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HISTORICAL PROCEDURES OF RECRUITING GUERILLAS

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IT IS NOW generally recognised that guerillas cannot operate nor exist for long without the active support of at least a small portion of the population and the passive indifference of the majority of the remaining population. It is also recognised that the guerillas actually represent only a small segment of the entire insurgent force. The larger segment consists of a covert underground apparatus within the civilian population. In brief, the guerillas carry out overt actions on the basis of timely intelligence information from the civilian population about the activities of government forces. The population further aids the guerillas by providing food, shelter, medical care, labour, and recruits. Most importantly, the population under guerilla control denies information to the counter-insurgency force concerning the hideouts of the guerillas and the identities of the underground apparatus and auxiliary personnel within the population.

We will be concerned here with the various historical techniques of recruiting non-combatant civilians for the guerilla force. This paper does not pretend to cover all of the factors involved, nor does it address itself to guerilla recruiting techniques as practiced in any specific past or current guerilla movement.

Recruiting personnel for the guerilla force is probably one of the most critical missions of the guerilla command apparatus. For in order to achieve the ultimate aim of overthrowing the enemy force, the guerilla

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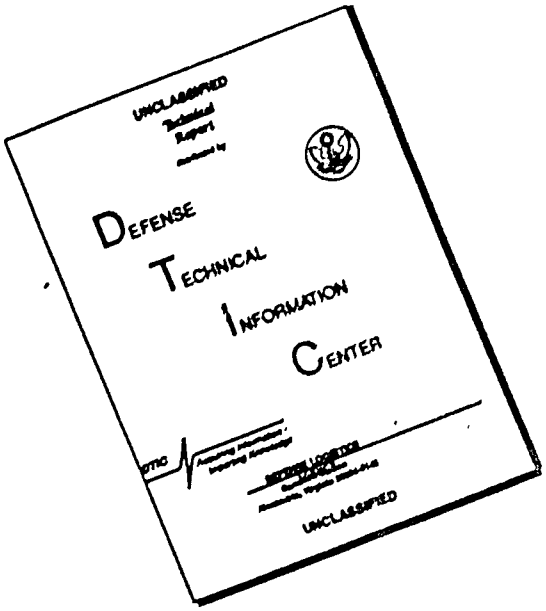

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ommand apparatus must ex-and and swell the guerilla orce until it approaches the haracter of a regular army. his thought has been demon-trated in all of the guerilla iovements occurring after the nd of the Second World War. Historically, most guerilla forces egin with a modest number of ersonnel. This initial force anges anywhere from twenty to ne hundred men and, in some ases, women.

Before describing specific echniques of recruiting per-onnel for the guerilla force it vill be beneficial to recognise nd elaborate on certain con-litions that are necessary to ssure maximum success of the ecruitment programme. The irst of these is *area assessment*. Before embarking on an am-itious recruiting programme, he guerilla leadership must nake a complete and exhaustive irea assessment which will nclude information about the complete social strata in the guerilla warfare operational irea. This assessment will in-clude the prevalent political notivations, an index of the social stratification of the irea, existing occupational specialities, and many other factors. An example of the itility of such an assessment is is follows. Area "X" contains several mineral and rock mines. The guerilla leaders know that very often mine workers make excellent demolitions specialists because of their utilisation of dynamite. The guerilla area assessment shows that Mr. "Y" does not entertain the same political belief as the govern-ment in power and the assess-ment also shows that Mr. "Y" is dissatisfied with his current class position and feels that the present government restricts the degree of social prominence that miners can attain. Obviously, Mr. "Y" will be a ready and attentive audience for the guerilla technique of *persuasion* (which will be discussed in detail later in the paper). The above example, while admittedly a simple one, does illustrate for the purpose of this short paper the value of an accurate and up-to-date area assessment which must be conducted by the guerilla leadership.

The second condition neces-sary to successful recruitment for the guerilla force is *security*. The existence of an adequate guerilla force security system is of paramount importance to the continual existence of the guerilla force. One of the best methods for the enemy to pene-trate the guerilla force is to utilise individual agents who, once in the guerilla force, pro-vide information to the enemy regarding guerilla movements and actions. Thus, is it extreme-ly important that the guerilla leadership be especially cautious in assessing the loyalty of guerilla recruits. Lieutenant Colonel William C. Wilkinson, who served with the O.S.S. in Burma in the Second World War, sums up the problems of security facing outside agents who are introduced to a strange area.

