

ANALITICAL PRIMS

FROM GLOBAL EMPIRE TO SUPERPOWER BRITISH COLONIAL EXPERIENCE AND STRATEGIC THOUGHT IN THE U.S. AFTER 1945

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Abstract

Recent events are characterized by a prompt growth in civil conflicts: from disorder for racial reasons to international collisions and civil wars of a religious, ethnic and territorial character. These circumstances even more often return the academic and expert communities to the history of the formation and development of a policy to ensure internal security. At the same time London and Washington within «humanitarian interventions» of the end of the 20th, the beginning of the 21st centuries make active and regular attempts to move to others soil (Afghanistan and Iraq are the most indicative examples) their own experience of providing internal security. Understanding and forecasting the prospects of this transfer of an alien model of forming a system of internal security demands a deep analysis not only of its main components, but also of its ideo-logical sources.

The special role of law enforcement agencies and departments (intelligence, counterintelligence, police, army), the inconsistent choice between the principles of democracy and safety requirements (including the extrajudicial restrictions of the rights of the foreign and own citizens authorized by the authorities on the territory of Great Britain and the USA) are still valid nowadays, allowing to say that the methods of providing internal security developed in the colonial past of Great Britain are still considered valid by a considerable part of the expert community of the USA (though aren't always effective in practice), and studying them has not only an academic, but also a political value.

In the light of the recently declassified documents on the activity of security services of Great Britain and the USA after World War II, in countries of «the third world» and also the modern international contradictions connected with attempts to introduce the model of providing internal security created on the basis of colonial experience of Great Britain to various countries of the modern world, there is a need to study this policy, and the development of structures, forms and methods of providing internal security in Great Britain and the USA as the universal recipe for «counterinsurgency operations» and «operations of stabilization». The present article represents the analysis of this process in the conditions of «Cold war» and «War on terror» at the level of strategic thinking as one of the most characteristic and essential aspects of transition from an era of global colonial empires to an era of nuclear superpowers.

Keywords:

empire; superpower; strategy; counterinsurgency; Great Britain; USA.

The British Empire is currently in high demand among the US military, political and diplomatic elite. This circumstance, interesting from the academic point of view and rather notable from the viewpoint of actual political analysis, is connected with the fact that some analysts and commentators (inclined to the opinion that the US is a superpower in a uni-polar world) believe that America's current position is remindful of the situation, where Britain (in their opinion) found itself at the peak of its power at the end of the 19th – the first third of the 20th century. Besides, a keen interest in its colonial past is explained by the fact that Britain's experience in creating its empire, at least in the opinion of these analysts, is historically similar to American military and political presence both in Afghanistan (since 2001) and Iraq (since 2003).

The first of the above-mentioned reasons of a noticeable interest in the history of the British Empire on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean has already become an object of analysis in a number of interesting, though at times rather biased, papers that constitute a different subject matter. Within the framework of a comparative historical analysis, the question mostly concerns the study of the transfer of colonial experience and the current legacy of European colonial empires. The present article mostly deals with the strategic analysis of historical parallels typical of the American military and the experts they have attracted since 1945.

It should be pointed out in this connection that historians, political scientists and journalists have actually picked up on this trend only at the start of the 21st century. Initially, in the 1960s, it reflected the purely pragmatic military interest caused by the Pentagon's attempts

to apply British experience of combating the Malayan "Communist underground" in Vietnam. Certainly, Britain's policy in that colony had attracted US attention long before it got involved in the war in Vietnam, but that was, most probably, connected with the strategic analysis of the situation in the entire South-East Asia in the light of the Cold War, rather than with a detailed analysis of colonial experience from the viewpoint of prospective involvement of the army in "counterinsurgency operations". In this sense, that interest did not differ from Washington's interest in the developments in the French Indochina¹.

