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8 April 1966

A NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY FOR LOW INTENSITY WARFARE

By

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Colonel, Infantry

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The continuing constraint imposed by the thermonuclear weapons, combined with the Communist strategy of indirect aggression, indicates that the most likely military threat to the United States in the next fifteen years will be low intensity war arising from Communist-generated insurgency in the developing nations. The purpose of this paper is to propose a United States national military strategy to cope with that threat. Conclusions drawn from the analysis of insurgency warfare form the basis of the proposed United States national military strategy to meet the threat of low intensity war.

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A National Military Strategy for Low Intensity Warfare

by

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Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
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SUMMARY

With the advent of thermonuclear weapons, aggressively-minded nations have been constrained to avoid becoming involved in large-scale conflict and to seek some reasonably safe form of aggression. As a consequence, Russia and Red China have decided upon a course of indirect aggression to further the spread of communism and to bring about the disintegration of the West. The Communists have made their intentions clear and have given ample proof that their indirect aggression will be in the form of "wars of national liberation" which they will incite and support in the developing nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The continuing constraint imposed by thermonuclear weapons, combined with the Communist strategy of indirect aggression, indicates that the most likely military threat to the United States in the next fifteen years will be low intensity war arising from Communist-generated insurgency in the developing nations. The purpose of this paper is to propose a United States national military strategy to cope with that threat.

A necessary first step in the formulation of strategy is an understanding of the threat against which the strategy will be directed. Thus, the first chapter of this paper is devoted to an examination of the threat posed by the Communist doctrine of "wars of national liberation." In succeeding chapters, various aspects of insurgency warfare are analyzed in an effort to arrive at conclusions from which a national military strategy can be drawn. Following are the more significant questions to which the analysis addresses itself: (1) If Communist-led insurgency erupts in a developing nation, what factors must the United States consider in deciding whether to assist the threatened government? (2) What are the obligations of the other nations of the free world in combatting Communist-led insurgency? (3) What measures can a government threatened by insurgency take to win the support of its people and how can the United States contribute to that end? (4) If America is rendering assistance to a government fighting insurgency, and if the insurgent forces are receiving substantial military assistance from an external source, what special problems are posed and how should the United States react? (5) What kind of military forces should the United States have to conduct counterinsurgency operations?

Conclusions drawn from the analysis of insurgency warfare form the basis of the proposed United States national military strategy to meet the threat of low intensity war. Following is a summary of the proposed strategy:

1. The United States should not overextend itself by the indiscriminate support of governments which are threatened by

insurgency. The threat to America's security and related vital interests must be the dominant factor in deciding whether or not to render assistance. In some instances it will be against our interests to assist. In others--particularly in the Western Hemisphere--United States unilateral intervention may be demanded to thwart Communist ambitions.

2. The United States should make every effort to have the other developed nations of the free world provide a fair share of the resources required to defeat Communist-led insurgencies. America should also seek agreement from these nations that they will provide specific troops when the occasion arises for counterinsurgency operations in specified geographic regions.

3. United States military doctrine on low intensity war must stress both the importance of the support of the people and the principles involved in helping the host government to gain this support.

4. If United States military forces are committed against insurgent forces which are receiving substantial military aid from an external source, and if the aid cannot be eliminated by local actions, the United States should act to cut off the aid by applying selective and measured pressure on the source nation.

5. Once the United States decides to assist a government undergoing insurrection, it should then make every effort to insure the defeat of the insurgents at the earliest possible moment so that they cannot build up their strength and make their defeat more difficult and costly.

6. The United States should have forces in being which permit a selective and measured response to wars of insurgency. This could be realized through a combination of Joint Counterinsurgency Task Forces as suggested in this paper, a mobile light infantry division with necessary support, and conventional general purpose forces trained for counterinsurgency operations.

7. United States military forces deployed to assist a government fighting insurgency should not be committed in a combat role except as a last resort.

CHAPTER I

THE THREAT

Many changes in the international order will inevitably occur in the coming years. The inability to predict the nature and extent of these changes increases the difficulty of national security planning. It does seem safe to assume, however, that the most drastic changes will take place in the developing nations, and that the three principal groups involved in the transformation will be the West, the Communist nations, and the developing states. Since Russia and Red China have clearly evidenced their intent to incite and support "wars of national liberation" as a means of bringing the underdeveloped nations into the Communist camp, it is essential that the United States have a national military strategy to meet this particular threat. The purpose of the ensuing passages will be to formulate and suggest such a strategy for the next fifteen years. As a preliminary to consideration of strategy, let us examine the nature of the Communist threat.

The spectrum of war embraces a broad range of possibilities, beginning at the lower end with cold war and culminating in general thermonuclear war. Because of the threat of mass destruction implicit in thermonuclear weapons, the nations possessing these weapons have been constrained to avoid any level of conflict which might result ultimately in their use. As a consequence, Russia has been compelled to search for some reasonably safe form

of aggression, one which would minimize the risks of escalation into a large-scale war and which, at the same time, would further the objectives of spreading communism and bringing about the disintegration of the West. Apparently Russia has concluded that the answer to the problem lies in fomenting and supporting "wars of national liberation" in the underdeveloped states of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Red China also advocates this form of indirect aggression although not necessarily because of restraints imposed by thermonuclear weapons.

Russia and Communist China have clearly announced the direction of their strategy with respect to the underdeveloped areas. In Khrushchev's now-famous speech of January 6, 1961, the Soviet Premier first addressed himself to the need to avoid those forms of conflict which could conceivably escalate into nuclear warfare. Turning then to the subject of "wars of national liberation" within the developing areas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, he emphasized the importance to the Sino-Soviet bloc of the success of the "anti-imperialist" movements in these regions and he pledged aid to these movements as an "international duty" of all Communists. Referring to internal "wars of national liberation," he stated:

> Can such wars flare up in the future? They can. Can there be such uprisings? There can. But these are wars which are national uprisings. In other words can conditions be created where a people will lose their patience and rise in arms? They can. What is the attitude of the Marxists toward such uprisings? A most positive one. . . . These are uprisings against rotten reactionary regimes, against the colonizers. The Communists fully

> support such just wars and march in the front rank with the peoples waging liberation struggles.[1]

The import of Khrushchev's remarks became even clearer when he pointed out the existence of Communist parties in some fifty countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America and stated that these parties are responsible for promoting the theories of Marxism-Leninism within their nations. Khrushchev's remarks clearly indicate a doctrine of active Soviet involvement in insurgency wars to achieve Communist objectives. Nothing has occurred since Khrushchev's downfall to indicate that there has been any change in the Soviet doctrine.

Communist China's most recent endorsement of national liberation wars was contained in an article written by Lin Piao, Vice Premier and Minister of National Defense of the People's Republic of China. The article, which was released on September 2, 1965, stated: "Today, the conditions are more favorable than ever before for the waging of people's wars by the revolutionary peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America against US imperialism and its lackeys."[2] After denouncing the United States for "aggression" in Vietnam and predicting that its forces will suffer defeat by the Vietnamese people, Lin Piao adds:

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[1]US Congress, Senate, A Summary and Interpretive Analysis of Khrushchev's Speech of 6 January 1961 prepared by the Legislative Reference Service, Library of Congress, p. 18.

[2]Foreign Broadcast Information Service, "Long Live the Victory of the People's War," Daily Report Supplement, Far East, No. 171 (4S), 3 Sep. 1965, p. 25.

> History has proved and will go on proving that people's war is the most effective weapon against US imperialism and its lackeys. All revolutionary people will learn to wage people's war against US imperialism and its lackeys. They will take up arms, learn to fight battles and become skilled in waging people's war, though they have not done so before. US imperialism, like a mad bull dashing from place to place, will finally be burned to ashes in the blazing fires of the people's wars it has provoked by its own actions.[3]

Lin Piao goes on record with respect to what is demanded of the Communists in connection with "wars of national liberation" by stating: "The socialist countries should regard it as their internationalist duty to support the people's revolutionary struggles in Asia, Africa, and Latin America."[4]

The threat which the Communist statements pose to the United States and the rest of the free world is obvious. That this is no empty threat becomes abundantly clear when one considers the number of Communist-instigated and supported insurgencies which have occurred since World War II. The Cuban and Vietnamese insurgencies illustrate the problems which the Communist efforts have created for the West, and in particular the United States.