"In a new and underdeveloped guerilla area, it is extremely difficult to check each man to determine where his loyalties

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really lie and this becomes still more difficult when a language barrier exists. Each man was screened, insofar as possible, to determine his loyalty and whether he was joining with an active desire to fight. A basic error was made in recruiting, in that the group leader, without an adequate knowledge of Kachin traits, personalities, and past history of the individuals, personally interviewed each candidate. The errors which resulted from this selection showed up in the form of a revolt during training by five men desiring higher pay and later by the refusal of a few men to leave Ngumia for patrol or ambush. In retrospect, it would have been better to have selected one or two individuals about whose loyalty and desire to fight there was no question, and to have allowed them to examine applicants under the supervision of the group commander. Although this system is not perfect by any means, it did produce excellent results when finally adopted at Ngumba".[1]

Wilkinson's "retrospect technique" while primitive, was expedient for the moment and might very well be applicable in some future operation. This writer would suggest that Wilkinson's techniques be taken several steps further to insure adequate security. These further steps would include a questionnaire which would further establish the recruit's identity. The questionnaire would aid in establishing the recruit's true loyalties and motives and would also help the guerilla leadership determine the most profitable means of utilising the recruit. For example; if the recruit mentions on the questionnaire that he has had experience as a radio mechanic the guerilla leadership would consider utilising the individual in a communications position.

The length and the time permitted to complete this paper do not allow the writer to further develop this extremely important condition of a successful guerilla recruiting programme. Suffice to say that a guerilla force cannot just accept any recruit into the ranks. All recruits must be thoroughly screened. The most stringent methods will not insure that no agents will successfully infiltrate the guerilla movement, but it does insure that the majority of the agents will be detected before they have an opportunity to do any serious damage.

The third condition that deserves attention here is that the guerilla leadership must establish an effective *psychological operations programme*. The guerilla force must propagate the thought that their fight is a just one and that they will eventually achieve victory. They must also widely propagate the thought that the guerilla force is winning and shall continue to win. The enemy must be presented as an oppressor of basic human needs and rights. A continual objective of the guerilla force must be to encourage the population to identify psychologically and physically with the guerilla movement. The farmer

[1] "Problems of a Guerilla Leader", Military Review, November 1952, p. 26.

who donates a bag of grain has taken the first step in physically identifying with the movement. The motive that stimulates the gift may have been purely a selfish one such as fear that the guerillas might terrorise him if he did not make some overt show of approval of the guerilla movement. Regardless of motive, if the guerilla leadership is psychologically sophisticated, the farmer will soon be an ardent supporter of the movement. Upon receipt of the bag of grain the guerillas should praise the farmer as a true patriot. Perhaps Bayo explains the process most appropriately when he asks and then answers the question in the following way:

"How must a guerilla behave with farmers? No matter how much food may be obtained, it should be well paid for after having repeatedly thanked the proprietor and having reminded him that he is helping the revolution. Then the men should volunteer to repair things in the house; beds, closets, tables, etc. They will help the owner put fences up on the farm, to sow or to do any kind of manual work in order to demonstrate our affection and gratitude, and bring him over to our cause, so that those living in the house will be interested in our return."[2]

Much of what Bayo advocates is what Colonel Virgil Ney labels "propaganda of the deed".[3] Other examples of "propaganda of the deed" would be successes in combat against the enemy and material support from an outside power in the form of supplies parachuted into the given country. While "propaganda of the deed" is certainly effective, it must be reinforced by other psychological warfare operational techniques such as rumours, pamphlets, and informal lectures in order to insure that the maximum amount of people learn of the deeds.

We have thus far discussed certain operational conditions which should be realised by the guerilla force before the guerilla leadership can expect maximum response to their recruiting drive. The remainder of this paper will be devoted to specific techniques and/or procedures of recruitment which have been utilised in one form or another throughout the history of guerilla warfare. The three major procedures which are to be listed and elaborated on in this paper are here labelled by this author as *paid, forced,* and *persuaded*. They will be discussed in reverse order of historical frequency.

The paid procedure of guerilla recruitment is the least practised procedure of the three. Guerilla leadership will usually resort to this method only in cases where a unique technical skill is needed and the individual possessing the unique skill cannot be persuaded to perform the needed task by ideological or moral argument. Professional people such as chemists, phar-

[2] Alberto Bayo, "150 Questions For A Guerilla", ed. by Robert K. Brown (Boulder, Colorado, Panther Publications, 1963) p. 53.

[3] "Notes On Guerilla War". (Washington, D.C., Command Publications, 1961).

macists, and doctors of medicine are the most common types that might be induced to serve the guerillas by this means. There are actually very few cases of the utilisation of this technique in the history of guerilla warfare because of the many weaknesses inherent in the system. Guerilla leaders have been traditionally reluctant to practise this procedure because financial incentive is always subject to outbidding by the enemy. Drs. Jacobs and de Rochefort offer a particularly clear thought on this subject when they write:

"Material incentives alone are not sufficient to secure this cooperation to any sizeable extent because material incentives are not sufficient to overcome fears of betrayals, reprisals, etc. . . . Except for some entirely insignificant exceptions, no member of the French or Dutch resistance movement during the German occupation was tempted by material rewards into helping Allied agents. No possible profit was worth the risks of torture by the Gestapo or the death oven of Matthausen. Only ideological incentives can cause men to accept the dangers and fears involved in unconventional operations."[4]