Thus, in the 1960s it was the question of emerging special interest in anti-guerilla warfare, including Britain's colonial experience in this area. A broader study of this kind of conflicts – as "asymmetric" ones – began in the 1970s [Mack 1975: 175–200]. Besides, the fact that the US foreign policy turned to the colonial experience of European powers is important in this connection because researchers generally concentrate on explanatory schemes of the theory of asymmetric conflicts when describing peculiarities of Washington's involvement in local conflicts [Deriglazova 2010: 51–64]. A direct consequence of such predominantly politological approach is that analysts and commentators overlook the Pentagon's attitude to the "archives" of colonial experience, including that of the former British Empire (relevant historical experience).

Theoreticians of "counterinsurgency operations", who used to serve in Malaya, Kenya, Aden and other dominions of the British Empire that collapsed after World War II, were not only experts on anti-guerilla warfare; they were directly connected in this capacity with decision-making on the settlement of local

¹Of all the documents testifying to Washington's interest in the situation in South-East Asia in the light of the emerging break-up of European colonial empires that the CIA declassified in the 2000s, only the most typical ones will be listed here: The Break-Up of the Colonial Empires and its Implications for US Security. 3 September 1948 / Central Intelligence Agency [hereinafter CIA] ORE 25-48; CIA report for the President of the United States: Current Situation in Malaya, 17 November 1949 / Declassified Documents Reference System; Resistance of Thailand, Burma, and Malaya to Communist Pressures in the Event of a Communist Victory in Indochina. 20 March 1951 / CIA. National Intelligence Estimate. NIE-20; French Problems in Indochina. 4 September 1951 / CIA. Board of National Estimates. Staff Memorandum 124. WSH/CLC. № 53617; Current Outlook in Indochina. Memorandum for the Director of Intelligence. 9 February 1954 / CIA. NE-11.

conflicts that accompanied decolonization in the Third World countries. Integrating Britain's colonial experience with strategic thinking, these classical authors of literature on "counterinsurgency operations" were actually outlining one of the ways of the "transfer of power" from a global empire to a superpower in the former colonies (and not only British ones) during the Cold War period. Bearing in mind a renaissance of these ideas half a century later, the question arises as to the role of these experts – both at that time and now – in determining the vector of the US foreign policy not only during the Cold War but also during the period of the War on Terror.

Problematizing both topics in the context of the declared subject matter, the main question in this case may be formulated like this: is Pax Britannica, in the opinion of US analysts, the past of the future Pax Americana from the viewpoint of force projection on the global scale (and to what extent)? One more question is whether Artemiy Kalinovsky's description of the efforts of Soviet military and civilian advisors in Afghanistan in 1979–1989 – "the blind leading the blind" – is appropriate for describing the state of affairs in that country (and in Iraq) after 2001? [Kalinovsky 2010].

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The British Army has long since become an object of a keen interest not only among professional historians. Many experts consider efforts aimed at maintaining order at the margins of the empire and in the parent state with the support of the army to be a reference pattern and/or a prototype of use of the armed forces in combating insurgents, be it national liberation movements in colonial empires, insurrections in the Third World countries during the Cold War or the global military presence of contemporary powers. The question concerns the need for a new understanding of the history of European empires of the early modern period as well as their legacy from the practical point of view – their experience in maintaining control over outlying districts with the help of the army. The question also concerns certain continuity during transition from an era of global colonial empires to an era of nuclear superpowers.

As an example, it can be pointed out, that relationship between contemporary anthropology (as scientific knowledge) and humanitarian interventions (as provocative political practices) in a different ethno-cultural environment is very similar to the relationship between ethnography and imperialism in the period of the first global empires (from the viewpoint of the content and the nature of cognitive practices). Some professionals trace direct logical and institutional links between colonial knowledge of the Belle Epoch and the post-war regional studies and social sciences in the activity of military intelligence bureaus related to collection, systematization and analysis of information on the theaters of operations, although acknowledging their failure to see beyond the boundaries of their cognitive technologies; beyond the instruments of maintaining order they trust in [Hevia 2012: 269].

Thus, the authors of the new Field Manual of the US Army FM 3-24, which served as a model for the new Field Manual JDP 3-24 of the British Armed Forces, implying the so-called "cul-tural" approach to addressing military and political issues in this or that region, have academic degrees either in anthropology or political science. Montgomery McFate, a science advisor to the Pentagon's program of cultural studies in the countries where the US Army was present in 2007–2010, who defined anthropology as "an intellectual tool to consolidate imperial power at the margins of empire", graduated as PhD in anthropology from Yale University in 1994, having devoted her thesis to social contacts of the Irish Republican Army and their impact on the IRA's ability to oppose London [McFate 2005: 24–38; McFate, Jackson 2005: 18–21].

