

INSURGENCY CAMPAIGNS, YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Insurgency campaigns, yesterday and today

Comparisons between the Victoro campaign, and today's insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan

SGM Dennis J. Woods

United States Army Sergeants Major Academy

Class 58 student # 122

SGM Britton R06

February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Unclassified

## INTRODUCTION

SGM Dennis J. Woods

Class 58

### UNITED STATES SERGEANTS MAJOR ACADEMY

Comparison between the Victoro counter insurgency campaign following the American Civil War, and the insurgency campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. Highlighting similarities between these campaigns and other events in history suggest that successful tactics' from the past may be successful in the present.

#### Thesis statement

As the war on terror takes its place in history as the first war of the new century, lessons learned from previous wars on terror might still apply.

## OUTLINE

- I. Introduction.
- II. Abstract.
- III. Comparisons.
- IV. Conclusion.

## Abstract

By directly contrasting the Victoro campaign to today's modern operations proves a point that is so often repeated in church "The devil doesn't have any new tricks just new faces". The tactics used by the enemy today and the methods employed to defeat him can be traced to the Indian Wars of the American Frontier following the United States Civil War.

.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction.....i.

II. Abstract.....ii

III. Comparisons.....1

IV. Conclusion.....4.

By directly contrasting the Victorio campaign to today's modern operations proves a point that is so often repeated in church "The devil doesn't have any new tricks just new faces". There are many parallels through out history but today's first war of the new century seems a lot like the first insurgent war of the last. Just as the US. Army down sized after the end of the American Civil war; the US government immediately deployed the Army across the frontier in small garrison forts. There they fought an illusive and resourceful enemy whose culture based on warfare proved difficult to defeat.

Today as then, the US Army down sized after the cold war ended, and drew down from 18 divisions to 10. The Clinton administration then almost immediately deployed the Army in limited numbers to peace operations around the world. Many soldiers during this time began to refer to them selves as "Meals on wheels or snacks on tracks".

During the Victorio campaign as today the US Army had to deal with a hostile press, while perusing an enemy that hid among the population. During the Indian wars, this human shield operation took place on the reservations, our rules of engagement and the Indian affairs bureau provided limited shelter for the Apaches of Victorio's war band. Safe on the reservation he was able to choose when and where to attack.

In today's fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, the enemy seeks shelter and fights among the population also using them as human shields just as the Apache Indian's of Victorio's time. By fighting among the population, today's insurgents also choose when and where to fight, and has

the added luxury of using our own morals, and rules of engagement as well as the international press against us.

100 + years ago in the Victorio campaign the Apaches received support from local tribes; and stole what they needed as they moved. Today's insurgents also receive shelter and support from the locals as well as support from Syria, Iran, and other Islamic states and charities. By comparison, our logistics originate half a world away and are difficult to transport, and maintain in the harsh environment of the Middle East. The movement and storage of our supplies also provides soft targets for the insurgents.

Another parallel between the Victorio campaign and today is the use of international borders. In Victorio's time, the Apaches could seek shelter from the US and Mexican governments by simply crossing the border causing any pursuing force to halt operations in order to avoid a larger conflict. Today as then the enemy uses the same border tactics to his advantage. In Afghanistan, they operate from the Iranian and Pakistan border areas, and in Iraq, they use the Syrian and Iranian border areas. Just as the Apache Indians had safe zones inside the American borders in the form of reservations, today's insurgents have the local Mosques that operate as a command post, weapons storage facility, hospital, and rally point. Using international law that we seem to be the only ones following, they are able to hide and stage for attacks.

Other similarities between these two insurgent campaigns can be drawn between the Apaches willingness to die in the service of his leader, and the Islamic insurgent's willingness to die in the name of his God. During the Victorio campaign the Indians mobility depended on the horse,

different from other Indian tribes of the period the Apaches never developed a kindred spirit with the horse and as such was able to ride him to death, steal another, and use the horse carcass as an instant supply point. The US 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry had to conserve their horses and rely on slow vulnerable supply wagons.

Today's insurgents flush with oil money, rely on modern motor transport operating among the population, using local cars, trains and commercial aircraft for transportation. A common trait among the Apache Indians and the Islamic fighter of today is that if they find themselves needing another mount, they just steal it!

By comparison, our forces must use highly visible up armored vehicles and travel in protected convoys, our long logistic supply trains also use special up armored vehicles and require specialized support mechanics. All of the logistical difficulties' that we endure the enemy avoids by simply hiding among the civilians, and choosing when and where to fight.

Defeat for Victorio was set in motion by the US 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> cavalry by controlling the water resources and forcing him to attack prepared positions. Today the same tactics applied in Iraq, and Afghanistan, are providing results. By controlling the local transportation network, and empowering the locals to identify, and fight the insurgents. Many of these operations now take place in the enemy's very own self identified rally point, the Mosque.

## CONCLUSION

Similarities' between the style of warfare, and tactics used by Victoros Apaches, and today's Islamic opportunity fighters are numerous. The one glaring exception is a difference in there work ethic. The Apache Indians would go to great length's to conduct an attack where as the Islamic fighters of today only conduct an attack if they can drive to it. By identifying and controlling resources use by the insurgents be they Apache or Islamic the conditions for there defeat can be set.

## References

Insert References Here.

Google.com the Victoro campaign.

Yahoo.com the Victoro campaign.

USASMA data disk #6 The Victoro insurgency page 156-189.

The authors personal experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq.