street gangs.

Weisel and Shelley (2004) studied the role of specialized gang units within the overall frame-work of community policing. They determined that specialized units and specialized strategies for combating criminal street gangs through these units do not conflict with community policing in either philosophy or practice. The implication, then, is that specific counter-gang strategies can be created that align with the overall philosophy of community policing.

Community policing, thusly defined and described, lacks any specific strategic elements. This is not necessarily a bad thing; crime, crim-inals, and communities are unique in their structure and relation to each other, and law enforcement must be afforded the latitude to develop appropriately unique solutions. How-ever, without a strategic map, such solutions invariably have differing levels of success. Fur-thermore, a proper strategy allows for unique-ness to be recognized and accounted for at the operational level. Without this strategic map, operations risk losing focus, deviating from the strategic goal, and strategic failure.

Instead of focusing on specific strategies, com-munity policing efforts typically focus on law enforcement and community interaction. To facilitate this interaction, law enforcement efforts are organized in accordance with bureaucratic structure—by creating specific units to imple-ment community policing. Unfortunately, such a practice creates real and imagined separation between those officers assigned to the commu-nity policing efforts and those assigned to patrol or investigative duties—a real separation in that officers assigned to community policing duties are removed from the day-to-day interaction with those in the community in an enforcement capacity; and imagined as a cognitive separation in that officers assigned to community policing efforts are often viewed as non-operators and their efforts perceived as a public relations effort instead of a law enforcement one.

Counter-Gang Strategy

The goal, then, is to create a specific counter-gang strategy that (1) is focused, accounts for uniqueness, and delivers results; (2) remains faithful to the philosophy of community polic-ing; and (3) breaks down the real and imagined barriers between community policing and coun-ter-gang efforts. The population-centric COIN strategy, with its inclusion of law enforcement competencies, provides this strategy. Law enforcement, therefore, can examine this strat-egy and the lessons learned from its application to create a counter-gang strategy. This strategy blends traditional law enforcement competen-cies with military intelligence and targeting practices that have proven to be effective in iden-tifying criminal actors and fracturing networks. The individual strategic elements provide oper-ational focus but retain the flexibility required to allow for the uniqueness of every environment.

1.*Creating and Adhering to a Mission Statement*

> Most law enforcement agencies have a mis-sion statement. This second mission statement serves the counter-gang strategy specifically. All investigations and operations must align

with the mission statement or those actions detract from strategic success. Investigations and operations that lead away from the mission may still be valuable, but they should be recog-nized as outside the scope of the counter-gang mission, and the responsibility for these should be passed along to another group to pursue.

2.*Locating and Establishing Relationships with Trusted Community Leaders*

Law enforcement must actively seek out trusted community leaders (TCLs) and develop these people as intelligence assets. These indi-viduals must be local residents or local busi-ness operators with both established roots in the community and acceptance as "persons of significant standing" by other members of the community. The TCLs not only work directly with law enforcement but are also expected to win the support of the larger community. Cooperation is a two-way street: law enforce-ment engages the TCLs to assist them with local community-issue resolution, and the TCLs assist law enforcement by providing or conveying information that can be processed into actionable intelligence. The mutual gain is legitimacy for both the agency and the TCLs. As legitimacy is increased for both, more vol-untary reporting of information by other com-munity members will be made.

When working with community leaders, law enforcement agents often find themselves pulled in the direction of that leader's specific wants or personal efforts. Those efforts may in fact be well-intentioned or noble; however, law enforcement must not be deviated from the primary mission as described in the mission statement. The TCLs' actions must always support the mission state-ment, and actions suggested by the TCLs should be continually checked against it.

3.*Recruitment of Local "Street Leaders" by TCLs*

TCLs should be expected to recruit street lead-ers. The *street leader* is an individual known and trusted by the TCL and suggested to law enforcement for cooperation. These street leaders are vetted by law enforcement and, passing this, can provide information covertly to law enforcement. Whereas the TCLs serve as a public liaison between the agency and the community, the street leader acts more as a confidential informant. This protects the street leader from retribution by gang members. The street leaders increase law enforcement's abil-ity to generate information exponentially.