General David Petraeus, Commander of the Multi-National Force in Iraq (2007–2008), Commander of the US Central Command (2008–2010) responsible for all military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Commander of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (2010–2011), who once stated that "cultural awareness is a force multiplier", defended his PhD in political science on lessons learned by the American Armed Forces in Vietnam that could prove useful to them

in future, at Princeton University in 1987 [Petraeus 1987].

David Kilcullen, an expert on “conflict ethnography” he had invented himself and senior counterinsurgency advisor to General Petraeus (until July 2007), holds a PhD in political science from the University of South Wales and the Australian Defense Force Academy (2000) summing up similar 1945–1999 experience of Indonesian authorities.

The abundance of examples of this kind makes it possible to trace the genealogy of such colonial knowledge from the leaders of imperialistic race of the early modern period to global and regional superpowers of the contemporary world. It is noteworthy, that at the sunset of the British Empire, its mission was formulated in the same way as at the dawn of its development: “winning the hearts and minds” of rebellious nations. In this connection, Field Marshall Sir Gerald Templer, British High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief during the Malayan Emergency of 1952–1954 in that British colony, is quoted as stating that, “the answer lies not in pouring more troops into the jungle but in the hearts and minds of people”. At the same time, in the opinion of many contemporary analysts, that endeavor in the history of the British Empire turned into a contested imperative of colonial authorities [Beckett 2001]².

As a working hypothesis, here the following question arises: if the new US Field Manual FM3-24 [Field Manual 2006] written and adopted under the influence of specificities of American military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq “reads like a manual on indirect colonial rule” [Gonzalez 2007: 16–17], isn’t all literature on counterinsurgency operations of the same nature, considering that the question concerns the establishment of some extent of control (“external control”) of one country over another and bearing in mind that Field Manual FM 3-24 is based on a neo-classical interpretation of

“counterinsurgency operations” [Hoffman 2007: 47–87]. In this connection, it may be not without some grounds that Douglas Porch stated, that the Field Manual “offers a doctrine of escapism... – a flight from democratic civilian control, even from modernity, into an ... romanticized, orientalist vision that projects quintessentially Western standards and Western prejudices on non-Western societies” [Porch 2013: 330].

Besides, as far as FM 3-24 is concerned, it can be said with confidence that genealogy of such colonial approach is not only hypothetical. In this sense, some non-indifferent humanities scholars consider this peculiar renaissance of such colonial ethnography and anthropology intended to accomplish relevant military and political missions of contemporary powers in the Third World countries as a “cultural turn” towards “mercenary anthropology”, while “ethnographic knowledge informs military operations and tactics on the ground” [Gonzalez 2007: 16–17; Stoler, Bond 2006: 98]. It is an equally theoretical and practical genealogy – the neo-classical approach to “counterinsurgency operations” goes back to Imperial Policing in the early, and especially earliest modern period, when this notion appeared in the vocabulary of the British Empire [Gwynn 1934; Notes on Imperial Policing 1934; Imperial Policing 1949].

In this sense, the circulation of ideas in the US strategic thinking began formally in 1962, when RAND Corporation, in close collaboration with the Pentagon and with the financial support of the Advanced Research Projects Agency, organized a symposium devoted to issues of counterinsurgency in the Third World countries, in Washington [Counterinsurgency. A Symposium 2006 (1963)]. The range of participants in that event deserves special attention. Almost half of those invited (five of the 12 attendees) were British officers of dominion armies, with some experience of “counterinsurgency operations” in Palestine, Malaya,

²Formulation of topics discussed at the conferences arranged at high-level academic forums in Great Britain – at the Institute of Historical Research and the National Army Museum – is rather revealing: «“Butcher and Bolt” or “Hearts and Minds”? British Ways of Countering Colonial Re-volt: A Historical Perspective». Institute of Historical Research, London. 15–16 September 2011; «The Small Wars: From Special Operations to Ideological Insurgencies». National Army Museum, London. 25 March 2013.