The Communists have selected the underdeveloped nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America as their targets for two excellent reasons. First, these nations hold an estimated 1.3 billion people

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[3] Ibid., p. 27.
[4] Ibid., p. 22.

and contain a wealth of natural resources. The advantages which would accrue to the Communists, and the problems which would be posed for the West if the bulk of these human and natural resources were to come under Communist control, are too obvious to require further comment. Second, conditions in the developing states make them excellent breeding grounds for the type of indirect aggression which the Communists have adopted. These states contain the instability and discontent upon which the seeds of revolt germinate and thrive. Needless to say, the Communists plan both to sow the seeds and reap the harvest.

There is no need for us to dwell at length on the difficulties facing the underdeveloped nations since they have been well covered by the American press and other public information media. However, since these nations have been selected by the Communists as the principal battleground for the continuing ideological struggle with the West, let us review a few of the factors which have earned them this dubious privilege.

Following World War II, a host of colonies achieved their independence and emerged as new nations. Unfortunately, many were not yet prepared for independence and, consequently, when the colonial powers withdrew, the indigenous governments were confronted with a multitude of political, economic, and social problems which they still have not resolved. The resulting disorder and instability have made these states highly vulnerable to the subversive

tactics of aggressively-minded nations. Additionally, the unsettled conditions have been particularly inviting to ambitious men within the struggling nations, men who in many instances would not hesitate to embrace communism if it might elevate them to power.

Other states have enjoyed independence for many years but have not developed political and social structures designed to meet the problems pressing in on them. A number of Latin American countries fall into this category. Political and financial power is concentrated in the hands of a relatively small number of people while the masses struggle desperately for the bare necessities of life. Although reforms have been initiated in some states to improve conditions, in some instances they have been inadequate and in others it will be some time before there is any noticeable impact. As a consequence, the natives of these countries are prime targets for revolutionary propaganda and subversion.

Many of the people of the underdeveloped nations are no longer satisfied with a way of life which offers little more than an opportunity to survive. Through their widened contact and communication with modern societies, they have gained an awareness of what life is like in these societies and, as a consequence, they aspire to a better way of life for themselves. Moreover, they expect to see a rapid improvement in conditions, a somewhat unrealistic expectation at best. Thus, when little or no improvement takes place, the people become frustrated and dissatisfied. The situation described here is sometimes referred to as the "revolution of rising expectations."

The conditions outlined above make the developing nations highly vulnerable to Communist subversion. The nature of this vulnerability is succinctly stated in a study concerning the emerging nations which was prepared at the Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In discussing the aspirations of the people in the developing states, the study states:

> But if their aspirations are being frustrated, if the leadership is rigidly traditional or incompetent, or opposed to change, and if the new aspirants are being given no role to play in building a new society, they may well conclude that their aims can be advanced only by violent overthrow of the whole existing structure. In such circumstances extremist philosophies like communism, arguing that violent revolution followed by authoritarian control is the only route to modernization, will have great appeal.[5]

In his treatise on counterinsurgency warfare, John S. Pustay provides some insight into the Communist modus operandi for subverting the underdeveloped nations:

> Harnessing the rising expectations of the people, the Communists present themselves as being for changes that will bring about a satiation of these expectations. Then they begin their follow-up campaign which is directed against internal conditions--arbitrary or corrupt government, inefficient administration, the immorality of the government leaders, the illegality of the government itself, high taxes, feudalism--or against foreigners, foreign ownership, and foreign intervention. . . . There generally is no promotion of a specific ideology, except perhaps nationalism. The object is to discredit the existing government and the existing social system.[6]

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[5]Max F. Millikan, and Donald L. M. Blackmer, ed., The Emerging Nations: Their Growth and United States Policy, pp. 95-96.

[6]John S. Pustay, Counterinsurgency Warfare, p. 56.

Since the end of World War II, the Communists have made numerous efforts to gain control of free nations through use of the above mentioned techniques. These efforts have generated a new awareness of unconventional warfare, and words such as guerrilla, insurgent, and counterinsurgent have become a part of our everyday vocabulary. Additionally, a certain mystique has been ascribed to this form of warfare, largely because of the publicity given to the mumbo jumbo used by the Communists in outlining their theory of unconventional war. Insurgency warfare and guerrilla operations are not something new which the Communists have devised. Instead, as practiced by the Communists, they are adaptations of traditional principles of irregular warfare which have been interwoven with the political-ideological theories of Marx and Lenin. There is nothing mysterious about insurgency warfare nor are guerrillas invincible. That they are not invincible is borne out by the defeats which they suffered in Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus, Greece, and the Philippines.[7] The intent of the foregoing remarks is to put insurgency warfare in its proper perspective, and not to give the impression that defeating guerrilla movements is a simple matter. On the contrary, as has been illustrated in Vietnam, defeating insurgents can be a difficult, costly, and protracted task.

The Communists have clearly indicated by words and deeds that they have adopted insurgency warfare as the form of conflict for

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[7]Otto Heilbrunn, Partisan Warfare, p. 170.

their aggressive actions in the international arena. Consequently, it appears that, barring some miscalculation leading to a large-scale conflict, the principal military threat to the United States in the next fifteen years will be low intensity conflict resulting from Communist-incited and supported insurgencies in the under-developed nations. It is essential, therefore, that the United States have a national military strategy which is designed to meet and cope with this threat. The purpose of the following passages will be to suggest such a strategy based upon an examination of some of the more significant aspects of insurgency warfare.

CHAPTER II

THE DECISION TO ASSIST A COUNTERINSURGENT

When Communist-led insurgency erupts in a developing nation, the United States is faced with making some prompt and important decisions. These decisions must be based upon America's vital interests as seen at the time, and the courses of action decided upon must be such as to best serve these interests. Since there are differences of opinion among Americans concerning our vital interests and how they can best be served, and since this matter will be touched on in subsequent discussion, let us consider it briefly before proceeding.

Rarely is there complete agreement among Americans as to the extent to which our vital interests are threatened by occurrences in or actions taken by other nations. Moreover, even when individuals are in general agreement on the threat, they may hold divergent views as to what courses of action in response to the threat would best serve America's interests. The foregoing is evident in the dissenting views which have been expressed by government officials and other responsible individuals regarding the present Administration's objectives and courses of action with respect to the war in Vietnam. It is important, however, that criticism of the Administration's decisions be viewed in the proper perspective. Honest differences of opinion do exist among humans,

and these can be expressed freely and publicly in our democratic society. In fact, public debate is an important element of the democratic process.

The American practice of public discussion and criticism plays a significant rôle in the determination of our vital interests as well as the courses of action which support them. Although these interests and actions are in the final analysis a political judgment of those government officials having the power to make decisions, any decision of importance requires that the public be informed and that an adequate consensus of public support be developed and maintained.[1] In the process of gaining this consensus, divergent views are presented to the American people through newspapers, magazines, radio, television, forums, speeches, and other such media. This not only provides the people with a basis for arriving at informed individual judgments, but also helps to crystallize the vital interests and the policy instrumentalities which support them.

We are living in a world of dynamic change. As a consequence, those national goals and policies which were valid yesterday are not necessarily valid today. There must be a continuing reappraisal of America's choice of national interests and foreign policies so that those retained or adopted are judicious and realistic in terms

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[1]Norman J. Padelford, and George A. Lincoln, The Dynamics of International Politics, pp. 235 and 280.

of present and reasonably predictable conditions, threats, and challenges. Since America's most vital interests are tied to security, these must be the dominant interests in guiding United States policies and courses of action in international affairs. Decisions concerning these interests will be of paramount importance because of current Communist international ambitions and objectives.

With these brief remarks concerning vital interests as a backdrop, let us now consider some of the decisions which will face the United States when Communist-led insurgency erupts in a developing nation.