4.*Development of Intelligence Gathering and Processing Capabilities and the Tactical (Street) Level*

Every local police station should have one offi-cer specifically trained in intelligence collection and processing. This officer should be under the supervision of the local commander but belong to a larger, centralized intelligence unit. This officer is responsible for collecting local informa-tion, processing it locally, and preparing detailed reports that include suggested operations based on that intelligence. This report is approved by the local commander and forwarded to the officer's primary unit for review. The larger intelligence unit maintains these reports and includes them in context for understanding the larger intelligence picture. Unless specifically instructed otherwise by the home unit, the oper-ations described in the submitted report will be conducted by the local unit. This gives the centralized intelligence unit an opportunity to ensure that local operations are coordinated and do not interfere with any larger-context inves-tigations. Concurrently, it is the responsibility of this intelligence officer to maintain a local intelligence file, communicate the intelligence picture regularly to the local commander and command staff, participate in local search war-rant executions and engage in site exploitation, be present for postarrest

debriefings of any sig-nificant arrestees, and providing some measure of information recognition and collection train-ing to the local officers. These officers, then, will be actively working to help develop the local intelligence picture. By pushing this information and intelligence expectation down the chain of command and developing local capabilities, the intelligence picture grows exponentially and operations are more focused and more efficient.

The responsibility of this officer is not an administrative one. The intelligence officer must be out on the street engaged in regu-lar street operations. This puts this officer in direct contact with information sources on a daily basis and allows all operations to be wit-nessed and evaluated firsthand. The ability to accurately frame the intelligence picture and make proper assessments depends on this officer having the proper situational context.

5.*Use of Questions-Based Organizational Analysis at the Tactical (Street) Level with Regular Reassessment*

An organizational analysis should provide for two things: (1) a thorough and specific under-standing of the targeted organization and (2) the creation of strategies and operations that specifi-cally target that organization. Questions-based organizational analysis allows law enforcement to develop a specific understanding of each organi-zation. With questions focused on specific aspects of the organization, such as organizational objec-tive, organizational operating practices, organi-zational structure and command, organizational financing, and organizational support, targeting and operations can be tailored to the individual answers for each question asked. In this manner, targeting and operations are not only more effi-cient but are also most effective.

A questions-based organizational analysis framework is replicable, ensuring that com-parisons between organizations are truly “apples to apples.” A questions-based organi-zational analysis should be repeated with reg-ularity within the same organization, allowing law enforcement to determine if leadership changes within the organization are affecting or have affected the organization’s objectives or operations, or if the organization is expand-ing or changing in any significant way.

6.*Use of Social Network Analysis to Identify Criminal Networks and Target Critical Nodes*

Networks may be defined as a series of rela-tionships between individuals who are work-ing in some coordinated manner to achieve an intended goal. The key to understanding and mapping these networks, then, is discover-ing and mapping these relationships. Social network analysis (SNA) software generates a web-like graph that shows links people have with one another. Individuals may be viewed as either links to one another, links to locations, or links to specific groups. In SNA, individu-als (nodes) and lines indicating relationships/connections between nodes (edges) are plot-ted intentionally. Nodes that are more criti-cal to holding the network together, typically by having the most direct contact with other network members, serving as the connector between the most network members, or serving as the connector between subgroups, are readily identified. Nodes that have stronger relation-ships or connectivity are placed closer together (shorter edges), while nodes less associated are spaced further apart (longer edges). In this manner, the resultant network visualization is a very effective mapping tool for understanding which nodes are most critical and which nodes are more strongly connected. Community-find-ing capabilities allow subgroups within a net-work to be identified and relationships between subgroups to be understood. By examining rela-tionships, it is also possible to identify network members who

might exist who were previously unknown if they had not claimed group mem-bership. For example, if law enforcement identi-fies gang membership only by known/admitted gang members, it is likely missing out on gang members who have never declared member-ship. By focusing analysis on relationships, not self-identification, law enforcement sees who is interacting with whom—a more accurate means to measure network membership and reach. Additionally, the focus of relationships allows for identification of "human bridges"—those individuals who serve as the connection between cooperating networks. Once these people are identified, operations can be focused upon their removal from the network, severing the ties that bind networks to other networks. With this visual graph, law enforcement is able to clearly identify the key nodes in criminal net-works. Once these nodes are identified, they can be targeted and removed, fracturing the net-work in the most efficient and effective manner.

SNA software should possess cognitive capa-bilities, allowing for dynamic network analy-sis. Such dynamic analysis allows law enforce-ment to engage in target forecasting. Using target forecasting, law enforcement can remove the critical nodes identified and observe how the network changes in response, providing a glimpse at possible future network structure. Past efforts by law enforcement targeting and removing only the heads of these criminal net-works have resulted in power vacuums that create factionalization and increased violence. As such, it is advisable to simultaneously target and remove several middle-tier criminal opera-tors. If SNA has identified several critical nodes, law enforcement can then remove these nodes in the SNA software in multiple orders and configurations to determine the best method for network destabilization and fracture.