Kenya, Aden and Oman: Captain Anthony Jeeps (Malaya, 1958, and Oman, 1959), who had been taking part in exchange of experience between SAS and Special Operations Forces at the US military base Fort Bragg since October 1961; Lieutenant Colonel Frank E. Kitson (Kenya, 1953–1956, and Malaya, 1957), who was responsible for the Middle East in the military operations section of the US Department of Defense, spent several months at the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia, as an instructor, and published the book *Gangs and Counter-gangs*, where he summarized Kenyan experience of counterinsurgency warfare; Brigadier David Leonard Powell-Jones (Malaya, 1953–1958); Colonel John R. Shirley from New Zealand (Malaya, middle of the 1950s, and Kenya, second half of the 1950s); and Colonel John White from Australia (Malaya, 1957–1959), attached to the US Army Headquarters since 1960.

In 1964, RAND analyst Riley Sunderland wrote a series of reports for the Pentagon, where he analyzed various aspects of how the British dealt with the Malayan Emergency in 1948–1964, one year before the USA got fully involved in the conflict in Vietnam [Sunderland 1964].

In 1966, Colonel Sir Robert Thompson, one of the classical authors of literature on “counterinsurgency operations”, who served in the British military intelligence in Malaya during the Emergency in that colony and headed the mission of British advisors in Vietnam in the early 1960s, published the first in his series of works offering a comparative analysis of the events in Malaya and Vietnam in connection with intensification of activity of the “Communist underground” [Thompson 1966].

Soon after, books of two other specialists on anti-guerilla warfare recognized by the expert community – Colonel Julian Paget and Lieutenant Colonel Frank Kitson, who represented the British view of “counterinsurgency operations” at the above-mentioned symposium – came off the press [Paget 1967; Kitson 1971]. It was under the influence of Kitson’s ideas that in the early 1980s “counterinsurgency operations” were included into the cur-

riculum of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Great Britain, as a separate subject [Beckett 2012: 26].

And finally, in 1972, before the very end of the war in Vietnam, a CIA official Robert W. Komer, who supervised civil engineering projects in that country in 1967–1969, prepared a report (published by RAND within the framework of cooperation with the Advanced Research Projects Agency), where he referred potential readers to British experience in Malaya in search of answers to the question of why the USA had failed to achieve its objectives in Vietnam [Komer 1972].

In 2006, when problems of the 1960s – large-scale involvement of the US regular army in “counterinsurgency operations” – became relevant again because of impressive American presence in Afghanistan and Iraq (which is mentioned in the foreword to and at the end of the symposium proceedings), RAND Corporation initiated republication of the 1962 symposium proceedings, this time for the general public. The author of the foreword to the 2006 publication was Stephen Hosmer, a RAND executive, who chaired the symposium in Washington in 1962.

That same year, a new Field Manual of the US Army FM 3-24 was published, where the “old new” approach was proposed to organizing anti-guerilla warfare and “pacifying” rebellious territories, which largely reflected the ideas expressed at the forum arranged by RAND Corporation half a century before. The circle was closed. Bearing in mind such genealogy of knowledge in the area of “counterinsurgency operations”, it is not surprising that some experts point to the great influence of classical authors of literature on “counterinsurgency operations” on the authors of the new Field Manual of the US Army and, therefore, on the attempt (imaginary or real?) at changing the course of American policy in Iraq and Afghanistan [Hoffman 2007]. The same trend is observed in subsequent supplements to the Field Manual FM 3-24: FMI 3-24.2, FM 90-8, FM 7-98 [Tactics in Counterinsurgency 2009].