In some instances the question will be whether the United States should intervene without being asked to do so by the threatened government and conceivably, because of the urgency of the matter, without giving advance notice to those friendly governments and international organizations having a legitimate interest. It is obvious that it would be preferable for America to receive a request for assistance and for her to furnish advance notice of her intentions to appropriate parties. However, this may not be practicable in some instances. Such was the case in April 1965 when, in the absence of any positive action by the Organization of American States, President Johnson dispatched United States military forces to the Dominican Republic to thwart Communist efforts

to overthrow the government and to seize power. Prompt action was essential in this instance, both to protect American citizens and property and to prevent the Communists from gaining another foothold in the Western Hemisphere.

President Johnson's decision to intervene unilaterally was in accord with a policy expressed by the late President Kennedy shortly after the Bay of Pigs disaster when he addressed the American Society of Newspaper Editors. At that time he stated:

> Let the record show that our restraint is not inexhaustible. Should it ever appear that the inter-American doctrine of noninterference merely conceals or excuses a policy of nonaction--if the nations of this hemisphere should fail to meet their commitments against outside Communist penetration--then I want it clearly understood that this Government will not hesitate in meeting its primary obligations which are the security of our nation.
>
> Should that time ever come, we do not intend to be lectured on 'intervention' by those whose character was stamped for all time on the bloody streets of Budapest.[2]

President Kennedy's remarks were prophetic, for criticism certainly did arise as a result of America's intervention in the Dominican Republic. The United States was criticized by the Communists and some Latin American nations for allegedly interfering in the internal affairs of another state. Moreover, some responsible Americans were critical of the President's decision. This prompted

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[2]Tom Wicker, "A Johnson Doctrine?," New York Times, 5 May 1965, p. 14.

the United States House of Representatives to take unusual action to indicate its support of President Johnson's Dominican policy. On September 21, 1965, the Washington Post reported:

> The House adopted a resolution yesterday endorsing unilateral use of force by the United States or any other Western Hemisphere country to prevent a Communist takeover anywhere in this hemisphere.
>
> Approved 312 to 52, the resolution has no force in law, but merely states the 'sense of the House.' It mentions no countries, but seemed tailored to give approval to the United States intervention in the Dominican Republic last spring and to like situations in the future.[3]

It can be seen from the foregoing that there is a strong body of support among responsible Americans for a policy of unilateral intervention to prevent the Communists from seizing control of additional nations in the Western Hemisphere. This policy certainly should not be inflexible since in some instances it may be against America's best interests to intervene unilaterally. However, unless there are compelling reasons to the contrary, the United States should not hesitate to intervene unilaterally if it appears that this is the only means of preventing the Communists from forcefully taking over one of the developing nations of the Western Hemisphere. Such action seems fully justified in light of America's experience with Castro's Cuba.

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[3]Richard L. Lyons, "Americas' Use of Force Endorsed," The Washington Post, 21 Sep. 1965, p. A1.

Let us turn now to a situation wherein a nation asks the United States for assistance in fighting insurgency. Important considerations and decisions will also arise when this occurs. The overriding consideration, of course, must be the threat which the insurrection poses to America's security and other vital interests. Although the United States has granted economic and military aid to many governments to assist them in their struggle toward progress and stability, each instance in which additional action is requested must be carefully considered on its own merits. America should not overextend her protective and supporting arm by providing more aid than her national security actually requires nor should she extend aid which is otherwise ill-advised.

It would be foolish, for example, to help an obviously repressive regime to fight insurgency. The regime will ultimately be overthrown and, because the United States supported it, the succeeding government and the people will be ill-disposed toward America, rejecting our friendship and conceivably forming alliances which threaten our interests.[4]

There is ample evidence that American officials have not been infallible in their judgment of actual and potential heads of foreign governments. Errors in judgment regarding the designs and ideological

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[4]Max F. Millikan, and Donald L. M. Blackmer, ed., The Emerging Nations: Their Growth and United States Policy, p. 111.

beliefs of Mao Tse-tung and Fidel Castro shaped American policy so that it helped them to rise to power.[5, 6] The seriousness of these errors is now only too evident. It is also generally recognized that American policy supported and encouraged the overthrow of President Diem in Vietnam. This led to additional coups and to political and administrative chaos which seriously affected the war effort against the Communists. In her book, Our Vietnam Nightmare, Marguerite Higgins gives an excellent account of the shortsightedness of those Americans who shaped the policy which led to Diem's downfall. After describing the chaos and lawlessness that followed Diem's death, she states:

> In 1964-65 in Vietnam the tragic and vicious circle was completed when some Americans, including many who cried the loudest for Diem's scalp, began using the coup-ridden political situation as an excuse for urging 'disengagement' from Vietnam, offering as an excuse its instability--the instability that the United States itself had done the most to create. It's like ordering a man's hand chopped off and then condemning him to death because he is physically disfigured.[7]

To err is human, but America cannot afford errors which cause her to back the wrong horse when the stakes are so high.

It is obvious that the United States cannot arbitrarily be against all revolutions since, as history shows, some are fully justified. However, if the United States should decide to assist

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[5]"After 19 Years: New Light on Why China was Lost," US News & World Report, 2 Apr. 1962, pp. 84-86.

[6]Earl E. T. Smith, The Fourth Floor, pp. 115-118.

[7]Marguerite Higgins, Our Vietnam Nightmare, p. 303.

in putting down a justifiable revolution solely to prevent the Communists from gaining control of the threatened government, then the United States must be prepared to do everything in its power to help eliminate the conditions which caused the people to rebel. It is pointed out, however, that this may be a difficult task since it is unlikely that the United States will be in a position to compel the government concerned to adopt measures which it opposes.

Senator Frank Church, a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, lends support to the foregoing views in his article titled, "How Many Dominican Republics and Vietnams Can We Take On?," which appeared in the New York Times Magazine of November 28, 1965. Senator Church discusses the serious threat of revolution which exists in many countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and he argues convincingly that the United States must not be a self-appointed fireman scurrying to quench every revolutionary blaze. Senator Church states:

> The causes of these impending revolutions are essentially indigenous, whatever the name of the ideology proclaimed or the colors of the banners unfurled. Regardless of the outcome in Vietnam, we shall have to live in a world beset with guerrilla wars for many years to come.
>
> In these circumstances, we should start to exercise a prudent restraint and develop a foreign policy more closely tied to a sober assessment of our own national interests. . . .
>
> * * * * *
>
> Emphatically, this does not mean that we should ignore Communist-infested guerrilla wars in the

> future; rather, it means we should keep our intervention commensurate, in each case, with what we as a nation really have at stake.[8]

In summary, the United States should not overextend itself by the indiscriminate support of governments which are threatened by revolution. The threat to America's security and related vital interests must be the dominant factors in deciding whether to lend assistance. In some instances it will be against the national interests to assist even though the insurrection is Communist-led and supported. In others, national interests may demand that the United States intervene unilaterally and in the absence of a request for assistance from the threatened government. It is the author's view that the United States should be especially disposed toward taking this action in connection with any Communist effort to seize power through use of force in the developing countries of the Western Hemisphere.

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[8]Frank Church, "How Many Dominican Republics and Vietnams Can We Take On?," New York Times Magazine, 28 Nov. 1965, p. 177.

CHAPTER III

THE OBLIGATION OF WESTERN NATIONS

The Communist strategy of instigating and supporting "wars of national liberation" poses a threat to the other nations of the free world as well as to the United States. Consequently, America should not be expected to shoulder substantially the entire burden of providing assistance to a nation which is combatting Communist-instigated insurgency. Such has been the case in Vietnam.

In late 1965 there were approximately 165,000 American troops in Vietnam, and the war was costing the United States about six billion dollars a year.[1] Although other nations were providing some assistance to South Vietnam, in the majority of instances these were token contributions. United States efforts to have other nations increase their assistance or to provide assistance if they were not doing so have met with little success.