The *forced* procedure of guerilla recruitment has become fairly common in the guerilla movements of the last twenty years. Basically, it is what the term force implies. Individuals are forced against their will to serve the guerilla cause. As in the case of the paid procedure above, professional people are often the individuals forced to serve the guerillas. The guerilla leadership will usually resort to this procedure rather than the *paid* procedure if the current local situation does not make it politically out of the question. In Greece, during the guerilla war from 1946-1949, the Communists often practised wholesale *forced* recruitment with seemingly mixed results. On this matter the late Field Marshal Alexander Papagos wrote:

"Force was used both directly, by the compulsory enlistment of the population, and also indirectly. Under the latter method, individuals refusing to join the Communist ranks were dubbed collaborators of the enemy, a charge which involved the death penalty or at least the burning down of the delinquent's home. Peasants who saw this happen and feared similar treatment joined the Communist ranks."[5]

Since the support of the population is needed for eventual success of the guerilla forces it would seem that *forced* recruitment on a large scale would be ineffectual and out of the question since it would antagonise the population. And yet, "intensive forced recruiting inside Greece netted approximately 24,000 civilians"[6] for the Communist ranks. It is

4. "Ideological Operations In Unconventional Warfare", in "Guerilla Warfare Readings", ed. by F. M. Osanka (Washington, D.C., Human Resources Research Office, 1962), pp. 168-169.

5. "Guerilla Warfare", in "Modern Guerilla Warfare" ed. by F. M. Osanka (New York, The Free Press, 1962), p. 231.

6. Lieutenant Colonel Edward R. Wainhouse. "Guerilla War in Greece, 1946-49; a Case Study", p. 224.

interesting to observe that students of the 1946-49 guerilla war in Greece list the lack of population support as one of the major factors contributing to the Communists' defeat in that guerilla war.

The final procedure of guerilla recruitment to be discussed here is the *persuaded* procedure. This is the most often used procedure and by far the soundest. The guerilla leadership must persuade the people that the guerilla fight is just and that the eventual victory of the guerilla movement is inevitable. Appeals must be made to the national aspirations, popular causes, and the population's dissatisfactions with the present form of government. Very often the guerilla leadership tries to avoid ". . . specific pronouncements at the inception of the organisation. By remaining vague, they are able to accommodate individual aspirations and thus increase their ranks."[7] The leadership of the French resistance movement against the Nazi occupation forces in World War Two seemed to have adhered to this policy of "accommodating individual aspirations" and thereby gained the support and talent of many different classes of the French social system. As Gordon Wright points out, "the working class furnished most of the militants, the 'infantry', of the underground, but it was the bourgeoisie that furnished most of the organisers and leaders."[8] Historically, the enemy of the guerillas have been instrumental in aiding the guerillas in achieving success using the persuasion procedure. The enemy does this by harshly mistreating the population. General Alexander Orlov, formerly a member of the Soviet NKVD, vividly describes how harsh treatment by the governing powers serves to escalate popular support for, and the number of recruits for, the guerilla movement.

"Peaceful peasants and other groups of hard-working people do not take up arms lightly against superior forces of the government, unless they have been driven to it by unendurable hardships, onerous taxation, property confiscations, and naked violence. Before armed resistance succeeds in gaining land reforms and concessions from greedy landlords and corrupt government, peaceful life is disrupted, the rural economy is disorganised, trade is at a standstill, whole communities are devastated, and lives are destroyed. It is because the injustices and sufferings have reached the boiling point that the most desperate and determined men take whatever weapon they can lay their hands on — from fowling pieces to axes and clubs — and retire into the hills and woods, from where they stage fierce raids on the estates of their feudal overlords and local police outposts. The men become outlaws. The authority of the government is defied. Punitive detachments of rural police arrive to track them down.

[7] J. K. Zawodny, "Unconventional Warfare", The American Scholar, Summer 1962, p. 393.

[8] "Reflection on the French Resistance", Political Science Quarterly, September, 1962, p. 339.

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People suspected of aiding the rebels are persecuted. Many are arrested. Order is gradually restored. The authorities learn from the population that the outlaws have fled to another country. But when everything seems quiet and the detachments are getting ready to depart, the rebels come down from the hills in the middle of the night, overwhelm the sentries, destroy the police force, and make away with their rifles and ammunition. The population begins to regard the guerilla band not only as a fighting unit, but also as a political entity united by the ideal of freeing the inhabitants from the arbitrary rule of the landlords and their feudalistic regime."[9]

Often, the *persuasion* process simply amounts to the guerilla force making it known that they are accepting recruits. Many youths will volunteer for excitement while other types will join the guerillas in order to avoid police or government persecution. Needless to say, of the three procedures of guerilla recruitment, the *persuasion* procedure is the most effective.

In summary, it has been demonstrated that there are three major historical techniques of guerilla recruitment. These are the *paid, forced,* and *persuaded* procedures. In order for these procedures, and particularly the *persuasion* procedure, to be most effective three distinct conditions must exist. These conditions were labelled in this paper as *area assessment, security and psychological operations programme.*

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