Yet, how did it turn out that, possessing firsthand information from the classical authors of literature on “counterinsurgency op-

erations", the USA lost the war in Vietnam and failed to achieve the set (proclaimed, declared) objectives in Iraq and Afghanistan by the time of the official withdrawal of troops from those countries? Thomas Mockaitis and John Nagl (both represent a rather illustrative example of a merger of the academic community with the US Army on theoretic issues of anti-guerilla warfare, having some experience of active military service (Nagl) and of teaching relevant subjects at military educational institutions, and being members of the Consultative Council of the Department of Defense), apologists of the British experience in "counterinsurgency operations", write about "historical amnesia" of Americans and about the fact that the latter had failed to take into consideration the context, in which they were trying to achieve the objectives set, meaning, first and foremost, the US policy in Vietnam [Mockaitis 1990; Mockaitis 1993: 7–16; Mockaitis 2007: 9–21; Nagl 2002].

Besides that, they point to the fact that the British Armed Forces were highly experienced in anti-guerilla warfare before the 1948 Malayan Emergency: 'The conclusion that insurgency was a Communist phenomenon caused Western analysts to overlook the prewar developments of British methods... The victory in Malaya was the culmination of a half century of experience, not a formula derived from a single experiment' [Mockaitis 1993: 7].

In this connection, it is worthwhile recalling instructions and regulations of the British Army on maintaining law and order in the Empire that were widely circulated between the two world wars (1919 – 1939) and, for the first time ever, laid rather detailed emphasis on the role of the army in that process [Gwynn 1934; Simson 1938; Notes on Imperial Policing, 1934; Duties in Aid of the Civil Power, 1923, 1937].

In this connection, less frequently is recalled the work by Colonel Charles Callwell, which was granted the status of a manual on the instruction of the British Ministry of Defense, although he was the first among British authors to set forth in detail the main features of the Small Wars in colonies and the specific objectives an army had to accomplish

in conflicts of this kind [Callwell 1896]. It is indicative that the US contemporary military thought traces parallels between Callwell's Small Wars and the 1935 US Marine Corps Manual (reissued in 1940), also devoted to participation of this combat arm of the US Army in Small Wars abroad in the light of the US "counterinsurgency operations" at the start of the 21st century [Sullivan 2006].

However, keeping up the logic of Mockaitis's and Nagl's conclusions, it is possible to point out that the impact of Great Britain's 1919–1939 colonial experience on the strategy and tactics of the British Colonial Administration in respect of "revolutionary liberation wars" of 1945–1960s characterizes connection between London's colonial policies in the early and the earliest modern periods in a similar way.

Meanwhile, much of what American strategists offered to Washington as regards organization of "counterinsurgency operations" both in the Cold War period and today, during the turbulent time of the global War on Terror, was a result of application of British colonial experience. The main lines of the Pentagon's efforts within the framework of anti-guerilla warfare both in South-East Asia in the 1960s and Central Asia and the Middle East at the start of the 21st century – population policies (control and cooperation), knowledge policies (intelligence and cultural knowledge) and security policies (police operations and military interventions) – fully correspond, on the surface, to British colonial policies [Roy 2013; Jager 2007; Mumford 2009]. In this case, the main question is whether any attempts have been made to borrow their content, along with the form?

One of the most important aspects of what analysts consider as the British strategy of anti-guerilla warfare is the minimum use of the armed forces (mostly for supporting the actions of civilian authorities within the framework of pacification policies). Besides, the principle of minimum force is closely connected with two other principles – collaboration of military and civilian authorities and observance of law (legal procedures) during "counterinsurgency operations". Meanwhile,

the mission of British military advisors in Vietnam headed by Sir Robert Thompson, which upheld namely these ideas, was wrapped up in 1965, while the main stake, as is known, was laid on “finding and liquidating” as much of the manpower of Viet Kong and the army of North Vietnam.

At the start of the 21st century, in connection with the US military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, strategic thinking of the American military demonstrated a large variety of assessments of that fundamental principle of anti-guerilla warfare, the British way (in the opinion of its apolo-gists), ranging from the “oil stain” strategy by General David Petraeus outlined in the new Field Manual FM 3-24 (neoclassical approach to “counterinsurgency operations”) to proposals on in-creasing the numerical strength of the US military contingent in Iraq alone to half a million and open statements (on the verge of disappointment with London’s colonial experience) to the effect that Britons had not always followed their principle of minimum force in their colonial and margins policies [Boer 2013].