The United States initiated a campaign to enlist additional international help for Vietnam in late 1964.[2] Efforts were pressed in both Washington and through United States Embassies abroad. One of the purposes in seeking assistance from additional countries was symbolic: to demonstrate a worldwide identification with what the

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[1]Associated Press, "Viet War Now Costing US About $16.5 Million a Day," The Washington Post, 11 Dec. 1965, p. A14.

[2]Richard Eder, "US Meeting Rebuff in Plea to Other Nations for Vietnam Aid," New York Times, 13 Dec. 1965, p. 6.

United States is trying to do in Vietnam. Symbolism aside, the campaign sought to meet shortages, both military and in the area of reconstruction and humanitarian assistance. Unfortunately, there was a relatively cold response to America's campaign for contributions to the Vietnam war effort. As a consequence, just prior to a meeting of the NATO member nations in December 1965, Secretary of State Dean Rusk held a news conference and, referring to the war in Vietnam, stated:

> We would like to see more help from more countries. Unfortunately, for many countries Vietnam seems a long way away. So was Manchuria in 1931. So was Ethiopia. All free world countries have a stake in the outcome of Vietnam.[3]

On the following day Mr. Rusk met with representatives of the NATO nations and pleaded for greater support and understanding of the American commitment in Vietnam, but the response was not encouraging.[4]

The United States would benefit materially if other free nations would provide a reasonably fair share of the resources required to combat Communist-incited insurgencies. The tax burden would be lessened and government funds could be diverted from defense expenditures to domestic programs. American battle casualties would be reduced. The commitment of United States military forces would be reduced to the extent that other friendly forces are provided, thus retaining for the United States a greater capability to meet its worldwide military commitments as well as other contingencies which

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[3] Ibid.

[4] "NATO and Vietnam," New York Times, 15 Dec. 1965, p. 46.

might arise. And finally, the greater the number of countries which actively oppose an insurgency supported by Russia and Red China, the greater will be the pressure of world opinion on these Communist powers to discontinue their support and seek an end to the fighting.

Since the Communists have clearly demonstrated their intent to wage their ideological struggle with the West by fomenting "wars of national liberation," and since existing military alliances and agreements do not adequately provide for a collective response to this form of indirect aggression, the United States should make every effort to obtain from other nations an agreement that they will assist in fighting Communist-led insurgencies. A step in this direction was taken in November 1965 when the United States informally proposed that the Organization of American States make some arrangements to form an inter-American military force to deal with any Communist attempts to overthrow a Latin American government.[5] A somewhat similar proposal could be extended to other nations of the free world which have the resources and are otherwise in a position to lend assistance in fighting insurgencies which arise in the developing countries. Conceivably agreement could be reached on earmarking military forces of various nations for counterinsurgency operations in specific geographic areas or in specified countries.

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[5]Arthur J. Olsen, "Rusk, in Rio, Bids Latins Help Create Hemisphere Force," New York Times, 19 Nov. 1965, p. 1.

Another approach might be a regional one, such as was mentioned above in connection with Latin America. It is recognized that many problems will arise in trying to work out the details, but, as has been indicated in formulating other alliances and agreements, these can be overcome.

Undoubtedly, American efforts to obtain advance commitments will meet with little success initially since many of the free world nations are suffering illusions induced by Communist statements regarding "peaceful coexistence." Like all illusions, this one will eventually be replaced by hard reality. The Communists have made their blueprint for conquest readily available for all to examine. Those who ignore it or improperly assess its import make the same mistake which was made in connection with Hitler and his "Mein Kampf."

Despite any frustration or disappointment which may be experienced, the United States should persistently and patiently seek to have other nations of the free world meet their responsibilities in defeating Communist insurgencies.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROLE OF THE PEOPLE IN INSURGENCIES

One of the most decisive factors in determining the outcome of an insurgency is the support of the people. The side which gains and holds the support of the people is most likely to be the victor.[1]

The need for the insurgent to have the support of the people has received great emphasis in Communist doctrine, particularly in the writings of Mao Tse-tung who, undoubtedly, has contributed most to the development of the theory of modern Communist insurgency warfare. In his studies on guerrilla warfare, Mao continually stresses the need for close cooperation between guerrillas and the population at large, indicating the importance he attaches to this by stating: "Because guerrilla warfare basically derives from the masses and is supported by them, it can neither exist nor flourish if it separates itself from their sympathies and cooperation."[2] Similarly, an outstanding characteristic of Mao's doctrine is the demand for strict discipline and scrupulous conduct on the part of guerrilla forces to prevent their alienating the people. This is illustrated by the code of conduct which he prescribed for guerrillas and which contains such instructions as: Do not steal from the people; return what you

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[1]David Galula, Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice, pp. 7-8.

[2]Samuel B. Griffith, II, (Translated from the Chinese), "Mao's Primer on Guerrilla War," Marine Corps Gazette, Jan. 1962, p. 43.

borrow; replace what you break; do not without authority search the pocketbooks of those you arrest.[3] It is interesting to note that American military authorities have issued somewhat similar instructions to United States forces in Vietnam. Included are instructions to wave to all Vietnamese, to treat women with politeness and respect, and to recognize that hand-holding among Vietnamese males is a custom of comradeship in South Vietnam and not an indication of homosexual tendencies subject to ridicule and mockery.[4]

It is important to recognize that Communist insurgents do not rely on the active support of the entire population. Only in extreme cases would people be so aroused against the government that they would rise against it en masse. In discussing this aspect of insurgency, Galula states: "In any situation, whatever the cause, there will be an active minority for the cause, a neutral majority, and an active minority against the cause."[5] After citing estimates of some military analysts to the effect that guerrillas need the active support of 15 to 25 per cent or more of the population and the sympathy of another 40 per cent, Ralph Sanders states:

> It seems safer to conclude that at the beginning of a communist insurrection, the sympathies of the people will normally resemble the well known bell curve distribution in statistics, i.e., a few will passionately support the communists, most will try to ignore them, and a few will staunchly oppose them. . . . The

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[3]Ibid., p. 44.

[4]"Marines in Vietnam Get 10 Instructions on Making Friends," New York Times, 28 Nov. 1965.

[5]Galula, op. cit., pp. 75-76.

> available evidence indicates that insurgents can operate with relatively little popular support. The assistance of a fraction of the population to provide sustenance and intelligence is sufficient as long as the remainder of the local inhabitants do not actively oppose them.[6]

The guerrilla strives for the active support of the people since they represent an invaluable source of urgently needed assistance. If the people are favorably disposed toward the guerrilla, they will provide him with food, clothing, shelter, labor, recruits, intelligence, and other forms of help. Of these, none is of greater benefit to the guerrilla than intelligence. The people observe almost every move of the counterinsurgent forces; if they promptly report these moves to the insurgent, the latter will acquire a significant military advantage. In describing the difficulties which the French encountered in combatting the Viet Minh in Indochina, Bernard Fall states:

> It must be understood that practically all French troop movements in Indochina took place in a 'fish bowl.' Since practically no troop movements could take place at night for fear of costly ambushes, even the smallest movement of troops, tanks or aircraft was immediately noticed by the population and brought to the attention of Viet-Minh agents.[7]

The very nature of guerrilla warfare with its widely separated and largely independent hit-and-run tactics demands that the guerrillas know what the enemy is up to. Knowledge of what the enemy is doing or is preparing to do permits the guerrillas to fight only

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[6]Ralph Sanders, "Mass Support and Communist Insurrection," ORBIS, Vol. IX, No. 1, Spring 1965, p. 220.

[7]Bernard B. Fall, Street Without Joy, p. 73.

at moments of their own choosing, to insure superiority when they choose to fight, and to escape antiguerrilla mop-up operations.

Since the chances of the insurgent's success depend so greatly on the support of the people, it is obvious that his defeat will be hastened if he lacks this support. It must be one of the prime objectives of the incumbent government, therefore, to gain the support of the population and thus deny it to the insurgent. As has been illustrated in Vietnam, this can be an extremely difficult task.

