

Running head: THE NEW FIGHT

The New Fight

Timothy Dudley Jr.

United States Army Sergeants Major Academy

Class 58

SGM Robert Hurst

7 December 2007

### Abstract

This paper reviews the United States failed attempt to combat the insurgencies of El Salvador, Somalia, and Haiti. The United States administration failed to implement lessons learned during each of these conflicts. We did not establish political, economical, and psychological success. We will continue to struggle with the current conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq until we change our doctrine.

## The New Fight

Modern conflict is defined increasingly in terms of insurgencies. With the end of the Cold War, the occurrence of classic, large-scale conflicts between armies of two or more sovereign nations have significantly diminished. Yet a different kind of conflict has progressively taken center stage: insurgency and counter-insurgency (SENLIS, 2007, p. 3).

The United States has had limited success battling insurgency over the last thirty years because the Army's training and doctrine was based on a Cold War scenario. Since the conclusion of the Vietnam War, the United States Army's training and doctrine addressed only what it felt was the greatest threat to our nation, and did not prepare for insurgency operations.

## El Salvador

The United States viewed El Salvador as an extension of the general East-West superpower conflict, in particular the Sandinista takeover in Nicaragua. The primary objective of the United States was to do what ever was necessary to return the situation to normalcy. The United States wanted the insurgency resolved quickly. The conflict would be political, moral and military hard work.

The Salvadoran government knew the United States had the resources to put together a successful plan. The senior policy maker's were reluctant and failed to develop any synchronized effort to deal with the situation in El Salvador. The Salvadoran security forces and their United States advisors concentrated their primary efforts on finding a "smoking gun" that would clearly and legally incriminate Nicaragua, Cuba, North Vietnam and the Soviet Union in the support of the insurgents. By ignoring or refusing to

engage the guerrillas' sources of support, the cross-border sanctuaries provided insurgents political and military life support. This gave the insurgents their own "Ho Chi Minh Trail".

Some specific and definite lessons can be learned from the Salvadoran experience. One important insight is to know the fundamental problem or threat. The El Salvador threat is multifaceted but aimed at one objective, providing a stable government. Another important insight is the defeat of military forces should not be the central objective of either side in a long-drawn-out struggle. The United States failed to properly organize and equip Salvadoran forces for counterinsurgency operations.

### Somalia

The roadmap to foreign policy failure by the Clinton administration, which included bouts of uncertainty combined with inaction or inconsistency, began in Mogadishu, Somalia, barely five months into his first term in office.

By the time President Clinton took office in January 1993, the American military presence had reached approximately 25,000 troops. During the first few months of his presidency, President Clinton worked to reduce the American force to just over 4,000. Then, in June 1993, the plan took a severe hit when Aidid's clan, who controlled most of the capital city of Mogadishu, killed twenty-four Pakistani peacekeepers, leading to a failed raid and the infamous "Black Hawk Down" incident.

On the basis of the problem in general, the United States should have stayed out of this civil conflict completely, as there were no United States economic or national security interests at risk. With no clear objective going in or any clear plan for exiting the conflict, the United States inherited a big problem. However, because no one in the administration took ownership of the strategy it began to rapidly deteriorate, culminating

in a humiliating action for the world to see. The United States owned a stronger, smarter, better trained and equipped military force. Due to the lack of leadership and preparation within the administration, they suffered defeat to a group of insurgents armed with AK-47s.

### Haiti

During the early 90's the Clinton administration was forced to develop a foreign policy for Haiti. They had two objectives: develop a strong democratic government and generate a program through United States aid that would allow Haiti to grow economically.

The powers of the Western Hemisphere had concerns about the removal of the newly elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. They feared this military revolution would motivate the rebels in their regions to form an insurgency. The Organization of American States and United Nations negotiators was formed to resolve the situation.

The mission of the negotiators was to force the insurgents to recognize the legitimate government. They would use economic and political pressure to achieve their goals.

The president of Haiti had a different agenda. He manipulated the United States power to reestablish the former dictatorship ran by Papa Doc Duvalier.

The current leadership is working on changing the regime for Iraq. The Iraqi government is unlike the Haitian government: with ten years of imposed sanctions on their country, the people of Iraq are economically stronger than the Haitian people. Haiti is the most underprivileged country in the Western Hemisphere. The Bush administration has an opportunity to learn from the mistakes of the Clinton administration that believed that replacing a regime would be quick and simple. The United States failed to provide the people of Haiti a credible leader.

## Conclusion

As you can see, today's Army should be innovative when combating insurgency for two main reasons. First, the historical success of previous insurgent tactics of Zedong, Viet Cong, El Salvador, Somalia, and Haiti, but the most importantly, the enemy's ability to quickly adapt to old and current doctrine.

References

Dykes, D. *A Failure in Somalia: Blackhawk Down*. Retrieved 26 October 2007, from

<http://www.helium.com/tm/492104/november-william-jefferson-clinton>

Manwaring, M. G., & Prisk, C. (1990). *Strategic View of Insurgencies: From El Salvador* (8ed.).

Washington, DC: The Institute For National Strategic Studies National Defense University.

Pezzullo, L. (2002). Haiti's lessons for U.S. leaders; Iraq: it takes more than bombs and troops to bring democracy and comfort to a country accustomed to dictatorship. In (Ed.), (p.1-3).

Baltimore: The Baltimore Sun.

SENLIS. (2007). *Countering the Insurgency in Afghanistan: Losing Friends and Making Enemies* [Brochure].

**Total Direct Quoted Words (TDQW) =**  
 Total number of words that are directly  
 quoted in paper

**Total Numbers of Words (TNW) =**  
 Total numbers of words within the body  
 of paper

**% Quoted Material (QM) =** Total  
 percentage of quoted material used  
 within your paper

**% OF PAPER COMPRISED OF  
 DIRECT QUOTES**

$$\frac{\text{TDQM}}{\text{TNW}} \times 100 = \text{\% of Quoted Material (QM)}$$

48
915

 x  
100  
=
 

5.25
------

 % of  
Quoted  
Material  
(QM)

$$\text{TDQM} \div \text{TNW} \times 100 = \% \text{ QM}$$