Some works in this respect demonstrate direct links between the British academic community and the American strategic culture. It is noteworthy, that doubts concerning correspondence of contemporary visions of the principles of the “British ways” of anti-guerillas warfare to histori-cal facts were mostly widely disseminated and substantiated namely by the British academic community (some of its representatives are connected with British military educational institutions), and that casts a different light on the nature of its influence on American strategic thinking [Anderson 2005; Elkins 2005; Bennett 2007: 638–664; Thornton 2009: 215–224; Bennett 2010: 459–475; Loyd 2010: 382–403; Mumford 2009; Mumford 2011].

Dispelling of the myth about the “British way” of anti-guerilla warfare became especially typical of the strategic thinking of the US

Army two or three years before the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq and Afghanistan (against the background of noticeable deterioration of the situation in those countries from the viewpoint of security and the level of terrorist threat in general, including, in particular, in the British areas of responsibility)³. Meanwhile, an opinion about the need to increase the numerical strength of the American military contingent to half a million in Iraq alone (the figure appeared in the initial plan of military operations OPLAN 1003), in order to act, as was stated, in keeping with the genuine (and not declared) British colonial experience, was voiced back in 2005 [Montanus 2005: 15].

In this connection, governmental and independent experts have lately drawn attention more often to the fact that London responded decisively to any critical situation in its colonial policy. Thus, the total strength of British troops in the Middle East and the Caucasus by August 1919 amounted to 225,000. In 1919–1921, another 40,000 soldiers and officers were stationed in Ireland, in order to retain it in the Kingdom and quench the fire of the civil war. In 1919–1921 alone, the Treasury spent £18 million on those military expenses, although in January 1920 the Cabinet of David Lloyd-George approved the state budget with a deficit of £473 million. In 1920, the authorities spent up to £60 million on suppressing the rebellion of Arab tribes in Mesopotamia, several times more than on preparing the rebellion of Sheikh Hussein of Mecca, with active involvement of Lawrence of Arabia.

In the 20th century, London found its Empire unaffordable long before 1945. It is not surprising that in the period between the two wars, one of the objectives of the Middle East Department (of the Colonial Office) headed by Winston Churchill consisted in gradually reducing Britain’s military and administrative presence in the colonies and bringing it into compliance with the parent state’s financial possibilities.

³As is testified by documents published in the Wikileaks in 2010, disappointment with the ability of Britons to ensure stability in their areas of responsibility in Iraq (near Basra) and Afghanistan (in Helmand Province) in 2007–2008 spread across the highest quarters of the US military and political elite, from General Dan McNeill, commander of the allied forces in Afghanistan, to the US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates.

Moreover, sometimes British officers claimed the role of colonial administrators almost openly (during the Malayan Emergency of 1948–1960, that issue was addressed by placing the functions of military and civilian authorities into the hands of Sir Gerald Templer, and Robert Thompson suggested that the position of a proconsul with the same powers be established in Vietnam). However, in critical situations the British colonial rule was often direct, and resort to its own experience was not as consistent as it is pictured in the works by British classical authors of literature on “counterinsurgency operations” and their apologists. For example, William Sheehan and Charles Townsend drew attention to the fact that after 1945, Britons ignored their Irish and Palestine interwar experience in ensuring security and restoring order, despite similar problems at first in Palestine, and later in Northern Ireland, although they compiled a detailed description of both campaigns [Record of the Rebellion in Ireland 1922–1923; Military Lessons of the Arab Rebellion in Palestine 1936].

But, in this case, how unique and/or replicable British experience is, if we take into consideration the fact that London failed to apply its Malayan experience successfully in Northern Ireland during the “unrest” of 1968–1998 and its experience of anti-guerilla warfare in general – in the south of Iraq within the framework of the 2003–2009 military mission (the last British soldier left Iraq in 2011)⁴? Historical analysis and documents declassified under the Freedom of Information Act show that those were attempts at reproducing a non-existent version of British colonial experience. Indulging in wishful thinking, military and civilian analysts (both in the USA and Great Britain) have been speaking of lessons, which they would like to learn, but which, in their interpretation, are presented as an ideal model

and, therefore, fail to correspond to historical truth.

Noting this trend, it is worthwhile pointing out that attempts (occasional in the 1960s and systematic since 2001) to reconcile the realities of “counterinsurgency operations” with the theory of anti-guerilla warfare, which was developed in the context of colonial wars during the early and the earliest modern periods (but failed to become an object of systematic study and comprehension on both sides of the Atlantic until the start of the 21st century) are typical of US strategic thinking during transition from an era of global colonial empires to an era of nuclear superpowers.

An analysis of the place and the role of British colonial experience in the post-1945 US strategic thinking has shown that, despite problems with an effective organization of anti-guerilla warfare the US Army has encountered since the 1960s, Britain’s colonial experience as such is still an object of active discussions in the US military and academic communities as an historical example that can serve as a lesson for the future (regardless of whether analysts present this example as positive, negative or one that cannot be replicated at the start of the 21st century in principle). This circumstance, in its turn, testifies to lack of a strategy, since the US expert community sticks to the same analytical framework of perception of actual historical experience (colonial history of European states), despite complaints regarding its content.

At the same time, the “British way” of anti-guerilla warfare is more often an object of theorectic discourse (of an apologetic or critical nature) rather than a set of recommendations of effective practical actions from the viewpoint of correspondence of its main provisions to the steps taken by the Pentagon in South-East and Central Asia and the Middle East in the 1960s and 2000s. In this sense, the adop-

⁴Despite the attempt of the British Ministry of Defense to present the experience of the Armed Force’s involvement in stabilizing the situation in Northern Ireland within the framework of Operation Banner in 1969 – 2006 as rather positive, practically all commentators drew attention to the fact that the military eventually failed to defeat the so-called Provisional Irish Republican Army, despite the efforts aimed at reducing violence in the province to an “acceptable” level [Operation Banner 2006]. Similarly, in the reports of the Parliamentary Defense Committee on the results of the 2003 – 2009 military mission in Iraq, the authorities covertly acknowledge their military experience in Ulster as unsuitable for local specificities.

tion of the new Field Manual FM 3-24 in 2006, as well as the formation of a team of British military advisors in South Vietnam in 1961 that consisted only of five persons, do not automatically signal a new (and more effective) security policy, and that was clearly manifested in the consequences of withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam in 1973 and from Iraq and Afghanistan in 2010.

The aforesaid makes it possible to make a number of mutually exclusive suppositions. One of them is that half a century was insufficient for American generals to form their own opinion of the “British way” of anti-guerilla warfare, which at first sight seems strange against the back-ground of a keen interest in this issue in the USA, but (upon closer examination) looks quite possible, considering revision of the views of British “counterinsurgency operations” typical of recent US strategic thinking.

Another supposition is that the military consider discussions on this subject as an essential propaganda component, while actually relying on military force. This opinion is shared by representatives of a certain part of the American anthropological community, which criticizes sharply the collaboration of their colleagues with the Pentagon, as well as by representatives of the academic analytical community, although their opponents in the same milieu point, not without grounds, to a sufficiently diverse US experience in the area of

social engineering in Third World countries [Gilman 2003; Heir, Robinson 2008; Simpson 2008; Kuzmarov 2009: 191–222].

One more supposition is that the attempt to borrow British colonial experience is obviously doomed to failure due to fundamental differences in London’s (at the time of Pax Britannica) and Washington’s (at the time of Pax Americana) foreign policy. While claiming the status of a superpower, the USA shuns responsibilities of a formal empire, which presupposes involvement in large-scale and long-term social, economic and political transformations in the country of operation, i.e. the establishment of direct control over them in a form that looks absolutely unacceptable today from the political point of view – that of an empire.

Therefore, the US Army is not a colonial institute of a global empire but an instrument ensuring projection of force through a change of political regimes and a vast network of military bases. “Counterinsurgency operations” are a way of ensuring such projection of force rather than a set of interventions intended to transform local realities and/or blend with them (including through co-opting representatives of local elites and ensuring their career growth) in a way typical of the British Empire.

However, all of the three suppositions need clarification and require a separate review, which is outside the framework of the present article.

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