The difficulty facing the incumbent government arises from the fact that insurgency warfare is a complex military, social, economic, psychological, and ideological phenomenon. Each of these factors enters into gaining the support of the people. As a consequence, the government's war against the insurgent must be fought simultaneously on both the military and political fronts. In this connection, the following statement of Chalmers A. Johnson expresses the views of many qualified analysts of insurgency warfare:

> To approach the subject of guerrilla warfare as a purely military doctrine is to court disaster. The area of counter-guerrilla policy in which military considerations become relevant is extremely restricted and, even then, the most sophisticated military activities against guerrillas may be fruitless if not pursued in conjunction with political measures.[8]

What measures, then, can the government take to win the active support of the people in the fight against the insurgents? A number

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[8]Chalmers A. Johnson, "Civilian Loyalties and Guerrilla Conflict," World Politics, Vol. XIV, No. 4, Jul. 1962, p. 646.

of techniques are available. Let us consider some of the more significant ones together with the problems which they pose.

The government can aid its cause by a decisive defeat of guerrilla forces, widely and persuasively publicized.[9] Galula states: "The counterinsurgent needs a convincing success as early as possible in order to demonstrate that he has the will, the means, and the ability to win."[10] This is important because many of the people will not commit themselves to either the government or the insurgent until they are reasonably sure which side will win. The obvious penalties for backing the wrong horse dictate against a rash or premature decision. Admittedly, the initial success may not be sufficiently convincing that it alone will rally the bulk of the population behind the government. Nevertheless, it will be beneficial to the extent that it convinces people it is unwise to assist the insurgent. Once it becomes obvious that the guerrillas are being defeated militarily, the people will begin to support the government in ever-increasing numbers. Success breeds success.

The people will be reluctant to give their active support to the government until they feel safe from possible guerrilla reprisal. The government must take measures, therefore, to provide the necessary security. To the extent that forces can be spared from military operations, security can be furnished by the judicious location of military and paramilitary forces among the people. If this is

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[9]Peter Paret, and John W. Shy, Guerrillas in the 1960's, p. 45.
[10]Galula, op. cit., p. 79.

impracticable, the government may have to resort to resettlement of the population; however, this poses a number of problems. Galula states:

> If the rural population is too dispersed to allow the stationing of a military detachment with every group, the counterinsurgent faces the decision of resettling it, as was done in Malaya, Cambodia, and Algeria, and is being done today in South Vietnam. Such a radical measure is complicated and dangerous. Complicated because the population has to be moved, housed, and given facilities to retain its old, or to find new, independent means of living. Dangerous because nobody likes to be uprooted and the operation is bound to antagonize the population seriously at a critical time; a well-planned and well-conducted resettlement may ultimately offer the population economic and social advantages, but they will not become apparent immediately.[11]

Resettlement will do more harm than good if not handled properly. Late in 1959 a resettlement program was initiated in Vietnam, designed to pull the peasants together in large agglomerations known as "agrovilles." In describing the shortcomings of the program, Stanley Karnow states as follows regarding construction of the agroville at Vi Thanh:

> In fifty days, beginning in December, 1959, with the help of the army he /the provincial official/ rounded up twenty thousand peasants--although they were in the midst of their rice harvest--and put them to work immediately. They were paid nothing, and many of them had to walk ten or twelve miles to and from the construction job every day. And when the agroville was finished, there was room for only 6,200 people, leaving some fourteen thousand others without their rice crop, without any payment for their work, and without any opportunity to enjoy the fruits of their labor.[12]

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[11] Ibid., pp. 111-112.

[12] Stanley Karnow, "Diem Defeats His Own Best Troops," The Reporter, 19 Jan. 1961, p. 26.

It is obvious that an ill-devised and poorly carried out resettlement program will be detrimental to the government. If resettlement is decided on, it should first be carefully tested in a limited way to identify the problems and to get the necessary experience.

Winning the support of the people will be facilitated if the government has comprehensive and effective propaganda and education programs. Excellent programs of this nature were skillfully carried out in the Philippine and Malayan insurgencies with considerable success.[13] The people must be convinced that it will be to their advantage in the long run to support the government. James Cross states:

> To this end the government has to explain its programs in ways which are both understandable and credible to the mass of the population. These programs and their results must appear sufficiently attractive and attainable to make the people identify their own hopes for the future with the survival of the government rather than with its overthrow and removal. It takes a high order of salesmanship to get this message across to an apathetic and largely uneducated population whose previous contacts with the government may well have been limited to corrupt tax collectors and rapacious soldiery. However, if the authorities cannot make their position clear and compelling, they cannot hope to call forth the willingness to fight and to sacrifice without which no war can be won.[14]

It is obvious that propaganda and education programs should not be used to deceive the population. In the final analysis, the government

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[13]Otto Heilbrunn, Partisan Warfare, pp. 155-156.

[14]James Eliot Cross, Conflict in the Shadows: The Nature and Politics of Guerrilla War, p. 105.

will be judged by what it does rather than what it says. If it resorts to lies, exaggerations, and unfulfilled promises, it will ultimately be discredited.

Military civic action is another technique which is available. Major General (Ret.) Edward G. Lansdale, generally recognized as an expert on the techniques for winning the support of the people, describes civic action as follows: "Civic action means more than giving economic help; it is an attitude of behavior, an extension of military courtesy, in which the soldier citizen becomes the brotherly protector of the civilian citizen."[15] Civic action embraces a broad range of activities ranging from basic acts of courtesy to major engineering projects. It is essential that the goodwill which the soldier acquires for the government through civic actions is not negated through injudicious military tactics. In this connection, Robert Taber states:

> The indiscriminate use of aircraft against presumed Viet Cong targets does much to explain the alienation of the rural population from the Saigon government. Country people whose only contact with the government comes in the form of napalm and rocket attacks can scarcely be expected to feel sympathetic to the government cause, whatever it may be.[16]

Other instances of military tactics which have alienated the Vietnamese people, to include the one concerning the burning of villages by American forces, may be found in press reports which have come out of Vietnam.

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[15]Edward G. Lansdale, "Vietnam: Do We Understand Revolution?," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 43, No. 1, Oct. 1964, p. 85.

[16]Robert Taber, The War of the Flea, p. 95.

The final technique is the initiating and carrying out of essential political, economic, and social reforms. Our description earlier of the conditions which make the developing nations vulnerable to Communist subversion indicates the nature and importance of these reforms. In their book on insurgency warfare, referring to the re-establishment of government authority and social order, Peter Paret and John Shy state:

> The obvious initial step is a reform program to allay the grievances that originally permitted the outbreak of violence. . . . Reform must have at least two aspects if it is to be effective. First, the administration of reform must be reasonably honest; not only must it not be compromised by corruption, but it must not seem to be simply responding to the program of the guerrillas. Economic and social problems must be attacked on their own merits, and not as if the government were itself a political party. Ramon Magsaysay, who defeated the HUK rebellion, demonstrated that the link between guerrilla warfare and social reform was as much one of credibility as of action.[17]

It will be far more difficult for the government to defeat the insurgent if it is unwilling or unable to carry out meaningful reforms. Moreover, there will be no lasting peace until reforms are made and the seeds of revolt thus removed.

The unwillingness of the Saigon government in some instances, and its inability in others, to carry out the necessary reforms has been detrimental to the war effort in Vietnam. In his book, The Two Viet-Nams, Bernard Fall provides an excellent account of Saigon's

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[17]Paret and Shy, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

inept reform program during the Diem regime and the problems which this posed for American officials.[18] Little progress has been made since Diem's overthrow and, as a consequence, in August 1965, the United States sent General Lansdale and thirteen associates to Saigon to assist in formulating and carrying out an adequate and fruitful reform program.[19] These gentlemen, like those before them, are faced with serious problems. First, urgently required land reform will be impeded because more than half of the cultivated or potentially arable land is under Viet Cong control.[20] And second, American officials cannot impose their will on the Saigon government. In recent years, the Americans have advised and prodded the Vietnamese on almost every conceivable field of human activity; this has generated a degree of resistance and at times open resentment.[21, 22]

Once the United States commits itself to assisting in counter-insurgency operations, and particularly if American forces have been committed, the United States must find means to persuade the incumbent government to carry out those measures which are essential to the success of the war effort. This proposition is supported by General Lansdale who states:

> In trying to help the Vietnamese, the United States has been contributing in generous measure those things

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[18]Bernard B. Fall, The Two Viet-Nams; A Political and Military Analysis, pp. 254-315.

