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Deane-Peter Baker, Evert Jordaan, eds. *South Africa and Contemporary Counterinsurgency: Roots, Practices, Prospects.* Claremont: International Publishers Marketing, 2010. xix + 268 pp. $37.95 (paper), ISBN 978-1-919895-33-8.

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Commissioned by Margaret Sankey

What can clearly be stated about this monograph is that it delivers and readers will not be disappointed. This book presents impressive scholarship regarding counterinsurgency (COIN) via a variety of scholarly, military, and sometimes combined perspectives. Readers will gain a deep understanding of COIN operations not only in South Africa but also throughout Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

Coeditors Deane-Peter Baker and Evert Jordaan have divided their work into four thematic parts. Following the introductory first chapter, which provides an excellent foundation for this monograph's content and organization, chapters 2 through 4 examine COIN's foundation as well as its present state. The second chapter, by Annette Seeger, offers an incredibly strong description and definition of COIN. In fact, her chapter is so strong that the third chapter, by Anita M. Gossmann, covers much of the same information, making it seem redundant. Yet Gossmann does include a wonderful analysis of the historical COIN experiences of the United States and Great Britain. By the time the reader gets to chapter 4, yet another COIN introductory chapter, the need to combine these chapters is evident.

The next five chapters provide a historical overview of COIN in Africa and, at times, specifically focus on events in which South Africa actively was involved during the apartheid era. In chapter 5, Commander Thean Potgieter examines COIN in Africa during the colonial period, and her work is particularly strong regarding COIN policies of colonial British, French, and Portuguese forces. Chapter 6 describes South Africa's apartheid era COIN techniques and assesses its success. Lieutenant Colonel Abel Esterhuyse and Jordaan focus their chapter on South Africa's COIN operations against SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization). Captain Mashudu Godfrey Ramuhala looks at guerilla warfare from the perspective of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). The chapter provides a solid description of MK ideology and training but does not analyze specific MK operations and their success or lack of success. Gossmann includes a wonderful chapter on how South Africa lost its COIN capability and why it needs to get it back. The subsection title "Building the Ark before the Rain: Recapturing COIN Knowledge" clearly articulates a major point of not only her chapter but also this book.

Chapters 10 and 11 are noteworthy in that they discuss areas where COIN operations are currently taking place, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Afghanistan. Major Jim Terrie's chapter focuses on COIN efforts and successes in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He also argues that conducting true COIN operations in a United Nations peacekeeping operation is nearly impossible due to the UN organizational structure and the complexities of peacekeeping. In chapter 11, Leopold Scholtz and Potgieter provide a thorough portrayal of COIN operations in Afghanistan and the lessons learned by the United States. A more useful choice would have been to directly connect South Africa's experience with COIN to their current involvement in Afghanistan, or to more concretely link American use of South African models, if this is the case.

The book ends with chapters showing that South Africa needs to rebuild its COIN capability in order to have more options regarding its activity in peacekeeping, African Union, and UN operations. Chapter 12 extensively delves into COIN doctrine, while in chapter 13, Lindy Heinecken and Donna Winslow argue for the need to incorporate more cultural information in COIN operations to improve the effectiveness and success of COIN. Finally, chapter 14 maintains that the South African military needs to prepare not only for conventional military operations but also for COIN operations.

Even with the varied approaches toward COIN analyzed in this book, a few strong themes emerge. COIN is and will be a major part of military operations for the foreseeable future and all militaries need to adjust to

this new reality. Military operations will fluctuate between COIN and conventional with little to no warning. COIN can be successful but success must come from the operational as well as the political level. Regardless of the apartheid era connection of previous South African COIN operations, to be prepared and relevant in contemporary military operations, South Africa must develop a COIN capacity and take advantage of its previous COIN operational experience.

A few shortcomings can be found in this work. The most noteworthy are the three chapters that explore COIN ideas. Though each provides a unique approach and examples in describing COIN, it might have been more efficient to combine the three chapters to avoid redundancy. The chapter on MK COIN operations was disappointing. The philosophical and training ideas were well represented but not the actual operations.

Regardless of the above criticisms, this is a strong collection in its exploration of COIN. It is a great introductory work for those who are not familiar with COIN and a solid work for those who want to continue their study of COIN. For scholars of South Africa, this edited collection can provide wonderful insight into past military operations and the difficulties of future endeavors. Though this work focuses on South Africa, scholars on the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the United States can find insights to aid in their scholarship and teaching.

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