SNA software should also include geospatial and spatial-temporal analysis capabilities. Geo-spatial analysis examines the social network where it exists in geography and overlays this upon a map. Whereas the social network analy-sis creates visualizations in which placement of nodes and edges is determined by the type and strength of relationships, geospatial analy-sis shows where those network members exist in geographic space. This allows law enforce-ment to identify network location and reach. Spatial-temporal analysis examines where the network exists in geography per unit of time. Using crime data over a given length of time, this can be broken down into smaller units of time. For example, three years worth of crime data on any network can be broken down into visualizations of network structure and geog-raphy as it existed over every successive three-month period. The visualizations can be viewed in chronological succession, providing a time-lapse-like view of the network as it evolved over the total three-year period. When viewed in such a manner, patterns of movement and/or conflict can be more readily identified, leading toward better recognition of habitual patterns. Additionally, this analysis can be used to make predictions on future movements. Such predic-tions can be considered probabilities, and law enforcement can plan operations accordingly.

Recently, a new SNA software program has been developed that includes several of these features. Developed in conjunction with the Chicago Police Department and the U.S. Military Academy West Point, the *Organiza-tional, Relationship, and Contact Analyzer* (*ORCA*) is designed specifically for law enforcement and allows for the visualization and identification of the social structure of street gangs (Paulo, Fischl, Markow, Martin, & Shakarian, 2013). Further-more, *ORCA* allows for the following analysis:

• *Ability to Determine Degree of Network Mem-bership* – Not all gang members self-iden-tify

or can be identified by law enforce-ment as gang members. *ORCA* examines the number of direct relationships (through co-arrest or other co-contact field data) an individual has with known or admitted gang members and calculates a probability, or degree of confidence, that the individual is a member of that gang. This informa-tion is useful when determining potential overall gang membership. It is also useful in identifying relationships between gangs. For instance, when a known member of Gang A is calculated with a high prob-ability of being a member of Gang B, law enforcement is alerted to a possible close relationship between these two gangs.

• *Ability to Identify Sets of Influential Members* – Though many gangs may be decentralized in organizational structure, there tend to be sev-eral individuals who exert tremendous influ-ence over other members. *ORCA* identifies this set of individuals. Law enforcement can then choose to target these individuals with social service efforts, knowing that their exit from the gang is likely to pull many other members out with them; target them for anti-violence messaging, knowing that their com-munications to the rest of the gang is likely to have the most meaningful effect; or target them for removal via incarceration.

• *Ability to Map the "Ecosystem" of a Given Gang* – Within any social network, certain individu-als tend to associate with each other more than with other network members. In regard to street gangs, this may best be understood through the concept of street corner drug crews. Though members of a larger gang, corner crews tend to associate with each other more often than with other members in the same gang. *ORCA* identifies these inter-nal subgroups. Additionally, this analysis is run for gangs and gang factions themselves. In this manner, gangs and gang factions that tend to associate with each other may be identified. This is useful in identifying poten-tial cooperative efforts between gangs and/or gang factions.

ORCA is currently being tested with several municipal and state law enforcement agen-cies. Future versions will include the geospa-tial and spatial-temporal capabilities previ-ously identified.

7.*Operations Driven by Intelligence*

Locating and establishing relationships with TCLs, recruiting and effectively utilizing street leaders, comprehensively using SNA, and push-ing information collection and intelligence pro-cessing down the chain of command organizes the law enforcement agency for intelligence-driven operations. Law enforcement should then use aggressive counternetwork targeting models such as Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, and Analyze (F3EA) to find criminal actors, fix their location, and quickly move in to apprehend or "finish" the offender(s) (Faint & Harris, 2012; Flynn, Juergens, & Cantrell, 2008). Information gathered on-scene is then exploited for new intelligence and ana-lyzed to drive the next operation in a cyclical pat-tern. Regular reassessment of the environment and regularly repeated organizational analysis keeps the intelligence picture fresh, ensures the problem is properly diagnosed as the environ-ment evolves over time and in response to law enforcement operations within it, and allows for law enforcement to remain properly agile in operations while remaining stable in strategy.

Relationships with the community are also enhanced via selective targeting and appre-hension of verified criminal actors. The need to conduct large street sweeps, raids, and vehicle checkpoint-style operations that alien-ate community members from law enforce-ment are decreased over time as the overall intelligence picture grows.