[19]John Maffre, "Lansdale Team in Vietnam Careful to Avoid Limelight," The Washington Post, 11 Dec. 1965, p. A12.

[20]John Maffre, "Saigon Dilemma: Land Reform," The Washington Post, 28 Nov. 1965, p. A10.

[21]John Maffre, "Lansdale Team in Vietnam Careful to Avoid Limelight," The Washington Post, 11 Dec. 1965, p. A12.

[22]Bernard B. Fall, The Two Viet-Nams; A Political and Military Analysis, pp. 278-279.

> which it so far has felt most qualified to give and which the Vietnamese may lack. . . . In general though, the United States has felt inhibited about trying to make a contribution in areas in which it feels that the chief responsibility must rest with the Vietnamese themselves, particularly in finding the motivation for conducting a successful counter-insurgency effort . . . due to the extent of our involvement, and because everything depends on that motivation, Americans cannot escape responsibility in this area either.[23]

General Lansdale's mission in Vietnam is directly related to the American responsibility which he mentions. If he can succeed in bringing the needed reforms to Vietnam, he will have accomplished an exceedingly difficult and urgent task.

We have indicated above the significant role which the support of the people plays in insurgency warfare and we have discussed some of the measures which can be taken to gain this support. Because of the singular importance of this particular aspect of guerrilla warfare, it is essential that all American military personnel who may become involved in such a war have an awareness of the importance of this factor, and that each individual have an understanding of what is involved and required insofar as he is concerned. If committed to counterinsurgency operations, American forces of all ranks will influence to some extent the views, feelings, and actions of the indigenous population. For example, influence will be exerted in varying degrees by those who deal and associate with

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[23]Lansdale, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

the people, those who serve as advisers to indigenous forces, and those who work with senior officials of the government or its armed forces.

Those American military personnel who may be assigned to positions which will permit them to exert direct influence on indigenous civilian or military leaders, at any level of authority, must be well versed in the principles involved at their level of operation in gaining the support of the people for the host government. Senior United States military officers must exert every effort within their authority to have indigenous officials initiate and carry out effective programs designed to gain and hold the support of the people. Moreover, every other officer and every noncommissioned officer who is in a position to influence activities or operations which may affect the peoples' allegiance must make every effort to have these carried out so that they win the peoples' support rather than alienate it. In essence, there must be a concerted and coordinated effort at all levels to rally the people behind the government.

The foregoing discussion leads to two conclusions. First, United States military doctrine on insurgency warfare must stress the importance of the support of the people and the various principles involved in gaining this support. And second, this aspect of insurgency warfare must be incorporated in appropriate training programs and service school curricula so that all military personnel who may become involved in this form of warfare receive training commensurate with their anticipated responsibilities.

CHAPTER V

EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

An important aspect of insurgency warfare is the presence or absence of assistance to the insurgent from outside sources. If the insurgent receives significant military support from outside the country, the counterinsurgent's task becomes far more complex and difficult.

James Eliot Cross, a former member of the Office of Strategic Services and an authority on unconventional war, states:

> Insurrection takes on another dimension when the insurgents are encouraged and supported by the government of another state. Inciting rebellion then becomes a technique of foreign policy and a form of unconventional aggression by one national government against another. Since this sort of unacknowledged and irregular attack is not aggression in the classical sense of the word, it is difficult to demonstrate to international tribunals and to the world at large that aggression is indeed taking place, and as a result effective forms of defense and retaliation are hard to determine and carry out.[1]

Although external aid to insurgents is not a new tactic, it merits special consideration now and in the foreseeable future because of the Communists' frequent use of the tactic and their declared intent to continue to use it in pursuit of their international goals.

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[1]James Eliot Cross, Conflict in the Shadows: The Nature and Politics of Guerrilla War, pp. 6-7.

Geography plays a significant role in connection with external assistance. The counterinsurgent benefits if his country is isolated by natural barriers or situated among countries that oppose the insurrection. These conditions make it more difficult for the insurgent to be provided with military assistance from outside sources, and it denies him sanctuary in neighboring states. The reverse is true, however, if the nation undergoing insurrection is contiguous to a state or states which favor the rebellion and which intend to support the insurgent. Under these circumstances the rebels have sanctuary outside their own borders in which they can find security, shelter, and training facilities. Further, the furnishing of weapons, ammunition, and other essential items to the guerrillas becomes a relatively simple matter. And finally, if it becomes necessary and if the government involved believes it can get away with it, troops can be moved into the rebellious area to fight alongside the rebels. Undoubtedly, geographic conditions and their effects on supporting insurgencies will weigh heavily on Communist decisions regarding "wars of national liberation."

Most informed analysts and writers agree that the element of external assistance is one of the most important in insurgency warfare. Referring to the nation which renders external assistance as an "active sanctuary," Bernard Fall attributes singular importance to external aid by stating: ". . . the success or failure of all rebellions since World War II depended entirely on whether the active sanctuary was willing and able to perform its expected

role."[2] Fall's proposition receives considerable support from James Eliot Cross who states:

> . . . unconventional offensives built around guerrilla operations and mounted against reasonably responsive and competent governments have little chance of gaining national victory unless they receive sustained and large-scale support across a contiguous border and can look to the Communist side of that border as a sanctuary and base as well as a source of supply.[3]

There is ample evidence that the nature and outcome of wars of insurgency are greatly influenced by whether or not the guerrilla receives support from an outside source. The turning point in France's war in Indochina occurred in 1950 when the Vietminh began to receive aid from Red China.[4] Although the Vietminh had ample manpower, prior to receiving Chinese aid they were unable to equip sufficient forces or mount large-scale operations because their primitive arsenals could not meet their needs. Red China met these needs and the Vietminh then went on to defeat the French.

It is significant to note that Communist insurgents were defeated in Greece, Malaya, and the Philippines where they were denied any substantive outside assistance. The Communist-led guerrillas in Greece initially met with considerable success because of the extensive support which they received from across the Yugoslav and Hungarian borders. However, subsequent to the split between Tito and Stalin,

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[2]Bernard B. Fall, Street Without Joy, p. 294.
[3]Cross, op. cit., p. 10.
[4]David Galula, Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice, pp. 40-41.

the Greek-Yugoslav border was closed and, as a consequence, the guerrillas lost valuable bases and most of their external support. This seriously weakened the guerrillas and hastened their defeat. In Malaya and the Philippines, geographic conditions prevented the insurgents from receiving any meaningful support from outside sources.

The war in South Vietnam forcefully illustrates the important role of external aid in insurgency warfare. Considering all aspects of the war, nothing has been of greater benefit to the Viet Cong or has posed graver problems for their opponents than the massive support which has been provided to the insurgents from outside sources.

Hanoi has steadily increased the flow of supplies and troops across the borders of North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia into South Vietnam. In late 1965 it was estimated that at least seven North Vietnamese regiments had infiltrated into the south to fight alongside the Viet Cong.[5] This, together with the Viet Cong's stepped up recruitment of South Vietnamese, has prevented the counterinsurgent forces from attaining sufficient military strength to undertake decisive offensive action against the insurgents despite the build-up of American forces to some 170,000 by year end.[6] As a consequence, the Viet Cong have retained control over much of the land and many of the people, thus frustrating the government's efforts to gain the support of these people.

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[5]"Vietnam Conflict: The Substance and Shadow," The Washington Post, 9 Jan. 1966, p. A22.

[6]Ibid.

The Viet Cong have also benefited by using neighboring states for bases and sanctuary. This has posed a real problem for counter-insurgent ground forces since political considerations have thus far ruled out their crossing into North Vietnam or pursuing enemy forces which withdraw into the neutral states of Laos and Cambodia.

The combined efforts of the United States and Vietnam have been directed at disrupting and ultimately eliminating the support which Hanoi has been giving to the insurgents. These efforts have included ground operations at various points along the border, naval patrolling of South Vietnam's coast, bombing of the Ho Chi Minh trail and other communication routes into South Vietnam, and bombing of selected targets of military significance in North Vietnam. Thus far, the measures taken have been unsuccessful; rather than a decrease in the amount of external aid, there has been a decided increase. If the Communists continue to reject settlement of the war by negotiation and carry on the fight, the United States will face serious decisions regarding additional measures which must be taken to cut off external assistance to the Viet Cong.

It is obvious that the insurgent benefits greatly if he is able to receive substantive military assistance from outside sources. Consequently, if the United States commits military forces in support of a government fighting insurgency, and if the insurgent is receiving significant external aid which cannot be eliminated by actions within the country, the United States must act to eliminate this aid by bringing pressure to bear on the nation or nations

rendering the assistance. This pressure can take many forms, ranging from political suasion to military force. The United States must be prepared to use whatever form is required. Although the risk of broadening the war will rise as pressure is progressively increased, this is a risk which America must take. For one thing, it will be far less difficult and costly to defeat the insurgent if he is denied outside assistance. Of even greater importance, however, is the likelihood that firm measures against the nation or nations rendering assistance will convince the Communists that they cannot militarily support "wars of national liberation" without suffering some undesirable consequences. If these consequences are sufficiently serious and costly, the Communists may conclude that they have little to gain by inciting and supporting insurrection.

CHAPTER VI

MILITARY FORCES FOR COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

Conditions in the world today indicate that insurgency warfare in the emerging nations is the form of conflict in which American military forces are most likely to become engaged in the foreseeable future. It is obvious, therefore, that these forces must be fully prepared to cope with this type of warfare.

At present there is considerable divergence of opinion among both military and civilian students of warfare as to the type of force which is best suited to combat insurgency. Some are of the opinion that conventional United States forces are essentially all that is required.[1] Others oppose this view, arguing that changes in organization, equipment, and doctrine are required to meet the peculiarities of insurgency warfare.[2, 3] As in most cases, the answer lies somewhere between the extremes.

There have been ample wars of insurgency to provide guidance as to the kind of forces required and to assist in avoiding some of the errors which have been made. Bernard Fall has been highly critical of the French Army's operations in Indochina, accusing them of being roadbound and relatively immobile because of excessive

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[1]Neal G. Grimland, "The Formidable Guerrilla," Army, Feb. 1962, pp. 63-66.

[2]William H. Hessler, "Guerrilla Warfare is Different," US Naval Institute Proceedings, Apr. 1962, pp. 35-47.

[3]Boyd T. Bashore, "Organization for Frontless Wars," Military Review, May 1964, pp. 3-16.

and unessential heavy equipment.[4] Apparently the French failed to learn from their experience in Indochina, for David Galula states: "France's NATO divisions were useless in Algeria; their modern equipment had to be left behind, and highly specialized engineer or signal units had to be hurriedly converted into ordinary infantry."[5]

The United States has not been immune to criticism. Based on his observations in 1963, Bernard Fall alleges that the West has learned little from two decades of wars of insurgency. Among other things, he criticizes American doctrine in Vietnam in 1963 which stressed high firepower rather than the commitment of extensive manpower to constant effective patrolling, and he reiterates his view that America trained the South Vietnamese Army for a conventional war it would not conceivably have to fight.[6] In previously expressing this latter view, Fall had stated:

> . . . America's allies throughout the world . . . imitate as nearly as possible the United States in variety of equipment regardless how useless or uneconomical this might be. South Korea has a 'Marine Division' with amphibious equipment it cannot maintain; Latin American and Southeast Asian countries have their jet fighters or even jet bombers whose strategic value is nil, but which tie up large amounts of scarce training and maintenance potential. On the American side, the complicated process of applying imagination

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[4]Bernard B. Fall, Street Without Joy, p. 74.

[5]David Galula, Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice, p. 32.

[6]Bernard B. Fall, The Two Viet-Nams; A Political and Military Analysis, pp. 329 and 333.

> to military matters is comfortably avoided by organizing and training local forces along the known and tried patterns of American units with a minimum of local adaptation or experience.[7]

Additional criticism is voiced by James Cross. After discussing the need for mobility in insurgency warfare, he points out the undesirable trend toward ponderous conventional armies and states:

> We Americans have probably carried this trend to its greatest extreme. We have made the uncomfortable business of fighting as comfortable as the nature of the thing permits, but we have paid a considerable price to do it, and the logistic tail that supports an American division in action amazes and appalls foreign officers. This solicitous attention to the fighting man is commendable, but when ours or any other army so conceived and so managed is up against a guerrilla enemy this munificence of supply can be a terrible handicap in conducting the business at hand.[8]

The individuals named above are just a few of the great number of persons, particularly in the United States, who have been engaged in recent years in a critical analysis of insurgency warfare. American strategists and tacticians have extensively studied past insurgencies and have drawn on our experience in Vietnam in an effort to arrive at a suitable doctrine of counterinsurgency for United States military forces. Even this may not provide all the answers to wars of insurgency since, because of the many variables involved, no two wars are exactly alike and what held true for one may not hold true for another. As a consequence, some trial and error is necessary in most wars.

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[7]Bernard B. Fall, Street Without Joy, p. 297.

[8]James Eliot Cross, Conflict in the Shadows: The Nature and Politics of Guerrilla War, p. 29.

The United States has gained considerable knowledge and experience in the Vietnamese war, learning under the most realistic testing conditions what types of units, equipment, and tactics are best suited for insurgency warfare. One of the most significant developments thus far has been the effectiveness of the newly formed United States 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) in counter-insurgency operations.

The 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) is the outgrowth of some two years of studies, maneuvers, war games, and tests directed toward tailoring a light and highly mobile division for wars such as that in Vietnam. It is relatively lightly armed and depends upon about 450 helicopters and small aircraft for its battlefield mobility. None of the division's 16,000 ground vehicles is heavier than a jeep. The suitability of this type of division for wars of insurgency has been established in Vietnam. After the division had been engaged in some of the heaviest fighting of the Vietnamese war, Hansen W. Baldwin stated:

> The First /sic/ Cavalry Division (Airmobile), which has learned the hard way what its men call 'on-the-job fighting,' is ideally suited for counterinsurgency operations. This is the opinion of most of the division's senior officers and other observers in Vietnam who have closely followed the division's recent campaigns in the Pleime-Ducco-Chuprong Mountain area.[9]

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[9]Hansen W. Baldwin, "Airmobile Division Suited to Task: Counterinsurgency in Vietnam," New York Times, 12 Dec. 1965, p. 3.

Conventional general purpose ground forces of the United States Army have also been tested in Vietnam. Because of the nature of the war and the terrain in Vietnam, it was necessary to increase the mobility of these forces by eliminating some of their heavy equipment and by providing them additional helicopter support. Under these conditions, the forces adapted themselves to counterinsurgency operations and proved highly effective.

All of the United States military services have learned a great deal about insurgency warfare through comprehensive analyses of past insurgencies and through experience gained in Vietnam. It is important to recognize, however, that this will not provide all the answers to future wars of this nature since no two wars are ever exactly alike. This becomes readily apparent when one observes how rapidly technology has changed the face of war. Nevertheless, despite the fact that placing present and past insurgencies under a microscope does not provide all the answers to the future, it does afford a logical basis from which to derive reasonably sound guidance for the future. It is on this basis that the following views are submitted regarding the military forces which America requires to cope with future insurrections.

Communist-led insurgencies normally move through various phases of intensity, escalating from acts of terrorism to large-scale attack against counterinsurgent forces as the guerrilla gains strength. The United States must have forces in being which will permit a selective response to insurgency warfare based upon the phase of any particular

insurgency and the level of assistance needed by the government concerned. The following combination of military forces is proposed to provide for this measured response to low intensity war requirements.