8.*Comprehensive Strategic Communications Operations*

Creating comprehensive strategic communica-tions operations is a three-step process. First, law enforcement must gather information and engage directly with community members, focusing on the perceptions the community members have of law enforcement, the street gangs around them, and the world in which they live and taking the time necessary to build part-nerships and networks within the community. Second, information gathered must be integrated into law enforcement operations. Law enforce-ment must ensure that their actions align with the realities within the community and under-stand how operations can influence community perception. Third, law enforcement must ensure that all available resources are used to com-municate the intended message. This involves coordinating information operations, increasing public presence and engagement, conducting regular community meetings, and advancing a specific counter-narrative, and it includes par-ticipation in community-sponsored events such as fairs or carnivals, direct engagement with school and faith-based officials, and the creation of joint police-TCL radio messages. Just as gangs often recruit members outside schools or local youth hangouts, law enforcement and commu-nity leaders should work together to "recruit" outside these same locations. An active police-community partnership that approaches and engages youth outside schools not only conveys a powerful counter-gang message but also dis-suades gang members from recruiting there. Law enforcement must also ensure that their actions constantly support the mission statement. This includes ensuring that all community members are treated with respect and receive impartial treatment.

Regular community meetings must be con-vened and focus specifically on gang abate-ment. Law enforcement should communicate success stories and seek community input for further cooperative operations. Community input should be encouraged, but all discussions must support the mission statement to prevent loss of focus. Involved community members must be encouraged to become active partici-pants in community issue resolution, and spe-cific tasks should be delegated out to them for completion. These community members are then expected to return to the next community meeting and report the status of their project. This encourages project follow-through and enhances the sense of community ownership.

9.*Whole of Government Approach with Law Enforcement Hand-Off*

Law enforcement must liaise with the various civic service providers required throughout the community or ensure that representatives from these civic service providers are avail-able to meet directly with members of the community and law enforcement on an "on-demand" basis. Repair or restoration of civic services should coincide with law enforcement operations. This should occur no later than 24 hours after law enforcement operations so that the community is able to directly observe the coordinated response to local issues. This whole-government approach removes imme-diate criminal activity, takes a measured step toward helping remove many of the condi-tions that allow it to set up in the location to begin with, and sends a signal to the local community that the whole of government is committed to resolving their local issues and reinvesting in the neighborhood.

Once this has been done, responsibility for the maintenance of these gains must be trans-ferred to the TCLs and any other respon-sible community organizations. This allows law enforcement to move from a position of agency sponsorship to agency support. This keeps law enforcement's commitment lighter and less expensive, which also means sustain-able. Furthermore, this transfer of responsibil-ity creates a real sense of ownership

within the community and reinforces the TCLs' local stature, leading to enhanced voluntary report-ing of other criminal activity and actors.

A Strategy in Practice

In 2009, Massachusetts State Police (MSP) troopers Michael Cutone and Thomas Sarrouf, both Green Berets and Iraq War veterans, began Counter Criminal Continuum (C3) Polic-ing in Springfield, Massachusetts (Hibbard, Barbieri, Domnarski, & Cutone, 2011). Using the above strategic elements, Troopers Cutone and Sarrouf, together with a small team of dedicated MSP troopers and local Springfield Police Department personnel, focused their efforts on an eight-block section of a neigh-borhood in northern Springfield with a sig-nificant gang problem (Goode, 2012). Results indicate decreases in violent crime, property crime, and weapons offenses (MSP, 2012). The program has expanded in scope from its ini-tial eight blocks to 30 blocks. Calls for police service in the area have risen, indicating increased community involvement, a greater willingness to report crime, and stronger per-ceptions of police legitimacy (Goode, 2012). The success and expansion of the C3 Policing Model indicate that population-centric COIN strategy can be adapted and implemented to great effect against criminal street gangs and local criminal networks.

Conclusion

COIN strategy is undeniably a military strat-egy; however, the core competencies of work-ing with and through the community, collect-ing evidence, and conducting investigations are fundamental law enforcement proce-dures. The military learned and adapted these competencies, mated them to their targeting and intelligence models, and applied them with success through their special opera-tions communities. Law enforcement should now examine these practices, adapt the les-sons learned from their use, and create that which has always been missing in community policing: a defined strategy to eliminate crimi-nal street gangs. To describe it another way, counter-gang strategy provides what com-munity policing has always been missing: a specific strategy with the linking and lever-aging of strong agency and community rela-tionships to identify, target, and remove the criminals who cause them harm. When such strategy and intelligence-driven targeting and operations are deployed against the criminal street gang or other criminal network, law enforcement is afforded the most effective and efficient means to disrupt, destabilize, and ultimately dismantle the criminal street gang.

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