It is most unlikely that a large commitment of American military forces will be required in the early stages of guerrilla warfare. However, it is of utmost importance that the insurgency be suppressed at the earliest possible moment since this will prevent the guerrillas from gaining strength. Consequently, the American forces which are committed in the early stages to assist the threatened government must be counterinsurgency experts in every sense of the word. It is believed that this requirement can best be met by establishing and maintaining three Joint Counterinsurgency Task Forces (JCTF), with each specifically trained and oriented for potential employment in one of the three developing areas, i.e., Asia, Africa, or Latin America.

The primary mission of these JCTF's would be to provide advice, training, and technical assistance to a threatened government in the early stages of insurgency warfare. The JCTF's would also be capable of assuming security missions and engaging in limited combat operations.

It is visualized that each JCTF would consist of some 2000-2500 individuals. The nucleus of the force would be a light infantry battalion with sufficient helicopters to provide mobility and logistic support. The balance of the force would consist of engineer, civil

affairs, medical, psychological warfare, intelligence, and communications personnel; advisers on ground, air, and naval operations; and other essential specialists. The members of each JCTF would undergo an extensive training program oriented toward the geographic area which had been designated for the JCTF. This program would cover all aspects of counterinsurgency, provide language training, and include a broad range of instruction to acquaint the students with the geography, history, customs, culture, and internal conditions of the nations which they might be called on to assist. This would enable the JCTF's to acquire the degree of expertise which it is considered they must have in order to accomplish their counterinsurgency mission most effectively.

With respect to command and control of the JCTF's, if they were located in the United States they could be assigned to the United States Strike Command. Upon deployment to an overseas area, a JCTF should be made directly subordinate to the appropriate unified commander. Of course, once a JCTF is sent into a country to assist a government undergoing insurrection, its activities must be closely coordinated with the American officials there who make up the country team.

Once the JCTF's were established, it would be essential that they achieve and maintain a high degree of collective and individual expertise. This would be difficult to do if the JCTF's were to experience the continued loss of experienced personnel. To prevent this, the following personnel policies are proposed. Individuals

should be required to serve repetitive tours in the JCTF's. To the extent practicable, those persons assigned to a JCTF located in the United States should serve all individual overseas tours in the geographic area of immediate interest to their JCTF. If this results in successive overseas assignments without dependents, the individuals concerned should receive additional pay as compensation.

If these JCTF's were established and a proper level of skill achieved and maintained, they would provide the United States with an extremely effective response to Communist-led insurgency in its early stages. Because of their highly specialized training and broad range of capabilities, they could render invaluable assistance to a nation conducting counterinsurgency operations.

In furtherance of the concept of having the capability for a measured and selective response to wars of insurgency, it is proposed that the United States have one highly mobile, light infantry division which is organized, trained, and equipped principally for counterinsurgency operations. The Air Force and the Navy would provide essential air and naval support. Either the entire division or elements of it could be committed, depending upon the situation. If needed and if permitted by the terrain, the committed force could be given additional support such as armor and artillery by the attachment of separate units.

If the level of insurgency demands the commitment of United States forces in excess of the light infantry division and its supporting elements, then conventional general purpose forces

should be employed. This concept would require that all general purpose ground forces and their supporting elements of the Air Force and Navy receive counterinsurgency training. Any changes in the armament or equipment of these forces which would be necessitated by the area of ultimate operations could be effected prior to deployment.

There is one principle which should be adhered to in any commitment of American combat forces to support counterinsurgency operations. These forces should not be used in a combat role except as a last resort. Initially they should be used to take over noncombat type missions from the indigenous forces, thus relieving these forces for combat duty. This will make it clear to the host government that it has the prime responsibility for combatting the insurgents. Additionally, the government will be more apt to win the support of the people if its forces rather than foreigners are carrying the fight to the guerrillas.

It is significant to note that the first American ground combat forces sent to Vietnam were committed in consonance with the foregoing principle. The New York Times of March 7, 1965, reported that two battalions of United States Marines would be deployed to Vietnam and stated:

> In today's announcement the Pentagon noted that the marines ordered to South Vietnam would have a 'limited mission.'
>
> Their mission, it was explained, was simply to relieve many of the South Vietnamese Army forces now protecting

the Danang base so that they could take part in more active combat duties against the Vietcong.[10]

In summary, it is proposed that the United States have forces in being which will permit a selective and measured response to insurgency warfare. The level of the response in each instance would be commensurate with the phase of the insurgency and the degree of assistance needed by the threatened government. It is believed that this can be accomplished through use of the three Joint Counterinsurgency Task Forces described above; a mobile light infantry division with air, naval, and other support available as required; and conventional general purpose forces which have been trained in counterinsurgency operations.

[10]Jack Raymond, "3,500 Marines Going to Vietnam on Saigon's Plea," New York Times, 3 Jul. 1965, p. 1.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

In the preceding passages we have looked at various aspects of low intensity war as it is being waged today by the Communists. It has been made amply clear by the Communists that this is the form of conflict which they intend to pursue in furtherance of their ideological and expansionist ambitions. Consequently, although the possibility of large-scale conflict cannot be ruled out, it seems reasonably certain that Communist-led insurgency warfare in the developing states will be the most likely challenge to the United States and its armed forces during the remainder of the 1960's and in the subsequent decade. This demands that the United States have a national military strategy to cope with this particular threat and it is to this end that this examination of low intensity war has been directed. Thus, based on this examination, the following concept of strategy is proposed.

The United States should not overextend itself by the indiscriminate support of governments which are threatened by insurgency. The threat to America's security and related vital interests must be the dominant factor in deciding whether or not to render assistance. In some instances it will be against the national interests to assist even though the insurrection is Communist-led and supported. In others national interests may demand that the United States intervene unilaterally and in the absence of a request for assistance

from the threatened government. The United States should be especially disposed toward taking this action in connection with any Communist effort to seize control of a developing nation of the Western Hemisphere.

The United States should make every effort to convince the developed nations of the free world of the threat which the Communist doctrine of "wars of national liberation" holds for them, and to persuade these nations to provide a fair share of the resources required to defeat Communist-led insurgencies. America should also seek agreement from these nations that they will provide specific troops for counterinsurgency operations in specified geographic regions. The intent here is to have a group of nations commit themselves in advance to providing troops to a multinational force which would be formed and committed in the event of Communist-led insurgency in a previously specified geographic area.

United States military doctrine on low intensity war must stress both the importance of the support of the people and the principles involved in helping the host government to gain this support. This aspect of insurgency warfare should be incorporated in appropriate training programs and service school curricula so that all military personnel who may become involved in counterinsurgency operations receive training commensurate with their anticipated responsibilities.

If the United States commits military forces in support of a government fighting insurgency, and if the insurgent is receiving

significant external aid which cannot readily be eliminated by actions within the country, then the United States should act to cut off this aid through the use of selective and steadily increasing pressure on the nation or nations providing the assistance.

If the decision is made to lend assistance to a government undergoing insurrection, the United States should then make every effort to insure the defeat of the insurgents at the earliest possible moment. Otherwise the insurgents will have an opportunity to build up their strength, thus making their defeat more difficult and costly.

The United States should have forces in being which permit a selective and measured response to wars of insurgency. This capability could be realized from the following combination of forces: the three Joint Counterinsurgency Task Forces as described earlier; a mobile light infantry division--such as the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)--with necessary air, naval, and other support; and conventional general purpose forces trained for counterinsurgency operations.

United States military forces deployed to assist a government fighting insurgency should not be committed in a combat role except as a last resort. Insofar as possible, American forces should be used to provide advice, assistance, combat support and combat service support, and to release indigenous forces from noncombat type missions so that they can be employed in a combat role.

In conclusion, the United States must be fully prepared to cope with Communist indirect aggression, for there are few things which

will contribute more to our ultimate security than the stable and peaceful development of the emerging nations of the world. It is essential, therefore, that American military forces have the capability to fight limited counterinsurgency campaigns through to what may be limited conclusions in support of long-term political and economic objectives.

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